

JOHNSON DEFENDS WARREN REPORT

Says a 'Reasonable Person'
Would Accept Its Findings

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 4—President Johnson defended the Warren Commission today, declaring that the evidence supports its conclusions about the assassination of President Kennedy.

In his first public statement on the subject since the commission became the target of a series of critical books and articles, the President gave the panel high marks for its "thorough study."

In answer to a question at his news conference, Mr. Johnson said "I know of no evidence that would in any way cause any reasonable person to have a doubt" about the commission's findings. [Question 12, Page 10.]

The commission concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in the slaying of President Kennedy.

Asked About X-Rays

Mr. Johnson's statements came in response to a question about the 65 X-rays and photographs of President Kennedy's body turned over to the National Archives this week by the Kennedy family. He was asked why the material had not been turned over before, and why it will not be available to non-Government investigators for at least five years.

Mr. Johnson replied that the material "has been available to the Warren Commission anytime it wanted to see it" and that Government agencies had access to it now.

"I think every American can understand," he said, "the reasons why we wouldn't want to have the garments, the records and everything paraded out in every sewing circle in the country to be exploited and used without serving any good or official purpose."

Mr. Johnson concluded that if anybody turned up evidence to cast doubt on the Warren report, it would be considered by the proper authorities.

Dr. James B. Rhoads, deputy archivist at the National Archives, said today that the mass of Warren Commission evidence delivered to the building by the Justice Department last week would be available for study by researchers in about a month.

These include all of the physical evidence considered by the commission except Oswald's 6.5 - MM Mannlicher - Corcano rifle and his .38-caliber Smith & Wesson revolver.

Weapons in Dallas

The weapons have been kept in Dallas where they were the subject of litigation growing out of the fact that Oswald violated a Federal firearms law by purchasing them under a false name.

A department spokesman said the F.B.I. would return the weapons to the archives within the next few days, where they will be placed with the other evidence.

Dr. Rhoads said "any serious researcher" would be permitted to study the items, which Acting Attorney General Ramsey Clark officially claimed for the Government this week. Under a 1965 law, the owners of the items will be compensated by the Government.

The documents considered by the Warren Commission—mostly reports from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other investigative agencies—have been in the archives for two years.

Dr. Rhoads said about two-thirds of this material had been cleared for release to researchers. Some documents must be withheld for security reasons, he said.