

Spectro/MAA - for 226 remand - paraffin tests

BN 7/21/78

One of the records of the FBI's 12/7/77 HQ JFK records release should have been provided on discovery in 75-236. It is 62-109060-2845, from Section 58, R.H. Jevons to Conrad (drafted by JFGallagher) of 3/21/64.

It recounts the 3/26 meeting with Melvin Eisenberg "to discuss spectrographic examinations conducted on materials relating to the assassination of President Kennedy."

The memo is in typically vague and inconclusive FBI language, to such an extent that I believe my interpretations that follow are justified and fair.

Of the Walker bullet Gallagher stated "the lead alloy" was different than that of the "large fragment recovered from the car." He had to spell this out no more.

Most of the rest is on paraffin tests but Gallagher is evasive on "the spectrographic examinations of the bullet fragments recovered from the wound in President Kennedy's head and from the vehicle..." Of these he said no more than can be said for an appreciable percentage of all bullets ever manufactured: "were composed of the same chemical elements." The capability of the tests permitted a more definitive statement.

On the testing of the casts, all rests on assumptions not even stated, that the maximum residues are from powder. There is no discussion of any other source, no statement that the tests established powder as the source and no reference at all to the check casts.

Gallagher says "it was not possible to distinguish between the powder residues of the rifle cartridges from the powder residues of the revolver cartridges." Only in a quest for evidence of guilt only is this the objective. The first objectives should have been to identify the residues as of powder and then what kind or source. This is all assumption, that Oswald fired both rifle and revolver and that the residues came from powder only.

Of the Abersold letter, the most significant part of which I believe dealt with the rifle and shooting, Gallagher represents that Eisenberg read only what relates to the paraffin casts. Of this Gallagher states "No elements were found during these tests to distinguish between the rifle and revolver deposits" and "Nothing has come to our attention and to our knowledge nothing has been done subsequent to these examinations which would assist further in the interpretation of the data obtained..."

One question about the first quote is, I think, are the elements different in the two kinds of same primers? I think they are the same elements, his word.

One question about the second is the absence of any effort to duplicate the Dallas conditions. Gallagher pretends that the washing of the casts ruined them for these tests. They had seen the chemical analysis of the Dallas water, etc. I believe they could have washed the test casts close enough to identical with the Dallas casts for a determination. I believe the reason this was not done is the negative paraffin results on the check, indicative of no rifle having been fired by LMB. (Perhaps more indicative if the presence of residues on his hands means he had not washed them.)

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Conrad *JWC*

FROM : R. H. Jevons *RHJ*

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY,
11/22/63, DALLAS, TEXAS

DATE: 3/27/64

Belmont	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mohr	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cooper	<input type="checkbox"/>
Callahan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conrad	<input type="checkbox"/>
DeLoach	<input type="checkbox"/>
Felt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gale	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rosen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sullivan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tavel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trotter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tele. Room	<input type="checkbox"/>
Holmes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gandy	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Handwritten signatures and initials

In accordance with the verbal request of Mr. Melvin Eisenberg of The President's Commission and with prior approval, SAs Henry B. Heiberger and John F. Gallagher met with Mr. Eisenberg on 3/26/64, to discuss spectrographic examinations conducted on materials relating to the assassination of President Kennedy.

SA Heiberger discussed the spectrographic comparison examinations which he conducted in the Laboratory. SA Heiberger advised that the lead alloy of the bullet recovered from the attempted shooting of General Walker was different from the lead alloy of a large bullet fragment recovered from the car in which President Kennedy was shot. SA Gallagher advised Mr. Eisenberg the spectrographic examinations of the bullet fragments recovered from the wound in President Kennedy's head and from the vehicle in which President Kennedy was riding at the time of his assassination were composed of the same chemical elements.

As reported in my memorandum of March 17, 1964 (Jevons to Conrad, LEE HARVEY OSWALD, IS - R), SA Gallagher discussed with Mr. Eisenberg the neutron activation analyses of the paraffin casts from Oswald. This technique you will recall revealed deposits on the casts characteristic of powder residues. However, it was not possible to distinguish the powder residues of the rifle cartridges from the powder residues of the revolver cartridges. It was in connection with this examination that Mr. Eisenberg then discussed with SA Gallagher a letter of Dr. Paul C. Aebersold, Director, Division of Isotopes Development, Atomic Energy Commission, to Assistant Attorney General Herbert J. Miller, which was dated December 11, 1963, and subsequently forwarded to The Commission. He read from this letter the following:

- 1 - Mr. Belmont
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. Malley

REC 7 62-109060-2845

62-109060

EX-103

25 APR 7 1964

JFG:gl
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66 APR 13 1964
FBI - WASH DC

APR 8 1964

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Memorandum to Mr. Conrad
Re: ASSASSINATION OF
PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY,
11/22/63, DALIAS, TEXAS
62-109060

"We would hope soon to have more details on whether the method (neutron activation analyses) will give useful information to distinguish between smoke deposits from revolvers and those from rifles—by means of their distribution on the body of the person firing them and by the levels of antimony and barium (and perhaps other elements) deposited."

Mr. Eisenberg then asked if more detailed background was available at this date. It was pointed out by SA Gallagher that Dr. Aebersold's letter was written prior to the actual activation analyses examinations of Oswald's casts. No elements were found during these tests to distinguish between rifle and revolver deposits. Mr. Gallagher further pointed out that the data in the present instance were further complicated by Oswald's firing of the revolver subsequent to the firing of the rifle and by the fact that the casts have been chemically treated and washed prior to receipt for neutron activation analyses. Nothing has come to our attention and to our knowledge nothing has been done subsequent to these examinations which would assist further in the interpretation of the data obtained from the activation analyses of the paraffin casts from Oswald.

ACTION: None, for information.

[Handwritten signatures and initials]