

Excerpts from deposition of
SA Courtland Cummings -
MUM, CA 75-226,
2/24/77. Then chief of
firearms ident. unit of Lab.

tification positively on the basis of an examination under the microscope.

What is the next step?

A I don't understand the question.

Q Well, are there any other procedures that you might employ to determine whether or not it is identifiable, or can be excluded as having been fired from that particular weapon?

A There is no way of looking at or examining a bullet to positively determine whether it's identifiable. All you can do is examine it for the presence of any microscopic marks which could possibly be of value.

Q All right. Then what do you do?

A Then you examine the weapon.

Q How is that conducted?

A Well, you -- first, you would run a patch through the barrel to determine whether or not the weapon had been fired since the last cleaning.

Then you would generally check it over to see its operating condition.

Q What do you mean by that?

A That is to determine whether or not the weapon is in, --

A Sir, I have no opinion. I have no way of knowing.

Q All right.

Do you know what the diameter of that bullet is?

A Approximately .263.

Q And does that afford you any basis for making an opinion as to where a fragment 3.5 millimeters long could have come from?

A No, sir.

Q I would ask you to examine the base of the bullet again and see if you can determine from that where there was a sample cut out. Is it clear?

A I don't know where a sample was cut out, sir.

Q Mr. Cunningham, you spoke earlier of the ballistics examination that you would normally make, and indicated that in a case of the magnitude of the assassination of President Kennedy, you would take comparison photographs of the bullets that you examined under the comparison microscope?

A Yes, sir.

Q I want to show you a photograph and see whether or not this is the kind of photograph that you would take for —

A This is not a photograph taken from a comparison microscope.

Q Is there any evidentiary purpose that could be

served by such a photograph?

A No, sir, but again, every piece of evidence in this case was photographed.

Q Yes, I understand that.

I want to show you another photograph and ask you: is that the kind of photograph that might be taken in preserving records of a specimen received?

A Not by the FBI.

Q Not by the FBI? Why not?

A That's a very bad photograph.

Q It is? Why do you say that?

A It's too dark, focus is not good. It does not look like an FBI photograph.

Q All right.

So you would ordinarily expect the FBI would have better photographs of, say the grooves?

A Yes, sir. I don't ever recall seeing this photograph.

Q No. For the record, it is not a photograph associated with the assassination of President Kennedy. I simply wanted to determine whether or not the FBI would make comparable photographs.

You would make comparable photographs?