

Press conference on FH, Nat Press Club East Room 11/14/75 HW 11/15/75

There was no time to prepare any written statement other than a short press release that an assortment of college students distributed for me (making fine impressions despite long hair.), I had been uneasy about the cost and felt that despite the changed attitudes there might not be a good attendance. I asked Steve Barker (Longon Telegraph bureau chief to make the arrangement, he decided that the fairly large East room, which has its own very large bar and much more space than we could have used, would be required. They sat in 40 chairs and had to add more, so Steve's judgement was good and if there is no single story then \$75.00 was well spent.

No TV, which was not unexpected since I specified only straight-news coverage would be permitted and no specials or magazine specials. Mutual radio covered and there were about a half dozen other radio coverages from the tape recorders on the tables alone.

AP, UPI, London Times, Telegraph, Daily Mail and a number of foreign papers unknown to me were represented and the biggest surprise of all, John Lindsay, of Newsweek, about whom more.

After a brief introduction in which I explained my purpose, to make it possible for the press to fill its function of informing the people by informing the press (including that because there would be no books on commercial sale and they were not about to tell people how to write me to order copies) there would be no freebies) I said that this book differed from others, including mine in that I had undertaken a massive investigation over a ten-year period of the essential evidence of a homicide, pursued it but out of the ordinary means, obtained what I regard as unprecedented evidence and to this had added suppressed evidence bearing on intent and wittingness. I then went into the medical and ballistics evidence with this new evidence, chiefly the medical and of that mostly Burkley's. I said, after the presentation, that no matter how one might seek to explain away evidence of this nature the official character could not be questioned, there remained a question I hoped they would agree with, what kind of way was this to run an investigation, especially on such a subject, and how could one have any dependence on an investigation that began as and continued as a non-investigation? Some of you may have been police reporters, I asked. Did you ever hear of a case in which the death certificate was not in evidence—even available? I flashed new pictures, new documents, and offered copies (no takers except from 10 who bought the book).

It lasted at least an hour and a half in which no person left. The college people present (total of 5) claimed I blew their minds so no words remained. I think otherwise but I do take it as unusual that there was no single nasty question when I stopped for questions. Lindsay, who had come up to me and been friendly prior to the beginning, asked the usual motive question, how could so many remain so silent for so long. I made a mistake in not doing as I always have in the past, by saying I deal with fact, this is the uncontested fact, and others would have to explain what is in their minds. Instead I decided to give a longer explanation that would have been a definitive answer. I read from the 1/22 transcript and started to read from the 1/11 organization of the work when Fred Emory, London Times bureau chief said "You haven't really answered John's question." Here Lesar interjected that what anyone might have in his mind can be argued but sets of facts like these can't be, they speak for themselves, after which I continued with the longer explanation.

What is perhaps most surprising (Lesar taped, I didn't) is the glowing, exceptional tribute Lindsay paid me, unsolicitedly and contrary to what he has been writing behind my back. He began by saying that I had done an exceptional investigation, that for 11 years I had been doing what they, the major media should have been doing, and something to the effect that they were all in my debt for it.

I draw no conclusions on coverage. (Star, Pist not present.) I do note a different major-media (print) attitude and I think in time we will also note a delay in the CBS TV specials. ABC's is so meaningless I'd be surprised if it did not go on last night. I know it was scheduled and did not stay up. The day tired me. (We again had a little party for the young people and they and we enjoyed it much.) They also were thrilled at my getting them into the press club for lunch.