

# THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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**J. F. Kennedy  
Assassination:**

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# THE UNSOLVED J.F.K. MURDER MYSTERY

An overview in three parts of a growing public insistence that the truth, the whole truth, is not yet known.

## PART ONE

New demands for better answers

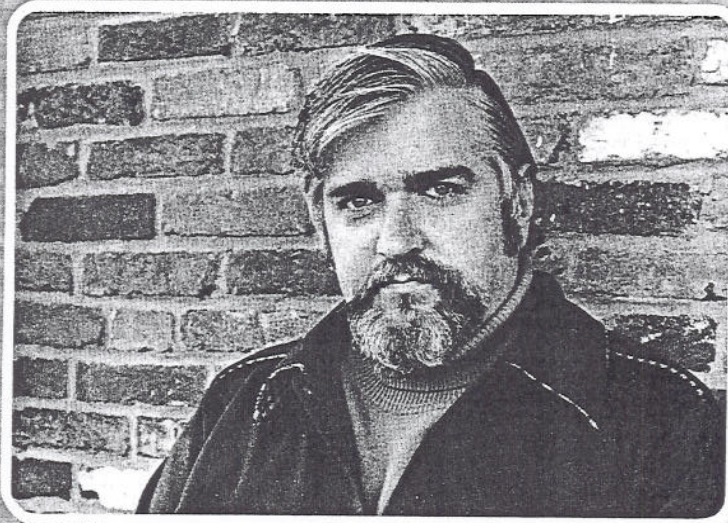
By George O'Toole

"People keep asking me if I've found any new evidence," Mark Lane, doyen of the assassinologists, said recently. "I always ask them what's wrong with the old evidence."

Lane's questioners are often the standing-room-only college audiences that come to hear him speak of a decade of dissent from the official theory of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy found in the *Warren Report*. Most of the young people who turn out by the thousands to hear Lane had not yet reached their tenth birthdays on November 22, 1963; to them the old evidence is both new and significant. In campus parking lots across the country, a new bumper sticker has begun to appear, "Who killed JFK?"

Dissatisfaction with the official answer to that question has been widespread ever since the publication in September 1964 of the *Warren Report* naming Lee Harvey Oswald as the lone assassin and finding no evidence of conspiracy. In 1967, Gallup and Harris public opinion polls revealed that approximately two-thirds of the American people did not believe the assassination was the work of only one individual. A spate of books raising questions with the official explanation gave substance to those doubts, but offered no specific alternatives to that explanation. Growing concern with the war in Southeast Asia and social upheaval at home gradually displaced the assassination from the public arena. But now it has returned.

One of the most curious developments in the wave of new interest in the case was the decision by the Rockefeller Commission investigating alleged illegal domestic operations by the CIA to probe the possi-



George O'Toole, the author of the widely discussed book, recently released, *The Assassination Tapes*, was formerly Chief of the Problems Analysis Branch, CIA.

bility that the intelligence agency was in some way involved in the assassination. Undoubtedly prompted by long-held theories that the CIA was behind the assassination, the Commission's action seemed nonetheless strange to many observers. The Commission undertook to probe the possibility of CIA involvement—a tacit assertion that the *Warren Report* may have been wrong in finding no conspiracy—but declined to call for a reopening of the case. It was as though the Commission were implicitly defining two alternatives: either Oswald alone was guilty of the assassination, or else the CIA was involved. The broad spectrum of other possible explanations was excluded. Few observers were surprised when the

Rockefeller Commission failed to shed any new light on the mystery.

The first manifestation of renewed public interest in the JFK assassination was a three-day conference held late last January in Boston by a group known as the Assassination Information Bureau. The AIB is the creation of five young Boston-area activists, some of whom worked in the anti-war movement of the Sixties and early Seventies. More than a thousand people jammed a Boston University auditorium on the first day of the AIB-sponsored conference to hear Mark Lane and several other assassination researchers. The next day classrooms and lecture halls on the campus were filled to capacity by young people eager to learn more about



"the old evidence" and some of the more recent work on the JFK case, as well as on the assassinations of Robert F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King. Before the conference closed, it was apparent that the assassinations would become one of the major concerns of college-age youth in 1975 and in following years.

The Boston phenomenon was repeated at a half dozen major campuses across the country before the end of the spring semester. Even at smaller schools, the visit of a prominent assassinologist would bring out record numbers of students to hear him speak. In April, *Rolling Stone*—a leading newspaper of the rock counterculture—devoted most of one issue to the JFK assassination.

But renewed interest in the questions about the *Warren Report* was not limited to college students; the campus movement was only a bellwether of a reawakening of general public interest in the subject, and the established news and information media soon followed the trend. Tom Snyder's "Tomorrow" program and Geraldo Rivera's "Goodnight America"—both late-night talk shows—each devoted several programs to the JFK assassination. *Newsweek*, *New Times*, and the *U.S. News and World Report* covered the subject in long feature articles, while CBS announced plans for a television documentary special on the assassination of the two Kennedys and Martin Luther King, to be aired this fall.

Why, after almost twelve years, has the tragedy of President Kennedy's death again become a topic of major current interest? A cynic might answer that we, as a people, have acquired a taste for controversy and scandal from our long experiences with the Vietnam War and Watergate. But it could be argued as well that those experiences have taught us a needed skepticism toward official government reassurances. Yet for many the answer is much simpler: they have seen for the first time a twenty-two-second strip of home movie film of the last moments of the presidential motorcade in Dallas.

The film was taken by the late Abraham Zapruder, a Dallas businessman who happened to be an eyewitness to the assassination. It was purchased from Zapruder by *Life* magazine, which made a print available to the Warren Commission and published still frames from the film. But the film was never released by *Life* for public viewing as a motion picture. For years bootleg prints of the Zapruder film have been finding their way into the hands of individual assassination researchers, but until 1975 only a relatively small number of Americans had seen it. A young filmmaker named Robert Groden changed that.

While most pirated prints of the film are blurred and of poor quality, Groden obtained—through means he has not disclosed—a sharply better copy. He put it together with other footage of the presidential motorcade to create a comprehensive motion-picture account of the Presi-

dent's ride from Love Field to Dealey Plaza where the shots were fired. Through optical printing techniques, Groden managed to zoom in on the figure of the President in the back of the limousine during the critical six seconds in which the bullets struck. The result is a scene of stomach-turning horror, and the most graphic contradiction of the official claim that the final shot struck Kennedy from behind: the President's body seems to be driven backward and to his left by the impact of a bullet apparently fired from ahead of the limousine and to its right—the site of the famous "grassy knoll."

To most viewers, the film is conclusive proof that President Kennedy was caught in a cross fire and, therefore, that two or more assassins must have been involved. To defenders of the orthodox interpretation and even some critics of the *Warren Report*, the backward motion of the President's body is a convulsive movement, rather than the result of a bullet impact. But, at the very least, the film has raised a reasonable doubt regarding the Warren Commission's lone assassin theory. It has been seen by millions of Americans on television talk shows, and prompted many of them to study some of "the old evidence." Those who have done so have discovered that the Zapruder film contains more subtle, but less debatable, evidence in conflict with the official findings: for example, the timing of the shots (see Richard J. Whalen's article on page 47).

Dissent from the lone-assassin theory is by no means limited to campus teach-ins and talk show guests. In April Dr. Robert Joling, president of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, stated that no less than four, and possibly as many as seven assassination shots were fired. Dr. Joling added, "Even if there were only three shots as the Warren Commission ruled, there had to be somebody else shooting besides Lee Harvey Oswald. No one person could have fired that many shots in that period of time with that kind of accuracy." In stating his dissent, Dr. Joling joined his distinguished colleague, Dr. Cyril Wecht, one of the country's leading forensic pathologists, who has examined the medical evidence in the case and has, for years, been outspoken in his disagreement with the lone-assassin version.

Calls for full-scale reinvestigation of the JFK assassination are being heard with increasing frequency. One of the earliest voices came from an unexpected quarter, a former member of the Warren Commission's staff, W. David Slawson. Slawson, now a law professor at the University of Southern California, was interviewed by the *New York Times* in connection with a recently disclosed FBI document suggesting the possibility that someone had impersonated Lee Harvey Oswald, a document that Slawson said he had never been shown.

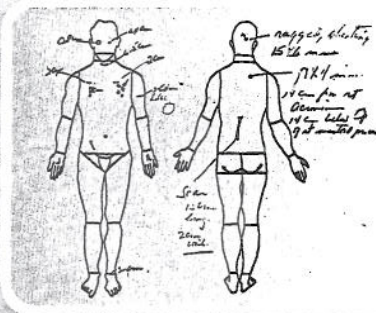
"We were rumor runner-downers, and we certainly should have seen this material, as we did a great deal of other stuff

that we showed to be unfounded," Slawson said. "It may be more significant that we did not see it, in terms of a possible cover-up and the reasons for it, than if we had seen it. I don't know where the impostor notion would have led us—perhaps nowhere, like a lot of other leads. But the point is we didn't know about it. And why not? This was not just another murder; it was, by definition, a political murder," Slawson noted in calling for a re-opening of the case.

Slawson was joined in his demand by yet another former Warren Commission staffer, Burt Griffin, now a Cleveland judge. In an interview with *Rolling Stone* Griffin said that he too felt the case should be reopened. However, both Slawson and Griffin later softened their stand, reaffirming their faith in the Warren Commission's findings and emphasizing that their call for a new investigation was

#### A MAJOR JFK RESEARCHER CLAIMS "WILLFUL COVER-UP"

Dr. Cyril H. Wecht is a prominent Pennsylvania forensic pathologist who has long held that two gunmen were involved in the JFK murder, and that Oswald could not have inflicted all that damage alone. Published titles tell the Wecht viewpoint: *Pathologist's View of JFK Autopsy: An Unsolved Case*, and *JFK Assassination, a Prolonged and Willful Cover-up*. A severe critic of the Warren Commission Report, he has stated that the 1975 Rockefeller Commission has committed a "flagrant" misrepresentation in quoting him as being satisfied by the Warren Report. Referring to his statements to the Rockefeller Commission, Dr. Wecht says: "If that transcript shows in any way that I have withdrawn or revised my thought of the Warren Report, I'll eat the transcript on the steps of the White House."



This drawing made in the autopsy room indicates one bullet had entered the President's back, and a second had entered the rear of the skull.



aimed at settling the widespread public doubts regarding the assassination.

A formal call for a reopening of the case was introduced in the House of Representatives last February by Rep. Henry Gonzalez of Texas. Gonzalez, who was riding in the presidential motorcade in Dallas when the shots were fired, has often given voice to his doubts regarding the Warren Commission's findings. In his bill—House Resolution 204—he proposes a committee of seven members of the House "to conduct a full and complete investigation and study of the circumstances surrounding the deaths of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, and the attempted assassination of George Wallace." In calling for the new probe, Gonzalez told his colleagues, "We must settle once and for all in the interest of the welfare of our country and the future of its people the truth

of what happened at Dallas on November 22, 1963, and what Lee Harvey Oswald carried to his grave before he had his day in court, and perhaps what Oswald did not know . . .

"There are many more disquieting questions to be resolved . . . but they must be answered—with calmness, objectivity, dispassion, and fairness."

Gonzalez's resolution was referred to the House Rules Committee. Whether it will be passed on to the full House and whether the House will vote the proposed committee into being are questions to be answered when Congress meets again this fall. And the answers will very much depend on whether the present groundswell of doubt is merely the result of a popular taste for scandal, or represents a continuing, genuine public concern that we have not yet heard the full truth of what happened on that November noon in Dallas.

**PART TWO**

*The doubts emerge—1967*

*By Richard Whalen*

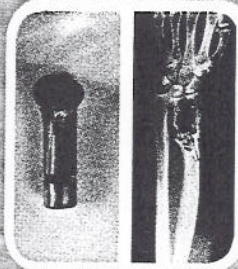
In January 1967 the Post published a detailed report by veteran journalist Richard J. Whalen on the growing public controversy over the official assassination theories of the Warren Commission. In his concluding comments, Whalen called for an official reexamination of the evidence in the case, a plea that was seconded by the Post on its editorial page. But the case was never reopened, and controversy over the assassination of President Kennedy faded as public attention focused on the more immediate problems of America in the late 1960's.

With the current renewal of public concern over the unanswered questions of the Dallas tragedy, the editors of The Saturday Evening Post reviewed Whalen's 1967 article and found that it remains a thorough and balanced presentation of the major points of controversy. We are pleased to reprint portions of the article here, with some additional commentary to bring it up to date.

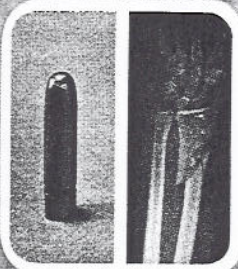
Within thirty-six hours of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and the murder of Patrolman J.D. Tippit, Dallas District Attorney Henry Wade was satisfied that the case against Lee Harvey Oswald was indisputable. On the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository where Oswald worked, police had found three spent cartridges near the southeast window, identified as the assassin's perch. Wedged between boxes on the same floor was a 6.5-caliber Mannlicher-Carcano rifle with a four-power scope, obviously the assassin's weapon. An all-night search by the FBI had traced the rifle bearing serial number C2766 from a distributor in New York to a sporting-goods mail-order house in Chicago, where records showed it had been shipped to one "A. Hidell," Post Office Box 2915, Dallas. A forged Selective Service card in Oswald's wallet bore the name "Alek James Hidell." Experts matched the handwriting with the \$21.45 money order used to purchase the rifle and the application for Box 2915. The FBI laboratory, studying the three shells, a whole bullet found on a stretcher at Parkland Hospital, and two bullet fragments found in the presidential limousine, tied this evidence to Oswald's rifle. When arrested, Oswald had in his possession a Smith & Wesson .38-caliber revolver, the same kind of pistol used to murder Tippit, and this had been traced from a Los Angeles mail-order firm to "A.J. Hidell" at Box 2915. Witnesses to Oswald's firing from the window, his flight from the Book Depository and his encounter with Tippit were coming forward to identify him in lineups at police headquarters. All that was needed now, in Wade's view, was



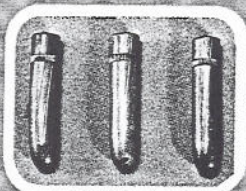
Richard Whalen's article on JFK, reprinted here in part from the January 14, 1967 Post, concludes: "The nation's honor will not be entirely secure until reason addresses the many unanswered questions of the assassination."



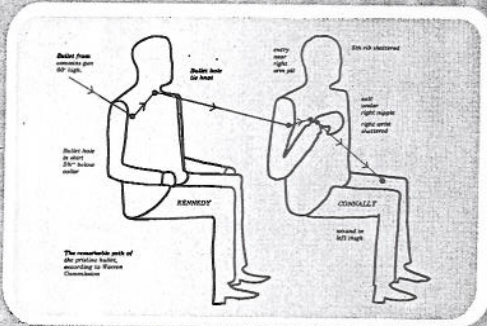
A test bullet fired into a cadaver's wristbone severely flattened.



The "Warren" bullet is nearly perfect in contour.



The same bullet resembles two test-fired into tubes of cotton.



This drawing, based upon the findings of the Warren Commission, is based on the theory that one shot probably hit both Kennedy and Connally.



for the sullen Oswald to break his silence and confess. "I have sent men to the electric chair with less evidence," Wade crowed before the press and television cameras.

If a dozen jurors could have been found who had not heard Dallas officialdom try the case publicly, Oswald might very well have gone to the electric chair. Had he been prosecuted for murdering an ordinary citizen, the evidence arrayed against him would almost certainly have brought a verdict of guilty. But, in the instant Jack Ruby darted from the shadows in the basement of police headquarters and fired a bullet into Oswald's stomach at point-blank range, in full view of millions of startled television viewers, all certainties were shaken. No matter how detailed and circumstantial the official explanations, Oswald's enforced silence would always leave the story incomplete and clouded with an element of doubt.

Immediately after the assassination, President Johnson had ordered a special FBI investigation, but he soon decided this was insufficient in the climate of suspicion created by Oswald's murder. Therefore, on November 29, he appointed an extraordinary Presidential Commission, one without precedent in U.S. history, "to evaluate all the facts and circumstances surrounding" the assassination, "including the subsequent violent death of the man charged with the assassination." Johnson thus asked the commission both to confront the ugly possibility of conspiracy and at the same time to reassure a stunned and grieving nation, to restore confidence in its leaders and institutions. The commission could not face in both directions at once. Chief Justice Earl Warren and his six distinguished colleagues meant to be true to their mandate to gather and weigh all the facts, but they were naturally disposed to begin with the facts incriminating the dead Oswald. Symbolically the commission's first witness was Marina Oswald, his Russian-speaking widow, who could not have testified against him at his trial and who was afraid she would be deported if she did not tell the commission what it wanted to hear.

In September 1964, three months after its planned publication date and only the minimum safe distance from the November elections, the Warren Commission delivered its 888-page *Report* to its anxious client in the White House and to the American people. At tedious length, the *Report* reaffirmed the familiar account. Lee Harvey Oswald had been as lonely in his crime as he had been throughout his pathetic life. His motive for the most meaningful act of his life was as confused as his wanderings across seas and continents and ideological frontiers. All three murders in Dallas—the President, Tippit and, finally, Oswald—were without rational motive, said the report. Oswald's killer, Ruby, was a stranger to his victim, but not, it turned out, to the Dallas police. The commission wished to declare flatly that no conspiracy of any kind existed,

but Senator Richard B. Russell balked and announced he would file a dissenting "footnote" covering two typewritten pages. "Warren was determined he was going to have a unanimous report," Russell recalls, and so the *Report's* language was tempered to say that no evidence of a conspiracy had been uncovered. Chiefly because three shells had been found, the commission concluded three shots had been fired from the Book Depository, and one had apparently missed. One bullet caused the President's fatal head wound, which left the commission only a single bullet with which to explain the seven nonfatal wounds suffered by the President and Texas Governor John Connally. The "single-bullet" theory, the chief novelty in the *Report*, was at once its most crucial and vulnerable finding.

Any "official" explanation of the assassination, which caused a profound national trauma, was bound to dissatisfy some Americans. A President's murder is an event of endless fascination, as witness the continuing detective work into Lincoln's death after more than a century.

Today, almost twelve years after the assassination, many of the original critics of the *Warren Report* accompanied by a new generation of younger skeptics, are bringing their case to public forums across the country. Some of the old critical books have been reissued, and some new works are being published. (See "The Doubts Emerge—1967," on page 47, and "New Demands for Better Answers," by George O'Toole on page 49.)

Part of the explanation for the popularity of the critics lies in their promise of telling you something you don't know—something sinister—and in their willingness to invest the "crime of the century" with the dramatic values of uncertainty and suspense that the *Warren Report* so conspicuously lacks. The critical books, in most instances, are readable, whereas getting through the *Report* is a civic chore. As defenders of the commission impatiently insist, the critics have turned up little, if any, "new evidence," but they don't have to. Two months after publication of the highly praised *Report*, the commission brought out twenty-six printed volumes containing more than 17,000 pages of testimony and exhibits (Government Printing Office; \$76 the set). Since then, it has been possible to examine most but not all of the evidence supposedly supporting the *Report's* conclusions.

By doing just that, the critics have made us uneasily aware of the commission's highly selective attitude toward testimony, favoring witnesses (some very dubious) who confirmed Oswald's guilt, rejecting those who tended to jeopardize the case being built. The same was true of the approach to evidence: Too often, it drew forced conclusions that did not follow naturally from the known facts. What a staff lawyer describes as "by far the most comprehensive criminal investigation ever conducted in the world" was actually a deep but narrow attempt to strengthen

the already impressive *prima facie* case against the dead suspect. The *Report* tells us too much about too little. When the Oswalds lived on Bartholomew Street in New Orleans, we know they had a nice backyard and kept a dog named "Sunshine." But the published evidence (and the 300 cubic feet of commission documents stored in the National Archives) does not include the results of the FBI's spectrographic analysis of the bullet found at Parkland Hospital—the bullet so essential to the finding of Oswald's solitary guilt. In the past few years, many, but not all, of the Warren Commission documents stored in the National Archives have become available to private researchers. Very little information from the newly released materials seems to have bolstered the conclusions of the Warren Commission, but many items have been cited by the critics as further evidence



Charles de Gaulle of France once opined that Fidel Castro had possibly engineered the Kennedy killing.



that the Warren Report was wrong.

The critics raise a great many trivial questions and some troublesome ones. The main thrust of the critics' attack—that a murderous conspiracy in Dallas was subsequently covered up by an official conspiracy in Washington—is blunted by that imposing alp of documents produced by the commission. Not only does the bulk of that data point to Oswald's guilt, but conspirators who had something monstrous to hide would have left behind less evidence of bungling and official confusion. And yet the failure of the available alternatives does not remove the major shortcomings of the Report. Without surrendering to fantasy, there is still room for reasonable doubt about the commission's essential finding—that Lee Oswald alone murdered the President.

The doubt arises, to begin with, from a strip of eight-millimeter amateur movie

film taken from a vantage point on the grassy knoll by Abraham Zapruder, a Dallas dress manufacturer. The Zapruder film was the most important single piece of evidence in the investigation. Tests in the FBI laboratory determined that Zapruder's Bell & Howell Zoomatic camera had been operating at an average speed of 18.3 frames a second. Frame-by-frame analysis of the Zapruder film provided a reasonably precise estimate of the elapsed time between the shot that hit the back of the President's neck and the shot that shattered his skull, fixed by the Report at 4.8 to 5.6 seconds. Tests with Oswald's rifle disclosed that expert marksmen could not fire the bolt-action carbine twice in less than 2.3 seconds, a time, be it noted, which made no allowance for aiming at a moving target through a poorly adjusted scope. (An FBI agent who interviewed Zapruder in December, 1963,

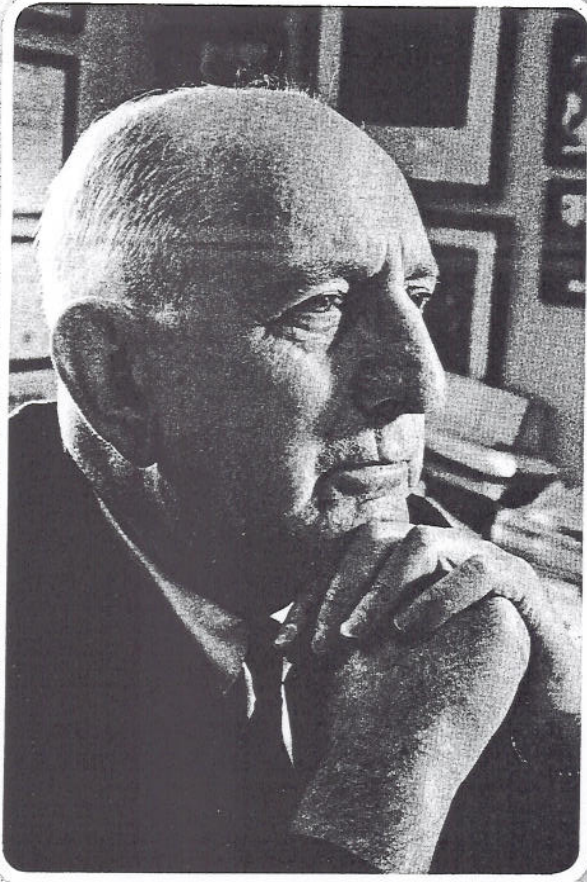
according to a report in the Archives, originally informed Washington the camera had been running at "normal speed . . . or twenty-four frames a second"—which, if true, would mean the assassination occurred within less than four seconds. Oswald could have got off three shots in under six seconds, but it meant that for a middling shot who had little or no practice—the Report's attempt to depict him as a superior marksman is unconvincing—he had to be extraordinarily lucky, a stunning departure from the pattern of an inept, luckless life. Even harder to believe, however, is what the film requires his first bullet to have done, if he alone was firing.

Repeated viewing of the Zapruder film shows that President Kennedy is unmistakably reacting to his first wound at a point designated frame 225. One highly significant feature of the film, however, is Governor Connally's reaction to his wounds, for Connally himself insists he was hit by the assassin's second shot. But if the President was hit by the first shot and the governor by the second, Oswald would not have had enough time to fire the rifle twice.

To make this clear, some detail is required. For several frames before frame 225 a road sign blocks the camera's view, so it cannot be determined when the President first began to react. Except for an instant at frame 186, a large oak tree blocked the view of Elm Street from the sixth-floor window. An assassin there would not have had a clear shot at the President until frame 210. Therefore the President apparently must have been hit between frames 210 and 225. Allowing 2.3 seconds, or forty-two frames, for the assassin to fire a second shot, Connally could not have been hit until frame 252. But Connally steadfastly maintained he was hit by a second bullet at frame 234 (at least nine frames and a half second later than the President). Because a rifle bullet goes faster than sound, and because he heard the sound of the first shot, the governor testified it was "inconceivable" to him that he could have been hit by the first shot. "After I heard that shot, I had time to turn to my right and start to turn to my left before I felt anything." Connally's wife, who had been seated next to him in the limousine, corroborated his testimony. The FBI and the Secret Service, in their reports, also seemed to support Connally's recollection. So did his doctors, who said the governor was no longer in position to receive his wounds after frame 240. The FBI's *Summary Report* of December 9, 1963, which guided the Warren Commission's entire investigation, related the motorcade's progress on Elm Street until "three shots rang out. Two bullets struck President Kennedy, and one wounded Governor Connally." The FBI never officially changed its mind about the governor's being hit separately.

Unless Connally was mistaken and his reaction to the first shot delayed, which was possible, the commission confronted

Continued on page 100



Senator Richard Russell was one of several Commission members who remained unpersuaded re the "single bullet" theory.



## PART THREE

The new explosion of controversial research

By Mark Lane

This spring, I spoke at thirty-five colleges or universities. This is now more than eleven years after the death of John Kennedy, and when one speaks to some who were six or seven years old at the time of the Kennedy assassination, their knowledge of this event is primarily through the history books which say, "John F. Kennedy, the thirty-fifth President of the United States, was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald, on November 22, 1963, in Dallas, Texas." And that's how they learned about the Kennedy assassination. They read the lie in their history books. But evidently they never really believed it because they don't believe it now. At almost every college and university where I've spoken, the largest group in the history of the school has come to hear this lecture. At Purdue University, for example, I called for a vote, as I have at every school, asking those present to indicate whether they think there should be a Congressional investigation into the facts surrounding the death of John Kennedy and a Congressional investigation into the cover-up by the CIA and by the FBI and it was clear that every hand went up for that. I also asked if anyone was opposed and one person said he was opposed; he wanted to explain his vote and he said, "I don't trust Congress." It seems we've gone from acceptance to cynicism without having passed through reality. At Northeastern Louisiana State University, not a giant school, we started out in a good-sized hall, but they sold that out so they moved it to the largest hall, sold that out, so they moved it to the coliseum in Monroe which was just about large enough—it held 4,500 people. People came from four different states. In Arkansas, people came from 150 miles away. It's been this way everywhere. I'm not talking about New York and Boston and San Francisco, but about what is referred to as the "heartland"—Indiana, Arkansas and places like that.

It does not surprise me that when I spoke in Madison, Wisconsin at the university there, we went to the largest theater in town, and when we got there a half hour early, traffic was tied up for five blocks. The Attorney General of the state was there and after I spoke he issued a poll to Congress to conduct an investigation. In fact, he went beyond that and said if it was an investigation in which the FBI or CIA were involved, he would not trust the results. Well, I wasn't really surprised about Madison. That's a college town. But many cities where I spoke are not college towns and in middle America the response there has been even more incredible. People come because they are interested but they're not sure. But by the

time it's over, they're sure.

I have to point out to my audiences that there is no process to get the facts. The U.S. Attorney General's office has the basic obligation. It's clear that we cannot rely upon a presidential commission, for the Warren Commission met behind closed doors and released the information that it wished to release; and the Rockefeller Commission is doing the same thing with the same personnel. David Belin, who is executive director of the general counsel for the Rockefeller Commission, was counsel for the Warren Commission also. He was the person most tenacious of the position that Oswald was the lone assassin. We need a public, open Congressional investigation where we could see the evidence ourselves and not rely upon leaks or press statements by the officials involved. The only way one can make the apparatus of government work in this case is to form committees, to meet with members of Congress, to meet with their representatives in the Senate. And that's happened at more than twenty schools. They set up local citizens' commissions of inquiry; they are circulating petitions; there are articles in newspapers; they are meeting with members of Congress; they are meeting with their senators. Senator Baker appeared recently several times on radio programs in Tennessee and discussed the subject, and the week after that said he received eighty letters from constituents from around Tennessee demanding that the committee look into this question. We've seen the same thing happen to Representative Downey in Virginia. He was at one of my lectures down there some time ago, and he's just out now for a congressional investigation. I'm urging people to become a part of such a process.

Students are really very moved when I tell them that the assassination of John Kennedy is not a spectator sport, that we have to see this as a part of our history. We have not had an election in this country which has been unimpaired by violence since that time. In 1968 Robert Kennedy was making a strong bid and he was killed. Then Wallace was shot. When you get back to it, the last time we had an election when bullets did not play a part and the man was permitted to finish his entire term after he had been elected was in 1956. That's twenty years. We can say on our 200th birthday that that's 10 percent of our life as a country, and it's the last percent. Students, I think, pick that up and are really concerned about it. There are some who are cynical and think it's hopeless, but I try to deal with that. I say this is not the place—we've learned in the last few years that this is not the country that we thought it was, but it certainly can be and it depends on our ability and our commitment. We are at a very delicate stage now in terms of our national consciousness: you can say almost anything that is derogatory about the government and most people will believe it now. This places a great responsibility upon us to be absolutely factual.

## Biographies of Leading Researchers

Robert B. Cutler, a Massachusetts architect, was attracted to the case by a draftsman's instinct that the published trajectory of the bullet was peculiarly nonaligned. In *The Flight of CE 399* (1969) he exposes the Single Bullet Theory; in *Two Flightpaths* (1971) the traverse line is reversed to show from which window of the depository the rifleman first shot the governor. In *Crossfire* (1975), the theory is postulated that the shooting came from a nine-shot fusillade of five rifles.

Donald Freed is co-author, with Mark Lane, of *Executive Action*, novel of the JFK assassination. The authors based their account on interviews in Dallas, New Orleans and the nation's capital. Freed is

Mark Lane—attorney, author of *Rush to Judgment* (a critique of the Warren Report), controversial filmmaker (his picture *Executive Action* starred Burt Lancaster and Robert Ryan in an interpretation of the Dallas shooting), Professor of Law at Catholic University, and Director of the Citizens Commission of Inquiry into the JFK death—is the dean of the assassinologists currently reassessing the Kennedy evidence particle by minute particle. His special impact has been on college campuses. Without exception, his appearances at thirty-five college campuses and universities have resulted in unprecedented traffic jams and overflowing halls, and his student audiences have been spellbound by the implications of his research. Photo taken at University of Minnesota.



Robert Cutler:  
Architect

Donald Freed:  
Theatrical Director



presently involved in gaining support for a reopening of the case, especially in California, where already nearly half a million signatures have been gathered. Like other publicists, he has been gratified by the number of interested legislators.

Robert Groden, a twenty-nine-year-old New York City photo-optics expert, has been studying the Zapruder film of the assassination for nine years. The frame-by-frame enlargements of this film and others provide the most technically advanced analyses available and provide strong evidence of crossfire in the JFK assassination. Groden testified before the Rockefeller Commission and Church Committee inquiries into the role of the CIA in the JFK murder and has shown his film work to more than 100 congressmen. In addition, Groden has appeared on nationwide as well as local radio and television

to discuss the JFK case.

Paul L. Hoch, a painstaking researcher, who, along with Peter Dale Scott, another faculty member at the University of California, Berkeley, has devoted much study to the assassination, is currently writing a book which not only checks out the evidence the Warren Commission failed to investigate properly, but also shows an understanding of the workings of the Commission as reflected by their internal papers. The work will also focus on the role of the FBI in the investigation and its connections with Oswald.

Mark Lane, attorney, author, controversial filmmaker, Professor of Law at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., is currently serving as director of the Citizens Commission of Inquiry, a group dedicated to the release of all classified documents

relating to the death of John F. Kennedy. He is a touring lecturer whose main theme is "Who Killed JFK?" He published *Rush to Judgment*, a critique of the Warren Report, in 1966, and directed a documentary film of the same name. He also co-directed *Executive Action*, an interpretational account of the shooting in Dallas, which starred Burt Lancaster and Robert Ryan.

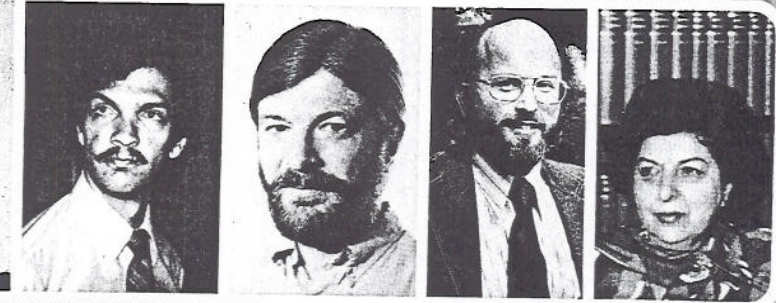
David S. Lifton was co-author of the 30,000-word "The Case for Three Assassins" in the January, 1967 issue of *Ramparts* magazine. The article deals at length with the shots, trajectories and wounds and for the first time gives a detailed public airing of the problems relating to the motion of the President's head during the shooting. With the background of his researches into the National Archives, he has posed as a devil's advocate for two semesters in a UCLA law class which discussed the findings and deliberations of the Commission.

Sylvia Meagher, author of the much-acclaimed *Accessories After the Fact: The Warren Commission, the Authorities and the Report*, now out of print, as is her *Subject Index to the Warren Report and the Hearings and Exhibits*, has written numerous articles on the assassination for such magazines as *Esquire*, *Commonweal* and the *Texas Observer*. In her long study of the Warren Report and the testimony she became convinced that Oswald had no motive, no means and no opportunity to shoot the President.

Jerry Policoff first became interested in the JFK assassination in 1966 and has devoted much of his spare time to research the event since, notably the role of the media, with special emphasis on the coverage in the *New York Times*. In articles in leading magazines he has dwelt on the distortion and omission of facts, on the uncritical acceptance of "official" versions of the assassination in the media. He is presently writing an article on David W. Belin, Executive Director of the Rockefeller Commission and counsel to the Warren Commission.

Richard H. Popkin was chairman of the Department of Philosophy at the University of California, San Diego, and editor of the *Journal of the History of Philosophy* at the time of the assassination and became interested in the tragedy because of the discrepancies in the original reports. As a result he compiled his findings and views in *The Second Oswald*, published in 1966. Active in the Committee to Investigate Assassinations, he is presently Professor of Philosophy and Jewish Studies at Washington University in St. Louis.

L. Fletcher Prouty, a retired USAF colonel, who for many years had been associated with security arrangements for VIPs, was appalled by the lack of security mea-



Robert Groden:  
Optical technician

Paul Hoch:  
Physics Professor

David S. Lifton:  
Engineer

Sylvia Meagher:  
Health Organization  
Official



tures for the Kennedy motorcade in Dallas. An early member of the Committee to Investigate Assassinations, Prouty has lectured and written on his research. His book, *The Secret Team* (1973), discusses the role of the CIA and government and touches on the JFK killing. One of his many questions asks why the 112 Army Intelligence Unit was told not to guard the motorcade.

Howard Roffman graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1974 and is now attending law school at the Holland Law Center in Gainesville, Florida. His interest in the assassination began when he was fourteen years old. He became convinced that the conclusions of the Warren Commission were inadequate and journeyed to the National Archives to study the files, the youngest researcher ever to see them. His highly regarded *Presumed Guilty*, a scholarly treatment of the controversy, has just recently been published.

Vincent J. Salandria, a Philadelphia labor lawyer and one of the earliest researchers into the assassination, published his first article, "The Warren Commission—Analysis of Shots, Trajectories and Wounds—a Lawyer's Dissenting View," in the November 2, 1964 issue of *The Philadelphia Legal Intelligencer*. Later articles buttressed his theories of a conspiracy. In a December 1971 and January 1972 article for *Computers and Automation*, he postulates that the CIA was responsible for the planning of the assassination.

Ralph Schoenman, who organized the "Who Killed Kennedy? Committee" in London in late 1963, has been actively engaged in research and publicity regarding the assassination. Involved in gathering evidence for the Clay Shaw trial in New Orleans, Schoenman is presently working on gathering evidence with entertainer Dick Gregory to submit to the Rockefeller Commission for a reopening of the case. He is writing a book on evidence for conspiracy involving governmental agencies in the murder of the President.

Gary R. Schoener began researching the JFK assassination in 1964, working in the National Archives and interviewing witnesses. He has made over 300 radio, TV and lecture appearances on the subject. Besides the articles he published in 1967, he co-authored "The Watchman Waketh But in Vain," which was serialized through most of 1968 in *The Midlothian Mirror*, a newspaper then edited by Penn Jones, himself a key researcher who has delved into such oddities as the number of material witnesses to the shooting who have died strangely.

Richard E. Sprague, a recognized authority in the field of computers, has published over thirty articles in *Computers and Automation* (now *Computers and People*)

magazine, including a detailed analysis of the biases in media coverage. A co-founder of the Committee to Investigate Assassinations, he was one of the early researchers and lecturers on the photographic evidence in the assassination and has recently been devoting his efforts to obtain congressional action in reopening the case.

Josiah Thompson, a member of the philosophy department at Haverford College, Pennsylvania, published *Six Seconds in Dallas* in 1967 (excerpted in *The Saturday Evening Post*, January 14, 1967). Thompson sought to bring a positive approach to the inconsistencies of the Warren Report. If it was wrong, what was the probable way the killing actually happened? With the renewed interest in reopening the case, he has recently testified before Congressmen to aid the passage of the Gonzalez and Dowling resolutions.

Cyril H. Wecht, M.D., doctor, lawyer, author, is coroner of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and an active member of a group of leading pathologists who are seeking to reopen the John F. Kennedy case. He has published detailed forensic analyses: "Pathologist's View of JFK Autopsy: An Unsolved Case" (1972), "The Medical Evidence in the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy" (1974), "JFK Assassination: A Prolonged and Willful Coverup" (1974). He is presently researching the latest available evidence.

Harold Weisberg, a leading researcher into the unsolved inconsistencies of the assassination, has spent years researching and publishing documents that had until then remained "Top Secret." With James Lesar, junior counsel for James Earl Ray, he has taken the government to court for the release of this information. In his recent book, *Whitewash IV*, he provides an annotated transcript of the proceedings of the Warren Commission for January 27, 1964—which it took six years for him to wrest from Washington.

David R. Wrone, a historian at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, became interested in the assassination ten years ago because of its similarities to other events in American history. He wrote *The Assassination of John F. Kennedy, An Annotated Bibliography*. Wrone supports the conspiracy theory and is working on an article detailing the consequences of the failure of the Warren Commission. He is also writing a history of the Freedom of Information lawsuits.

### ***A Bibliography for JFK Buffs***

During the twelve years since November 22, 1963, dozens of books have appeared. The following is a compilation of some of the major works by serious students of the assassination:

### **FROM THE OFFICIAL RECORDS:**

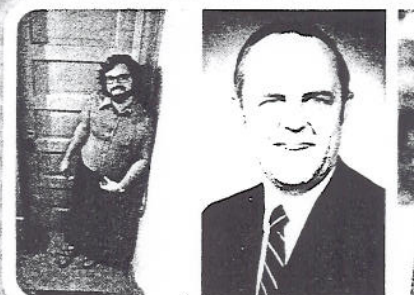
*Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1964). More commonly known as the *Warren Report*, this 888-page book presents the official conclusions of the Warren Commission, i.e., Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin of President Kennedy, and no conspiracy was involved in the murders of either Kennedy or Oswald. The *Report* was reprinted by several commercial publishers in both hardcover and paperback editions, and millions of copies of the book have been distributed. It is available in almost all public libraries.

*Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1964). Shortly



Jerry Policoff:  
Publisher's Salesman

Richard H. Popkin:  
Philosophy Professor



Gary Schoener:  
Psychology Counselor

Richard E. Sprague:  
Computer Systems  
Specialist



after it published the *Warren Report*, the government released these twenty-six volumes of testimony and evidence collected by the Warren Commission. Eight thousand sets of the *Hearings* were printed and sold to interested researchers for \$76 each. Now long out of print, the *Hearings* are the basic source material for all students, researchers and critics of the Warren Commission. Occasionally a set of the twenty-six volumes becomes available in the used-book market. With the recent renewal of public interest in the case, demand has driven the going price to several hundred dollars. The public libraries of some large cities, and the libraries of most major colleges and universities have a set of the *Hearings* in their reference collections.

*The National Archives and Records Service, General Services Administration, Washington, D.C. Approximately 25,000*

pages of the Warren Commission files were excluded from the published twenty-six volumes of the *Hearings*. These were turned over to the National Archives by the Warren Commission when the Commission dissolved itself in 1964. Initial comments by Archives officials indicated that this unpublished material would be held secret for seventy-five years, i.e., until the year 2039. But in response to public outcry and the suits of individual researchers under the Freedom of Information Act, much of the unpublished material has become available during the past eleven years; and virtually all of the recently published studies of the assassination have drawn upon it to some extent.

The declassified, but unpublished, Warren Commission materials are available to any serious researcher. Mr. Marion M. Johnson of The National Archives is custodian of the documents, although he

does not have the authority to release any of the still classified items. Within the constraints placed on them by the Department of Justice and the Central Intelligence Agency—which control the classified materials—Mr. Johnson and his associates provide the individual researcher who writes to or visits the National Archives with friendly and cooperative service. They have published a twenty-eight-page *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy*, and a 185-page *Index of Basic Source Materials*. These publications are available from The National Archives.

BOOKS OF CLASSIC DISSENT:

*Rush to Judgment* by Mark Lane (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1966). Lane's dissent from the official explanations of the assassination began early. Within a month of the Dallas shootings, he published an article raising serious questions with the Dallas Police Department's case that Oswald was the assassin. *Rush to Judgment* was the first book to focus wide public attention on the defects in the Warren Commission's findings.

*Accessories After the Fact* by Sylvia Meagher (Bobbs-Merrill, 1967). Although it is virtually unknown to the general public, Meagher's book is familiar to all serious researchers, and is widely held to be the single most meticulous, thorough and balanced criticism of the Warren Commission. Meagher, an executive with the World Health Organization, spent years in indexing and analyzing *The Warren Report*, the twenty-six volumes of the *Hearings*, and all other available documents. For the reader with time for only one book, *Accessories After the Fact* offers a comprehensive analysis of the official theory.

*Inquest* by Edward Jay Epstein (Viking, 1966). Epstein wrote his book as a master's thesis in government at Cornell University. His goal was to study the functioning of a government organization in an extraordinary situation, in which there are no rules or precedents to guide it. Epstein interviewed several members of the Warren Commission and its staff, and was granted access to the personal files of one former staff member. *Inquest* presents a startling and disquieting view of the inner workings of the Warren Commission.

*Six Seconds in Dallas* by Josiah Thompson (Bernard Geis, 1967). Controversy regarding the ballistic, photographic and medical evidence, and its use in reconstructing those final tragic seconds of the presidential motorcade, has formed the basis of almost every critical study of *The Warren Report*. *Six Seconds in Dallas* is a lucid and readable presentation of that evidence, plus the author's own analysis and interpretation of it.

*The Second Oswald* by Richard Popkin (Avon, 1966). Popkin presents an interesting and persuasive case that someone im-

*Continued on page 110*



L. Fletcher Prouty:  
USAF Colonel, Ret.



Howard Roffman:  
Law Student



Vincent J. Salandria:  
Attorney



Paul Schoenman:  
Research Foundation  
Director



Josiah Thompson:  
Philosophy Professor



Cyril H. Wecht, M.D.  
County Coroner



Harold Weisberg:  
Retired Senate  
Investigator



David R. Wrone:  
History Professor



## The J.F.K. Assassination

continued from page 49

two alternatives. Either Oswald and his imperfect weapon had somehow performed an "impossible" feat of rapid firing, or else a second rifleman had been firing almost simultaneously. Not surprisingly, the commission rejected both possibilities. Instead, it found that Connally had been mistaken, and that one shot "probably" hit both Kennedy and Connally.

The chief advocate within the commission of this single-bullet possibility was Assistant Counsel Arlen Specter, then a thirty-three-year-old former assistant district attorney and now district attorney in Philadelphia. Impressed with the tight, scientifically based framework which the Zapruder film imposed on any explanation, and faced with the official autopsy finding that a bullet had exited from the President's lower throat, Specter reasoned that, unless the bullet mysteriously turned in flight and flew out of the car, it had to strike something or somebody within the car. In the car, there were only two minor nicks, on the inside of the windshield up near the rearview mirror. The FBI concluded they were from fragments. In the course of informal discussion with Commander (now Captain) James J. Humes, the chief autopsy doctor, Specter gained reassurance about the theoretical possibility of the single bullet striking both victims, and that laid the groundwork for suggesting this was what, in fact, had occurred.

During the testimony of Commander Humes, Commissioner Allen W. Dulles confessed his confusion as to the path and whereabouts of the bullet found on the stretcher in Parkland Hospital. He was under the impression the bullet had come from the President's stretcher. Specter politely interrupted, saying, "... We shall produce... evidence that the stretcher on which this bullet was found was the stretcher of Governor Connally." Dulles then asked whether the bullet was still missing. Specter replied, "... That is an elusive subject, but Doctor Humes has some views on it, and we might just as well go into those now."

With an enlarged frame from the Zapruder film before him, Humes said, "I see that Governor Connally is sitting directly in front of the late President, and suggest the possibility that this missile, having traversed the low neck of the late President, in fact traversed the chest of Governor Connally." The missile had struck no bone in passing through the President's neck, he said, and therefore lost very little velocity.

In an effort to strengthen his theory, Specter prevailed on the commission to engage in a series of tests with Oswald's rifle to show that one bullet could penetrate two bodies. The tests had a doubtful scientific basis and produced equally

doubtful results. Army wound-ballistics experts fired bullets into various animal and mineral substances—in one case, an anesthetized goat, intended to simulate Governor Connally's chest—and carefully calculated bullet velocities. However, no bullets were fired through two substances, which, of course, was the only remotely relevant test.

Similarly, the authority cited for the Report's statement that a single bullet "probably" struck both men was FBI ballistics expert Robert A. Frazier, who actually testified: "I would certainly say it is possible but I don't say it probably occurred because I don't have the evidence on which to base a statement like that."

Again, the single-bullet theory was almost buried under the testimony of medical experts, who found more fragments in the governor's wrist and thigh than were missing from the bullet. The all-important missile—Commission Exhibit 399—was almost intact and unmutated, and yet it was claimed to have torn flesh, smashed a rib and shattered a wrist on its course through

two bodies. However plausible the single-bullet theory, the implausible condition of the actual bullet was unsettling. Even Humes, on studying reports of X rays of metallic fragments in the governor's thigh, declared, "I can't conceive of where they came from this missile."

In addition, despite Specter's confident assertion to Dulles about where the bullet was found, testimony from Parkland Hospital employees failed to develop evidence showing that the bullet found there had come from Connally's stretcher. But neither did it rule out that possibility, and so the single-bullet theory clung to life.

The arguing within the commission over the single-bullet theory continued until the Report was in its final drafts. Senator Russell, Senator John Sherman Cooper and Congressman Hale Boggs remained unpersuaded, and were at most willing to call the evidence "credible." Dulles, John J. McCloy, and (then Congressman) Gerald R. Ford believed the theory offered the most reasonable explanation; Ford, for one, wanted

to describe the evidence as "compelling." The views of the Chief Justice are unknown. Specter, Norman Redlich and other members of the commission staff unsuccessfully opposed the attempt to straddle this crucial question. They realized only too well, being closer to the evidence and the dilemma it posed, that it was indeed essential for the commission to find that a single bullet had struck both victims if the single-assassin conclusion was to be convincing. Finally McCloy suggested a compromise—"very persuasive"—and this fundamental difference of opinion was fuzged up in the final language of the Report:

*Although it is not necessary to any essential findings of the Commission to determine just which shot hit Governor Connally, there is very persuasive evidence from the experts to indicate that the same bullet which pierced the President's throat also caused Governor Connally's wounds. However, Governor Connally's testimony and certain other factors have given rise to some difference of opinion as to this probability...*

The shaky evidence beneath the commission's findings goes deeper than the hedged and flatly contradictory expert testimony on the single-bullet theory. The very foundation of the commission's account is built on disputed ground—the autopsy performed on the President, the actual number and location of his wounds.

Although the Report claims "no limitations have been placed on the Commission's inquiry," the commissioners actually accepted very significant limitations on their access to the fundamental evidence in their inquiry. They did not see the X rays and photographs taken before the autopsy performed on the late President on the night of the assassination.

It is now known that the late Robert F. Kennedy—Attorney General at the time of the Warren Commission's investigation—firmly drew a line of propriety between the investigators and this vital evidence. The Kennedy family rightly controlled the highly sensitive autopsy material, but the commission wrongly declined to insist on examining it. If the commission had made a timely and discreet examination, it could have established beyond a reasonable doubt the precise location of the President's first wound. Instead, at this scandalously late date, the President's body remains the object of obscene speculation, and the country suffers needless, disruptive controversy. As matters stand, no single element of the commission's version of the assassination is more



### The Perfect Squelch

When the cross-country bus halted at a New Mexico restaurant, the passengers were pleasantly surprised to be greeted by a shapely hostess of obvious Indian extraction. One noisy young man, however, was too much carried away. Throughout lunch he voiced such witticisms as, "Me great white scout, you pretty Indian maiden, someday we make whoopee?"

The young lady bore this ordeal with the stoic calm of a true Indian. In a last effort to break her silence, the noisy one said, "Come on, Pocahontas, favor me with a phrase or two of your quaint native dialect."

At that, the girl looked straight at him and said, "Ugh!"

Charles A. Peters



plays a large part in motor racing," he explains. "The excruciating conditions of competitive driving can't be duplicated on a factory proving ground. It's a question of motivation. Therefore motor racing becomes engineering's real testing laboratory. Competition naturally forces technical advances—which years later show up in your ordinary road car."

Laymen constantly ask him how to improve their day-to-day driving performance. The summary of his advice is characteristic: "anticipation, concentration—and toleration." To help get the message abroad he has launched a British television series on driving safety called "Advanced Driving With Graham Hill."

Because family life is necessarily limited by Hill's racing schedule, it is the more cherished. He and Bette, who attends as many races as she can (and is frequently mistaken for Elizabeth Taylor), work at furnishing as normal as possible a childhood for their three youngsters—she gets to fewer and fewer races and Graham's big extravagance is coming home between close-scheduled events, even if it means a 9,000-mile round trip. He will fly thousands of miles to an injured driver's bedside or drop out of a race if he can be of some crucial service to a colleague in trouble. He is a stickler for what's proper when it's important.

But, again, it comes around to his enjoyment of people. "His magnetism," according to his friend Pat Franzese of the Glen Motor Inn, New York, "is that unlike most other celebrities, when he asks 'How are you?' he listens for your answer. He only comes in here once or twice a year, but he calls you by name, just casually, like you were part of his life. There'll never be another like him."

Today auto racing is second only to horse racing as the United States' most popular spectator sport and, as president of the Grand Prix Drivers' Association, Hill conducts a driver meeting before every race, going over rules, ethics, safety regulations and negotiations with the local race organizers. He now owns his own racing team and drives for it. In a recent accident, he stuffed his car straight into a sand bank, corrugating the snout way

back to the windshield. Drivers who pulled him out were concerned about his vulnerable legs. "I did myself no damage," he said. Looking ruefully at his car, he added, "But I've shortened the car a bit."

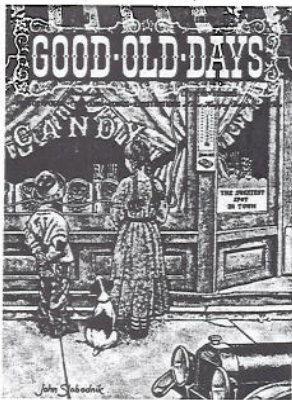
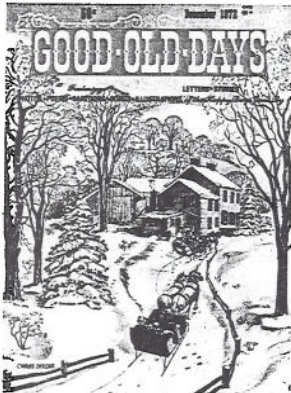
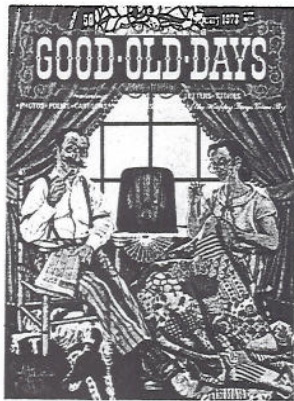
His myriad friends are constantly

urging him to quit Grand Prix driving while he's ahead.

"Oh, I can't do that," he says. "What is there left to win?" they ask.

His eyes twinkle. "Well, I've never won the British, you know." Then

he turns serious for a brief moment. "I love racing," he says, "and as long as I enjoy it I shall continue to do it. But it occurs to me more that I might never stop enjoying it, so I shall have to think of another reason." ❧



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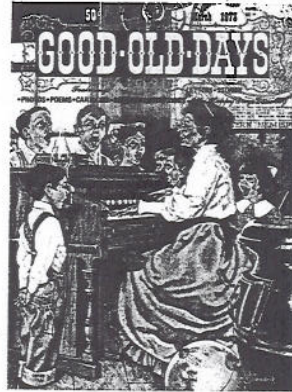
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- My 5¢ nickel
- The Old Huckster Wagon
- Dry goods store — 1910 style
- Horse Hitching Posts
- Days of the Woodshed
- Bloomer girl
- Superstitions 60 years ago
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- They danced for 20 days
- Halloween Memories
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- Grandma what's a coalbin?
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suspect than the official account of the President's autopsy.

Jacqueline Kennedy, though visibly in shock, was nonetheless determined not to leave Dallas without her husband's body. Nor would President Johnson return to Washington without her. Consequently, in order to spare the widow the ordeal of several hours' delay, and to fulfill the new President's wish, presidential aides and Secret Service men literally seized the body from local officials at Parkland Hospital, who were demanding that an autopsy be performed in accordance with Texas law. If the law had been observed, there might have been no controversy, and the Bethesda doctors, the FBI and the Secret Service would have escaped the heavy responsibility they now bear. Sadly and ironically, the report of the autopsy performed on the murdered Oswald in Dallas is a model of clarity and precision alongside the sloppy, ambiguous and incomplete record of the autopsy President Kennedy received.

Informed of the necessity of a postmortem examination during the grim homeward flight of *Air Force One*, Mrs. Kennedy chose the National Naval Medical Center, in Bethesda, Maryland, because her husband had been a Navy man. The Attorney General met her at Andrews Air Force Base, and together they entered the rear of the ambulance carrying the President's body. On arrival at the Medical Center, they left the ambulance at the main entrance and went to wait with aides, Cabinet members and Secret Service men in a suite on the seventeenth floor. The casket containing the President's body was carried through a rear entrance of the Bethesda hospital into an examining room. Two FBI agents, James W. Sibert and Francis X. O'Neill, Jr., instructed "to stay with the body and to obtain bullets reportedly in the President's body," noted as the body was unwrapped that "a tracheotomy had been performed," a significant observation in the light of later developments.

Before the autopsy, a medical technician and a photographer took X rays and photographs of the President's entire body, which, as Sibert and O'Neill noted, "were turned over

to Mr. Roy Kellerman of the Secret Service." The eleven X rays were developed by the hospital, but the photographs—twenty-two four-by-five color transparencies, eighteen four-by-five black-and-white negatives and one roll of 120 film con-

taining five exposures—were delivered to the Secret Service undeveloped. Kellerman told the agents these pictures "could be made available to the FBI upon request," an offer repeated by the Secret Service three days later, when the material

was reported to be in the custody of Robert Bouck of the Protective Research Section.

The autopsy was performed by Commander Humes, the hospital's chief pathologist, assisted by Commander J. Thornton Boswell, of the



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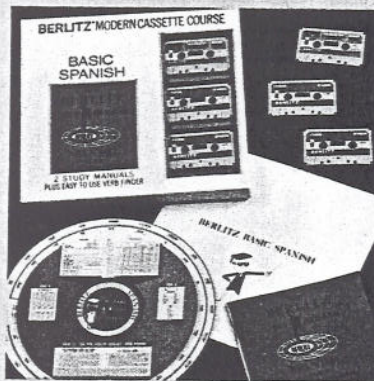


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Bethesda staff, and Lieutenant Colonel Pierre A. Finck, chief of the wound-ballistics branch of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology. The first incision was made at 8:15 p.m., and the autopsy proceeded for almost three hours. "During the latter stages of this autopsy," according to Sibert and O'Neill, "Dr. Humes located an opening which appeared to be a bullet hole, which was below the shoulders and two inches to the right of the middle line of the spinal column. This opening was probed by Dr. Humes with the finger, at which time it was determined that the trajectory of the missile entering at this point had entered at a downward position of forty-five to sixty degrees. Further probing determined that the distance traveled by this missile was a short distance, inasmuch as the end of the opening could be felt with the finger. Inasmuch as no complete bullet of any size could be located in the brain area, and likewise no bullet could be located in the back or any other area of the body as determined by total body X rays and inspection revealing there was no point of exit, the individuals performing the autopsy were at a loss to explain why they could find no bullets."

With uncertainty prevailing, one of the agents left the room and telephoned the FBI laboratory, which informed him that the Secret Service had turned over a whole bullet found on a stretcher, possibly the Presi-

dent's, in Parkland Hospital. This information was given to Dr. Humes, who, according to the agents, "advised that in his opinion that accounted for no bullet being located which had entered the back region and that since external cardiac massage had been performed at Parkland Hospital, it was entirely possible that through such movement the bullet had worked its way back out of the point of entry and had fallen on the stretcher."

Beyond the opinion attributed without qualification to Dr. Humes, it is noteworthy that he appeared well informed on the emergency measures used at Parkland: The tracheotomy incision was visible when the body was unwrapped, and the doctor knew—from an unspecified source—that external cardiac massage had been performed. A Secret Service man brought a piece of skull into the autopsy room. Under X ray it showed minute metal particles and chipping, indicating this had been the point of exit for the bullet which entered the President's skull. The FBI account continues: "On the basis of the latter two developments, Dr. Humes stated the pattern was clear"—again note the unequivocal language of the report—"that the one bullet had entered the President's back and had worked its way out of the body during external cardiac massage, and that a second high-velocity bullet had entered the rear of the skull and had fragmented

prior to exit through the top of the skull."

Three Secret Service agents—Kellerman, William Greer and William O'Leary—observed the autopsy. Kellerman and Greer had not left the President's side in life and in death throughout the long day. Kellerman later recalled seeing a wound "the size of a little finger" just below the large muscle between the President's right shoulder and neck. He testified about a brief conversation with one of the doctors: "... a Colonel Finck... we were standing right alongside of him, he is probing inside the shoulder with his instrument, and I said, 'Colonel, where did it go?' He said, 'There are no lanes for an outlet of this entry in this man's shoulder.'... I said, 'Colonel, would it have been possible that while he was on the stretcher in Dallas it worked itself out?' And he said, 'Yes.'"

When the autopsy was completed, Kellerman called Secret Service agent Clinton J. Hill for a final view of the President's body. Hill testified that he saw "an opening in the back, about six inches below the neckline to the right-hand side of the spinal column." (The FBI laboratory, subsequently inspecting the President's jacket and shirt, placed the bullet holes "approximately six inches below the top of the collar and two inches to the right of the middle seam...") When asked why he had summoned Hill, Kellerman

explained, "More witnesses."

Yet the extra witnesses, when the Report was finally published, would supply testimony about a wound for which the commission had no bullet. In other words, the official version indicated a bullet had entered through the base of the neck, exiting at the throat, and it could not account for a bullet wound lower down the back. It is no wonder that a weird conflict arose over what had been seen in the examining room at Bethesda. It is even more curious that the commission did not call some of the dozen or more persons who were present, including a few with special professional competence: the President's personal physician, the Surgeon General of the Navy, the commanding officer of the Medical Center, the commanding officer of the U.S. Navy Medical School, and the Bethesda Hospital's Chief of Surgery. But before Sibert and O'Neill had even filed their report (dated November 26), the autopsy doctors conferred, on Saturday, November 23, and entirely reversed the findings described in the FBI agents' account of the back wound.

This reversal of the Bethesda autopsy was later attributed to the situation in Dallas. When the President was wheeled into the trauma room at Parkland, he was lying on his back. Dr. Malcolm Perry, who testified he had treated perhaps 150 to 200 gun-

Continued on page 107

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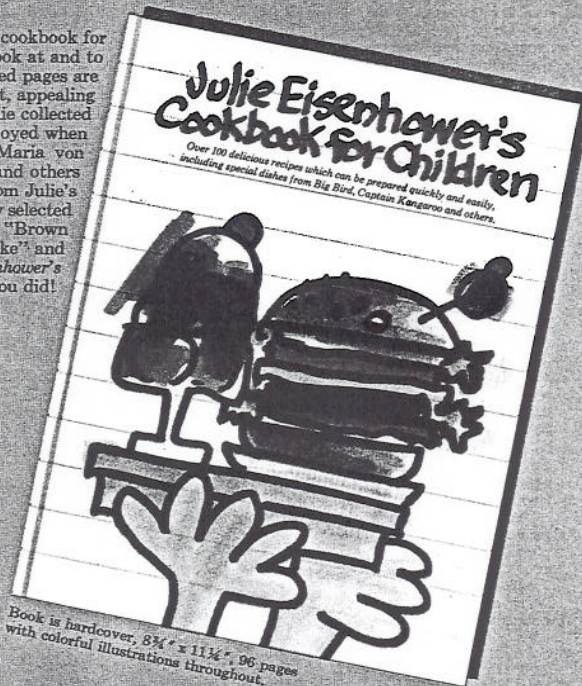
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shot wounds, noted at a glance a small hole in the President's throat which appeared to be a bullet entrance wound. Within a few minutes he obliterated the wound by making a tracheotomy incision through it. The attention of the doctors was absorbed by the massive head wound, and they worked frantically over their patient until he was obviously dead. The President was never turned over. ("No one had the heart," a doctor recalled.) The Parkland doctors thus were unaware of the wound that was later identified at Bethesda.

Early on Saturday morning Commander Humes telephoned Dr. Perry. Humes learned of the bullet wound where the tracheotomy had been performed. He also learned that the wound appeared to be one of entry, which upset the "pattern" of the previous night's autopsy.

The world press was quoting the Parkland doctors, including Dr. Perry, as saying the President had been shot from in front. Combined with eyewitness accounts saying the shots had come from the grassy knoll or the triple underpass, this seemed strong evidence of a second assassin—and only one, Oswald, had been caught.

After talking with Dr. Perry and his colleagues, Drs. Finck and Boswell, Dr. Humes prepared a handwritten draft of the autopsy report, one in which he now had to account for another bullet wound. His substantial editing of the draft reflects the atmosphere of high uncertainty in which he wrote. In describing the critical wound in the back, he originally wrote, "The second wound of entry. . . ." Then he inserted above the word "entry" the qualifying word "presumably," and repeated the amendment throughout the draft.

More important, Dr. Humes decided the bullet entering from the rear had not penetrated a finger length, but had passed through the President's neck, exiting below his Adam's apple, at the point of the tracheotomy incision. He fixed the point of entry at the base of the back of the neck, above the point of exit, thus tracing a downward course consistent with a shot fired from the Book Depository. He connected the wounds of entry and exit by reference to contusions on the strap muscles in the neck and the extreme upper lobe of the right lung, which, he testified, were photographed.

The Warren Report is very definite about this bullet's path being discovered during the autopsy. Humes, however, testified: "The report which we have submitted . . . represents our thinking within twenty-four to forty-eight hours of the death of the President, all facts taken into account of the situation." How had Sibert, O'Neill and Kellerman missed the discovery of the bullet's path? And why hadn't the doctors called it to the attention of their lay

observers? The explanation may be that the path was not "discovered" until the following day, twelve hours or more after the formal autopsy, but not long after the doctors were confronted with another wound to explain. We may never know because a first draft of the autopsy report—its contents undisclosed—was destroyed.

Another of the Bethesda doctors, Boswell, had a curious idea of what was important in the autopsy of a President. On a chart showing a figure of a man used to symbolize the President, Commander Boswell, while in the autopsy room, placed a dot representing the back wound and well below the right shoulder. His handwritten notes on the margin of the chart place the wound in the position set forth in the autopsy report: fourteen centimeters, or five and one-half inches, from the right acromion process (the top of the right shoulder joint), and fourteen centimeters below the tip of the right mastoid process, the bony point behind the ear. What draws the eye, however, is the oddly errant dot. Dr. Boswell, now retired from the Navy and in private practice in Maryland, recently explained, "This was unfortunate. If I had known at the time that this sketch would become public record, I would have been more careful. It was strictly a worksheet, the same as rough working notes. . . . The photographs were to provide the exact description."

The autopsy X rays and photographs, it will be recalled, left Bethesda in Kellerman's custody, and they were taken to the White House early on the morning of November 23. Thereafter they vanished. The following March, when the three autopsy doctors testified, the pictures were "not available"; instead, the doctors used "schematic drawings," which placed the disputed wound at the base of the neck. According to a high FBI official, the autopsy pictures were sequestered by the written order of Attorney General Kennedy, directing the Secret Service not to release any information or material pertaining to the autopsy without his permission—leaving the public record incomplete. At the eighteenth annual meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences in March, 1966, panelists discussed the lack of autopsy information in the Report. Said a forensic pathologist: "By standards found in most good medicolegal investigative facilities . . . certain essentials are missing." Missing was any mention of findings pertaining to several organs, including the adrenals. If there was any truth in the rumor that the President suffered from Addison's disease, the autopsy report kept it within the family.

Arlen Specter had begged and pleaded for the commission to examine the autopsy photographs. Specter, who assumed sole responsibility for the chapter of the Report setting

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forth the basic facts of the assassination, recognized the importance of this photographic evidence, particularly in view of the conflicting eyewitness testimony and the troubling discrepancy between the FBI and official autopsy reports. His plea was made to General Counsel J. Lee Rankin, the intermediary between the commissioners and the staff, who at length informed Specter that the commission had decided not to "press" for the photographs. At once very junior and ambitious, Specter could not press the eminent lawyers on the commission too hard. But he reentered his plea, and when he was again refused, he was reportedly on the verge of tears. "I believe that Robert Kennedy had the final authority over the pictures," Specter now says, "and the Chief Justice was truly solicitous of the family's feelings."

More of the missing X rays and photographs came to light in October 1966, but too late to undo the effects of their suppression. The Department of Justice ended the mystery by disclosing that the material had been given to the Archives by the Kennedy family, under tight controls that would continue throughout the lifetimes of the late President's immediate family. Federal law-enforcement officials may see the material at once; scholars and independent researchers will require family approval for at least five years. What was not disclosed was where the pictures had been. According to an official of the Treasury Department, the Secret Service did not turn over the autopsy material to the family until April 26, 1965. Hence, at the time when the pictures might have proved enormously useful, they were still in government hands, and therefore within the reach of the Warren Commission if it had pressed the matter urgently.

In August 1972 the government permitted the autopsy photographs and X rays to be inspected by an independent specialist, Dr. Cyril Wecht, Dr. Wecht is the coroner of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania (including Pittsburgh), director of Duquesne University's Institute of Forensic Sciences, past president of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and the American College of Legal Medicine, and is widely regarded as one of the country's leading pathologists. In collaboration with another private researcher, Robert Smith, Wecht presented the results of his inspection of the autopsy materials in the September 1973 *Forensic Science Gazette* as follows:

The Warren Commission's "single-bullet theory" is untenable and the Commission's conclusion that there was only one assassin cannot be reconciled with available evidence. Medical and photographic data, including measurement of wound angles and calculations of bullet trajectories, strongly suggest that there were two rifles used. The

indicated locations are in the same building concluded by the Warren Commission to be the site of a lone assassin, but at points farther west in this building and on two different floors.

Wecht did not succeed in gaining access to all of the autopsy materials preserved by the Bethesda surgeons, because some of these items are simply missing. According to Admiral George Burkley, all materials were turned over to the National Archives; according to the National Archives, some items were never received. To many observers, this discrepancy is even more disturbing than the dissenting professional opinion of Dr. Wecht.

The mysteries left unresolved in the Warren Report are chiefly the result of the failure to ask obvious questions during the investigation. The single-bullet theory was left in limbo, never completely accepted or rejected, because the commission declined to confront the disturbing possibility that the strong case against Oswald might not be the only explanation. The critics who allege a cover-up of the "true facts" by the Warren Commission can as easily argue their case on the basis of the appearance of concealment as they can on the ground of actual conspiracy. The commission, all too often, permitted such an appearance to exist unnecessarily. The autopsy documentation—or the lack of it—can be used to raise suspicions of a gigantic cover-up.

The evidence against Oswald remains as "hard" as it was when Ruby's bullet killed him. Every piece of "soft" evidence tends to support the possibility of a second assassin. Why not, then, face in that direction and weigh every shred of evidence, old or new? The appropriate forum for such an airing of dissenting views might be a special joint committee of Congress, or perhaps a "citizens' panel" of independent investigators, with unlimited access to official records, to be appointed by the President without concern over how long it sat and when it issued a report.

The alternative is to remain imprisoned by the Warren Report which was an interim account intended to meet an immediate need. The enduring need is not only for the truth but for a determination of the truth in a manner that commands the respect of reasonable men. The cruel loss America suffered on November 22, 1963 has been shamefully compounded ever since by the timidity of official fact-finding and the excesses of irrational conspiracy-mongering. To John F. Kennedy the sanity of the nation was as precious as its honor. The nation's honor will not be entirely secure until reason addresses the many unanswered questions of the assassination. Z

The illusion that times that were are better than those that are, has probably pervaded all ages.

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## J.F.K. Bibliography

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personating Lee Harvey Oswald during the weeks prior to the assassination deliberately created a trail of evidence to link Oswald to the crime.

*Whitewash I, II, III, IV* by Harold Weisberg (published by and available from the author, Route 8, Frederick, Maryland 21701). One of the most dogged and tireless of the assassination researchers, Weisberg has waged a ten-year battle with the federal government for release of the unpublished documents of the Warren Commission. A fiercely individualistic man with a quirky and often difficult style of writing, he has found it necessary to print privately much of his own work. Unfortunately, his self-published books are largely ignored by reviewers, the news media, and some students of the assassination. Nonetheless, the four *Whitewash* volumes contain some of the most valuable source materials and painstaking analysis of the documentary evidence in the case.

### Defenders of The Warren Report:

*November 22, 1963: You Are the Jury* by David W. Belin (Quadrangle, 1973). The author is a former member of the Warren Commission's staff who has assumed the role of militant apologist for *The Warren Report*. *You Are the Jury* reaffirms the Report's conclusions, quoting at length from the Report and selected portions of the published testimony. Regarding his book, Belin recently wrote: "Unfortunately the Warren Commission Report did not go into the heart of the testimony of the key witnesses, and that is why I undertook to write my book so that people who really wanted to take the time to find out the truth could go to the heart of the evidence without laboring through the entire twenty-six volumes of the Warren Commission material."

*Portrait of the Assassin* by Gerald R. Ford and John R. Stiles (Simon & Schuster, 1965). In 1963 Gerald Ford, then a member of the House of Representatives, was appointed to the seven-member Warren Commission. *Portrait of the Assassin* appeared shortly after the release of *The Warren Report*, but well before controversy over the Report had become widespread. Thus *Portrait* is less a defense of the official theory than a supplement to it. Using portions of the testimony of witnesses who knew Lee Harvey Oswald, Ford and Stiles try to develop a profile of Oswald's personality which encompasses a motive for his presumed actions. One of the more notable features of the book was its revelation of previously classified Warren Commission discussions of evidence that Oswald had been an FBI informer.

*The Assassination of John F. Kennedy: The Reasons Why* by Albert H. Newman (Clarkson N. Potter, 1970). Like Ford and Stiles,

Newman attempts a psychological postmortem of Lee Harvey Oswald, to explain why Oswald wanted to assassinate President Kennedy. Newman's argument is based on a lengthy analysis of Oswald's diaries, associates, and news items that Oswald may have read.

*The Advanced Course: Going deeper into the subject*

*The Flight of CE 399; Two Flightpaths; Crossfire* by Robert B. Cutler (Mirror Press; 1969, 1971, 1975, respectively; available from Cutler Designs, Box 1465, Manchester, Massachusetts 01944). Cutler is an architect who has made a

detailed study of the geometry of the assassination, i.e., trajectory angles in relation to the available medical and photographic evidence and the physical layout of the assassination scene.

*JFK Assassination File* by Jesse Curry (American Poster and Printing Company, Dallas, Texas, 1969). Curry was Chief of the Dallas Police Department at the time of the assassination. His book contains some official Dallas police records not published elsewhere. While Curry is not an ardent dissenter, he admits that he feels some doubts about the Warren Commission's evidence that

Oswald was the assassin.

*Forgive My Grief I, II, III & IV* by Penn Jones (available from the author, Box 1140, Midlothian, Texas 76065). Jones is the award-winning former editor of the *Midlothian Mirror* with a long record of courageous journalism. He was the first to point out that many of the material witnesses involved in the case were dying before their time, often in suspicious circumstances or as the clear result of foul play.

*A Citizen's Dissent* by Mark Lane (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968). Part personal memoir, this book recounts the author's experiences as the earliest and best known critic of *The Warren Report*. Dissent also carries forward some of the arguments Lane offered in *Rush to Judgment*. Assassination Bibliographies:

*Selective Bibliography on Assassination* by Bernard Fensterwald et al. (Committee to Investigate Assassinations, 927 15th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005; 1969).

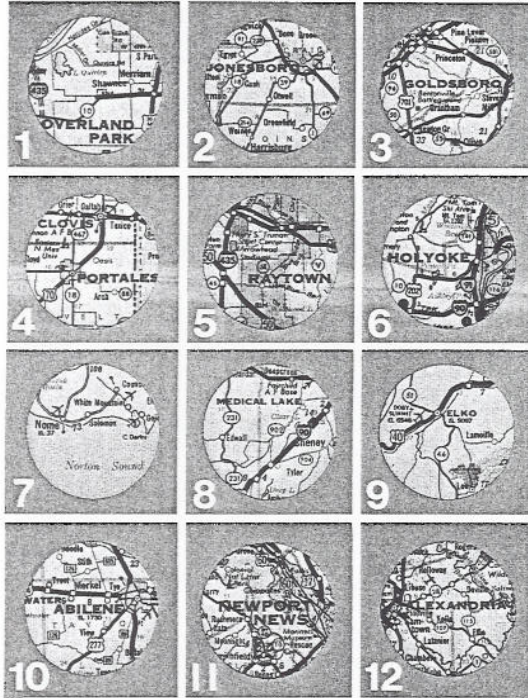
*A Bibliography of Literature Relating to the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy* by William C. Thompson (W.C. Thompson & Son, 731 Riverside Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78223; revised 1971).

*The Assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy: An Annotated Bibliography* by David R. Wrono (State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53706; 1973).

*Current Works*—Two new books on the assassination of President Kennedy have been published in 1975.

*The Assassination Tapes: An Electronic Probe Into the Murder of John F. Kennedy and the Dallas Cover-up* by George O'Toole (Penthouse Press Ltd., 1975). Reviewed in the May/June issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*.

*Presumed Guilty: Lee Harvey Oswald in the Assassination of President Kennedy* by Howard Roffman (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1975). Now a law student in his early twenties, Roffman took up his study of the assassination while in high school. His book is meticulously written and documented and is one of the most thorough step-by-step critiques of the official case that Lee Harvey Oswald was the assassin of President Kennedy. Although most of his material is derived from the official record and hence familiar to serious students of the assassination, Roffman has contributed several valuable new insights into the meaning of that evidence, especially in the ballistics and medical areas. The author limits his book to the question of Oswald's alleged guilt in the assassination, and does not address related areas such as the murder of Dallas police officer J.D. Tippit. But what he has done has been done extraordinarily well. Z



Courtesy of Rand McNally Co.

### Where Do You Think You Are?

East or West, North or South, each of the distinctive areas above appears on the road map of a single state. In terms of routes, state parks, mountains and memorials, there is, as the saying goes, "no place like it." Can you identify the states? If you or a friend find the game too easy (but you won't) add the requirement that you place the area north, south, east, west, or central in the designated state.

(Answers on Page 115)