

March 30, 1971

Acoustics and Speech Research Lab.
Bell Telephone Laboratories
Murray Hill, New Jersey

Dear Sirs:

I am a college freshman who, for the past four years, has been engaged in extensive research into the assassination of President Kennedy. It has recently come to my attention that Bell Laboratories was commissioned to do some analysis for the Warren Commission in the summer of 1964.

By letter dated June 30, 1964, the Commission sent a tape which purported to have been made during the President's assassination and requested that Bell study it for possible gunshots before an announcer broke in. This request was addressed to Mr. L. G. Kersta of the Acoustics and Speech Lab.

On July 17, 1964, Mr. Kersta responded, indicating that the analysis had detected six "non voiced noises" prior to the sound of the announcer's voice. His letter, which I have obtained from the National Archives refers to appended diagrams, at least two of which are referred to as "figures 4A and 4B." The Archives informed me that it does not have any of these figures or diagrams. Without them, it is quite difficult, if not impossible, to determine just what Mr. Kersta's letter is indicating.

I am herein requesting copies of the diagrams or figures which were sent to the Commission with Mr. Kersta's letter.

Also, I would like to know, if possible, whether your study of the tape precludes the possibility that each of the six noises may have been individual shots, even though they exhibit different characteristics. I am inclined to think shots from different weapons and different locations might explain the different acoustic characteristics of the six noises. If Bell reached any conclusions from studying this tape, I would appreciate knowing them.

I would like to inform you that the authenticity of this tape has not been established and there are indications it was not made during the actual assassination shots. However, the documents available from the National Archives are not complete, and I would greatly appreciate it if you could assist me in my efforts to fill the existing gaps, even if the tape proves to be a "fake."

Thanking you in advance for your efforts, I remain,

Sincerely,

Howard Roffman
8829 Blue Grass Rd.
Philadelphia, Pa. 19152



Bell Laboratories

600 Mountain Avenue
Murray Hill, New Jersey 07974
Phone (201) 582-4293

Bruce E. Strasser
Executive Director,
Public Relations and
Publication Division

April 19, 1971

Mr. Howard Roffman
8829 Blue Grass Road
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19152

Dear Mr. Roffman:

I regret that we have been unable to find in our files any diagrams of sound spectrograms such as you describe in your letter of March 30, 1971.

Mr. L. G. Kersta retired from Bell Labs several years ago. I spoke with him recently by phone regarding your questions.

He said that the tapes were made by a Dallas radio station and that they appeared to be authentic. He concluded from his analysis that the noises on the tape were from three rifle shots and their echoes.

If you wish to get in touch with Mr. Kersta directly, his address is P.O. Box 835, Somerville, New Jersey, 08876.

I hope this information is helpful to your investigation.

Sincerely yours,

Bruce Strasser

April 22, 1971

Mr. L. G. Kersta
P.O. Box 835
Somerville, New Jersey 08876

Dear Mr. Kersta:

Last month I wrote Bell Laboratories concerning my research into the assassination of President Kennedy, specifically about a purported tape of the assassination analyzed by Bell for the Warren Commission. Mr. Bruce Strasser was kind enough to answer me, based on an inquiry he made of you. He also provided me with your address.

Mr. Strasser informed me that your conclusion from analyzing the tape was that it revealed the noises of "three rifle shots and their echoes." Neglecting the question of the authenticity of the tape (which I cannot prove), this response prompts a few additional questions.

Could you explain to me what enabled you to distinguish what was a shot and what was the echo? Also, what was there about these noises which led you to the conclusion that they were rifle shots and not pistol shots or other explosions? I would also be interested in knowing if there were any indications of whether all three "shots" originated from the same source, both in terms of the weapon and its location.

I have no way of knowing how long the tape ran before the "shots" began. Thus, it is not possible for me to know whether other shots occurred before the recorder was turned on. Could you tell me how long a period elapses before the shots start?

I am of the impression that shots fired within a short enough time of each other would not be distinguishable as two individual shots on a tape recording. Could this have affected your analysis?

As you may know, the FBI conducted its own investigation of this tape recording. I would be interested in knowing if you were ever contacted by the FBI or any other federal agency about the tape and, if so, when.

If you have any of the diagrams or illustrations which accompanied your letter of July 17, 1964 to the Warren Commission, I would greatly appreciate copies (for which I would reimburse you) since the National Archives claims none are in their files.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could help me in my efforts to determine this information.

Many thanks,

Howard Roffman
8829 Blue Grass Rd.
Phila., Pa. 19152