

Special Supplement

The Pointer 1/11/68

Political Assassination In The 60's:

A Report On The Symposium

On The Assassinations Of President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, And Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Dennis MacDonald

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Pointer prints the following article in an attempt to make a record of the information revealed in last November's Symposium on the assassination of John F. Kennedy and the lecture on the assassination of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Ideally, a symposium of this sort would publish a pamphlet or booklet summarizing or transcribing the proceedings. Since this is not practical, The Pointer offers the following as an introduction to the study of political assassination.

The decade of the sixties will long be remembered as a tragic one for this nation and the world. A president, a presidential candidate and senator, and a leader of the nation's poor were cut down by assassins' bullets. John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King, ideal characters in the eyes of the people, shared common goals for the betterment of mankind. Who killed them? Why did they die? People still publicly asking these questions are labeled "crack-pots," "sensationalist," or "publicity-seekers." Many claim that these are not important questions, that these men are dead and there is no way to resurrect them.

If some of the critics of the official versions are correct in their contention that the assassinations resulted from conspiracies, it would be of crucial importance to the American people. These forces of reaction would threaten the survival of the nation and, perhaps, the world. This is all the justification needed to take a long, serious look at the positions of some of these critics who dispute the official government position on these assassinations.



The Murder Of John F. Kennedy

The Official Version

On November 22, 1963, President John F. Kennedy was killed in Dallas, Texas by a lone assassin named Lee Harvey Oswald. Two bullets caused all the wounds in the President's body and, in former Texas Governor, John Conally, Oswald fired all the shots from a sixth floor window of the School Book Depository Building in Dealey Plaza. The Warren Commission presents Commission Exhibit 399 as the bullet which did most of the damage. The Commission alleges that this bullet struck Kennedy in the back of the neck, exited through the throat, struck Conally in the back, shattered a rib upon exiting through the chest, entered and shattered his right wrist and finally embedded in his thigh. It was later discovered at Parkland Hospital after it managed to work its way out of Conally's thigh. The bullet that shattered the President's skull exploded upon impact.

The Evidence

Contrary to popular opinion, there is ample conclusive evidence that the conclusions of the Warren Report are wrong. Lee Harvey Oswald did not kill John Kennedy. The most that can be concluded from the evidence is that Oswald may have been involved in the conspiracy in a minor role. The most damaging evidence against the official version of the assassination is the Commission's

own report. Anyone who has the most elementary knowledge of logic is able to see that the Commission's conclusions do not follow from their premises.

In an investigation of the case it is necessary to look at the material evidence, the photographic evidence, the autopsy reports, the x-rays, and some basic laws of physics. The Commission had access to all of this. But, unfortunately, the Commission itself showed up for only about five per cent of the meetings. Consequently, they saw but a few of the 25,000 frames of photographic evidence, heard but a few of the witnesses, and saw neither the autopsy photographs nor the x-rays. The Commission itself didn't even see the Zapruder film.

Examination of the films, especially the Zapruder film, reveals much important evidence from which even the most ignorant of viewers could form some basic conclusions. First, one is able to determine from which direction the shots were fired by observing the direction of the movement of the body upon impact of the shots. "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction," is a basic law of physics. When hit, the President's body was thrust violently backward in the car. The film shows that only his body exhibited this movement and that the car did not speed up. It becomes clear that the shot did cause that movement and thus came from the front and not the rear as the Commission concluded. According to testimony of a witness, Lee Harvey Oswald was on the first floor of the School Book

Depository Building playing dominoes at the time. The building was to the rear of the motorcade at the time of the shooting. Therefore, Lee Harvey Oswald did not fire the shots that killed President Kennedy and wounded Governor Conally.

A look at Commission Exhibit 399 is another classic example of the Commission's failure to draw logical conclusions from the evidence at their disposal. The Commission's contention that C.E. 399 caused wounds in Kennedy's neck and throat, in Conally's back, chest, rib, wrist, and thigh and was later discovered in pristine condition has won it the name "Super-Bullet." The Commission's own tests (as well as those of C.B.S. news) prove that a bullet could not accomplish such a task and remain in pristine condition. (There is a small notch at the top of the bullet where a sample was taken by the F.B.I. for spectographic analysis.) Secondly, Conally's position in the car (see Zapruder Frame 230) makes it impossible for his to have been in the path of a bullet which transited through the President's neck, unless, of course, the bullet was capable of changing course in mid air. Thirdly, with the aid of the Zapruder film, it is possible to determine the amount of time which transpired between the reactions of Kennedy and Conally. Experts testified before the Commission that even the most expert marksman (which Oswald was not) would need at least 2.3 seconds between shots with the gun that was allegedly used. But, Conally reacted much sooner than that, so, in order to maintain the pre-determined loose

"Had I ever foreseen the events which would follow when I signed into law the National Security Act of 1947 which created what I thought would be the quiet intelligence arm of the President, I never would have done it."

Harry Truman
December 23, 1963
Washington Post

assassin theory, the Commission had to claim that a single bullet caused the wounds in Kennedy and Conally. However, the Commission overlooked the fact that the full half second between the reactions of Kennedy and Conally is too long a time for a single bullet to travel that course. The Commission agreed that the latest point at which Kennedy could have been hit is Zapruder Frame 225. Conally had to have been hit by at least Frame 230 for it to have been the same bullet. In Frame 230 (see reproductions above) Conally is still clearly looking straight ahead and holding his hat in his right hand. His wrist certainly was not shattered until Frame 236 which is what Conally claimed in his testimony before the Warren Commission. There is also more metal in Conally's body today than is missing from "Super-Bullet." (see x-rays.)

The Commission claimed certainty on the single bullet theory. Nevertheless, Harold Weisberg found it necessary to file suit under the Freedom of Information Act to get access to the spectrographic analysis of that bullet. Some might consider this amazing since the analysis allegedly supports the Commission's findings.

Questions and Speculation

Many curious circumstances and incidents surround the assassination and cause further suspicion of the Commission's findings. It is true that many of these do not lead to conclusive evidence, but they do raise questions and speculation. Weisberg pointed out that when the government withholds information from the people, there is bound to be much unfounded speculation. But, the wildest stories of the critics cannot equal the Commission itself in wildness.

The first speaker at the Symposium, Col. L. Fletcher Prouty (Ret.), was in New Zealand at the time of the assassination. On November 24, (November 23, in Dallas) Prouty bought a newspaper in Christchurch, New Zealand. It said Kennedy had been killed by a lone assassin, that the man's name was Lee Harvey Oswald, that he had fought with a policeman, that he had a Russian wife, that he had been in the Marine Corps, and numerous other details. The paper printed a picture of Oswald in a business suit, white shirt and tie. The Dallas police had charged Oswald with the crime at 1:00 am that very day. It occurred to Prouty that there was something strange in the fact that such details of a man's life could travel half-way around the world in such a short time. Where did the picture come from? One might be tempted to speculate that someone had a file on this man before the assassination.

Prouty, having been in intelligence and security work most of his life, questioned the ability of one man to perpetrate such a crime. He had been in Cairo during the conference of world leaders after the war. He had been involved in the security arrangements when President Eisenhower visited Mexico. The security involved in those situations had been obviously lacking in Dallas. Otherwise, such an assassination would have proved impossible, according to Prouty.

The advance men in Dallas preparing for the President's visit had suggested that the motorcade travel the most direct route to the Women's Auditorium in Dallas. This plan, for unknown reasons, was not accepted in Washington. It was instead decided that the

President would take an indirect route and speak at the Trade Mart. Who made this decision and why?

Secret Service regulations require that the bubble top be placed on the presidential limousine whenever the speed of the car is less than 44 miles per hour. This was not done in Dallas. Why not?

The Warren Commission Report states that there were no Secret Service agents stationed in Dealy Plaza except for those in the motorcade. Why not?

Air Force One, carrying the body of the late President, the presidential party, and President Lyndon Baines Johnson, arrived at Andrews Air Force Base in Washington at 5:59 pm (EST). At that time the Dallas police were still looking for multiple killers. Yet, the occupants of the plane had been informed some time before that a lone assassin had killed the President. The announcement came in the form of a call to the plane from McGeorge Bundy in the situation room in the basement of the Whitehouse. Why was the decision announced by Bundy even before it was made in Dallas? One must admit that it is a possibility, regardless of how remote, that the occupants of the plane were being told, "This is what you are supposed to think happened."

Richard Levine, a member of the Committee to Investigate Assassinations, presented an illustrated lecture on the photographic evidence of the assassination. Pictures taken within seconds of the assassination show many people running toward the "grassy knoll" area. Witnesses testify that they heard shots come from that area and many claim that they saw a puff of smoke (photographs show this). Witnesses claim that they saw footprints in the mud and mud on the rear bumper of a car behind the wood fence in back of the "grassy knoll." Yet, none of the trunks of any of the cars in that parking lot were checked by the Dallas police or the F.B.I. Why not? It is a strange phenomenon that, minutes after the assassination, law enforcement officials could so readily dismiss the stories of witnesses.

On that sunny day in Dallas, pictures record a man with an umbrella. According to witnesses, the man opened his umbrella at the exact moment of the assassination, immediately closed it and walked away. This man was never questioned by the police or the Commission. Why not?

Penn Jones, Jr., publisher of the *Midlothian Mirror* in Midlothian, Texas, told the Symposium that President Johnson was responsible for the destruction of material evidence. The presidential limousine was immediately sent to Detroit to be refurbished and the clothing of Governor Conally was cleaned and pressed before the Commission was able to examine it. Both would have been valuable evidence if the Commission had desired to determine the number and the direction of the shots fired. Why was this evidence destroyed?

A highway sign was in the immediate path of the bullets and was removed within hours of the assassination, never to be seen again. What was the great concern about changing a sign in the midst of all the confusion surrounding the murder of a president? Was this not also destruction of material evidence? Was there something to hide? Jack Ruby, a personal friend of over half of

the members of the Dallas police force, was able to walk right into the Dallas jail and kill Oswald in spite of the most extreme security precautions. How was this possible without the collaboration of others, namely, Dallas policemen?

There is a great deal of evidence being kept from the public. The government refuses to talk about the incident. Why is this so if all of the evidence supports the official version? Penn Jones has recorded the strange deaths of many key witnesses who differed with the official version and spoke contrary to it. One was shot in the back in a police station. Another's head was dragged out of a swamp by a dog. There were many "suicides." Few died natural deaths and even fewer lived out their life expectancies. One must wonder about these things even if they do not provide concrete evidence of a conspiracy.

The press is also guilty of suppressing evidence. For example, the *New York Times* ("All the news that's fit to print") suppressed its own study of the assassination after spending thousands of dollars on it. Time-Life, Inc. owns the Zapruder film, but has not seen fit to release it to the American public. Why not?

There are a lot of unanswered questions. But, to whom can we address them? The Commission disbanded immediately after issuing its report. There was no time for reporters or others to read the summary of the report, let alone the 26 volumes. Other information was sealed in the year 2039 by an executive order of President Lyndon Johnson. The autopsy reports, the x-rays, and the clothing was to be available for inspection by "experts" in 1972, contingent on permission from the lawyers representing the Kennedy family. (One such expert, Dr. Lattimer, recently received permission to examine this material. Four doctors had applied for permission. Three were qualified pathologists and Commission critics. One, Dr. Lattimer, was a urine expert and an apologist for the Commission. The other three were denied access.)



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"You have to still t
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Ray And The Murder Of Dr. King

Two of the Symposium speakers dealt extensively with the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Both are currently involved in the court cases involving accused assassin, James Earl Ray. Harold Weisberg is the author of *Frame-up*, which deals with the Ray case, and James Lesar is on the team of lawyers now representing Ray in his attempts to get a trial. The material below is taken from the speeches of both.

James Earl Ray is far from being the most likeable man in the world. He is a racist. He has been a criminal almost all his life. This, however, is not enough to conclude that the man is guilty of murder. Our judicial process requires that he be proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. This is not what happened in the case of James Earl Ray. Regardless of what type of man Ray is, the case is an important one to study from several points of view. Weisberg put the questions this way: How does our society function? How does it meet the test in time of crisis? Can there be justice in a crime of this kind? What forces at work in the society are responsible for such an act? Are there genocidal forces at work? Is there something in common in the murders of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr., Medgar Evers, Fred Hampton, George Jackson, and numerous lesser-known Black leaders?

The most important fact in the case is that James Earl Ray never had a trial. He is presently in prison as the result of a pre-trial

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Would Ray have been proved guilty be reasonable doubt if there had been a One may recall a series of unusual which Weisberg refers to as the "min of Ray. The story for Ray began w arrest in London on June 8, 1968. He ch charged with the crime on April 4, year. He was extradited to the United and became the client of Arthur Haine Jr. On the eve of the scheduled November 11, things began to come u Ray had decided that he wanted to t stand in his own defense, contrary advice of his lawyers. As a result, it the case and, by some unclear proces Forman took over the defense. (F defended more than 1000 accused mu cases and only fifty of his clients w victed and only one executed.) Fo strange reason, Forman was able to i into pleading guilty in exchange for a nine year sentence. At present, Ray ving that long sentence. But, the cas closed, at least as far as Ray and torneys are concerned.

An Unethical Judge

First, let us take a look at the jud presided at the "mini-trial," Judge i Battle. When Battle was a prosecutor, involved in a famous case that went the Supreme Court. Battle had gone cell of the accused, had had artificial I kept on constantly and read the Bible defendant intermittently for thirty-six At the end of that time, the accuse signed a confession. After the man w the sight of Battle, he took his case Supreme Court where it was overtu the grounds that under the terms c nnessee law, the man had been subje undue duress. Weisberg reports i circumstances in the Ray case. Battl cell prepared for Ray. He first placd sheets of metal over all the barred win the cell. Artificial lighting was install kept on for twenty-four hours a day closed-circuit television cameras at tape recorders were installed to recor sound and movement made by Ray dur eight months of his stay. A basic o American law is the right of the acc confer privately with his attorney. Haines asked that the camera microphones be removed so that he



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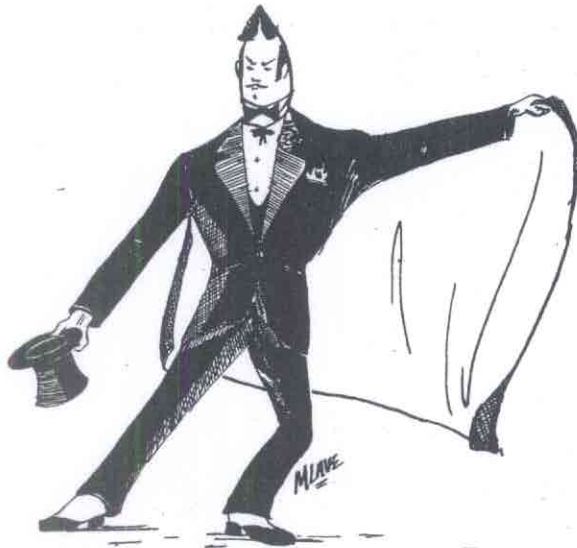
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MAGIC BULLET ?

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November 23, 1971

deal in which the judge, Preston Battle, was intimately involved. It is true that Ray entered a guilty plea. The remaining questions center on the circumstances which led him to act in such a way. Was the entire ordeal consistent with proper legal procedure? Would Ray have been proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt if there had been a trial? One may recall a series of unusual events which Weisberg refers to as the "mini-trial" of Ray. The story for Ray began with his arrest in London on June 8, 1968. He had been charged with the crime on April 4, of that year. He was extradited to the United States and became the client of Arthur Haines, Sr. & Jr. On the eve of the scheduled trial, November 11, things began to come unglued. Ray had decided that he wanted to take the stand in his own defense, contrary to the advice of his lawyers. As a result, they left the case and, by some unclear process, Percy Forman took over the defense. (Forman defended more than 1000 accused murderers and only fifty of his clients were convicted and only one executed.) For some strange reason, Forman was able to talk Ray into pleading guilty in exchange for a ninety-nine year sentence. At present, Ray is serving that long sentence. But, the case is not closed, at least as far as Ray and his attorneys are concerned.

An Unethical Judge

First, let us take a look at the judge who presided at the "mini-trial," Judge Preston Battle. When Battle was a prosecutor, he was involved in a famous case that went before the Supreme Court. Battle had gone to the cell of the accused, had had artificial lighting kept on constantly and read the Bible to the defendant intermittently for thirty-six hours. At the end of that time, the accused man signed a confession. After the man was out of the sight of Battle, he took his case to the Supreme Court where it was overturned on the grounds that under the terms of Tennessee law, the man had been subjected to undue duress. Weisberg reports similar circumstances in the Ray case. Battle had a cell prepared for Ray. He first placed heavy sheets of metal over all the barred windows of the cell. Artificial lighting was installed and kept on for twenty-four hours a day. Two closed-circuit television cameras and two tape recorders were installed to record every sound and movement made by Ray during the eight months of his stay. A basic tenet of American law is the right of the accused to confer privately with his attorney. When Haines asked that the cameras and microphones be removed so that he could

have privacy with his client, his request was denied. Haines and Ray found it necessary to lie facing each other on the cell floor and whisper to each other. Haines was required to show his notes to the guard upon leaving the cell. All this, according to Battle, was not in violation of Ray's rights, but was, rather, to protect him from the conspirators (who supposedly didn't exist). Was this not also undue duress as determined by the Supreme Court in its earlier judgment against Prosecutor Battle?

Battle is subject to criticism for another irregularity in the "mini-trial" dealings. The American Bar Association, under the direction of the now Chief Justice Burger, made a study of the issue of plea-bargaining which is the type of thing that landed Ray in prison for ninety-nine years. The Association concluded that a trial judge should not be party to any such plea-bargaining agreement prior to the imposition of the sentence. By the very fact that Battle meddled in the pre-"mini-trial" bargaining, Ray was denied due process of law. This alone is sufficient reason for granting Ray a trial.

The liberal press (mostly Eastern) wept editorial tears over the fact that Ray was denied due process. When called upon to answer the charge, Battle said, "But my conscience told me that it better served the ends of justice to accept the agreement. Had there been a trial, there could have always been the possibility in such an emotionally charged case of a hung jury. Or, though it may appear far-fetched now, he could have perhaps been acquitted by a jury." Weisberg pointed out the absurdity of denying a man a trial on the grounds that he may have been found innocent.

A further point of curiosity is the fact that there was absolutely no case against James Earl Ray. If there had been a trial, he most probably would have been acquitted. The prosecution was not even able to place Ray in the city of Memphis at the time of the crime, let alone at the scene of the crime. Two hours before the crime, witnesses allegedly saw him in a store in Memphis purchasing a pair of binoculars. Apparently, these were not to be used in the crime since the victim was a mere two hundred feet from the assassin.

"Bourbon Charlie"

The prosecution's star witness totally lacks even the least bit of credibility. His name is Charles Stevens, nicknamed by Weisberg, "Bourbon Charlie." The prosecution alleged that Stevens saw Ray flee from the scene of the crime. The police picked him up shortly

after the crime and kept him in custody to protect him from the non-conspirators and his bourbon. However, a court ruling made it clear that he could not be kept in custody simply because he witnessed a crime. (Thus, "Bourbon Charlie" won for all of us the right to enjoy bourbon.)

After a battle with the Department of Justice, Weisberg was able to obtain the public records of the extradition proceedings against Ray. It then became clear as to why it was so difficult to get those documents. They contained an affidavit by Charles Stevens stating, "Although I did not get a long look at him before he turned away, I think it was the man I saw earlier." This is hardly a "positive identification" as claimed by the prosecution in Memphis.

The fact that "Bourbon Charlie" was so drunk on the day of the assassination that he could not even get out of bed also detracts from his credibility as a witness. After the assassination he called for a cab to get him more booze. Though the Department of Justice could not locate the cabbie, Weisberg had no problem at all. The cabbie testified to the intoxicated state of Stevens. Charlie's wife, Gracie, corroborated the story of the cabbie and remained the only credible witness. She claimed that the man she saw fleeing was definitely not James Earl Ray. Unfortunately, Gracie was committed to a mental hospital outside of Memphis under a false name, thus making her unavailable for testimony had there been a trial. A judge has since ruled that she had been illegally confined.

Perjury

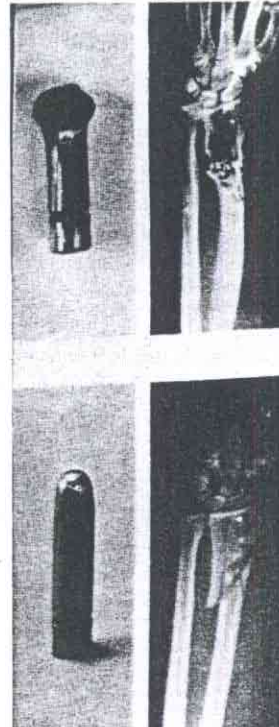
As in the murder of John F. Kennedy, the material evidence, especially ballistics evidence, is of key importance in solving the crime. A rifle was found at the scene of King's murder. According to F.B.I. ballistics expert, Robert Frazier (also the Warren Commission's ballistics expert), "Because of distortions due to mutilation and insufficient marks of value, I could draw no conclusion as to whether or not the submitted bullet was fired from the submitted rifle." The prosecution claimed at the "mini-trial" that they had recovered a bullet from King's body. Both Frazier and the prosecution lied. There was no bullet recovered. The bullet did

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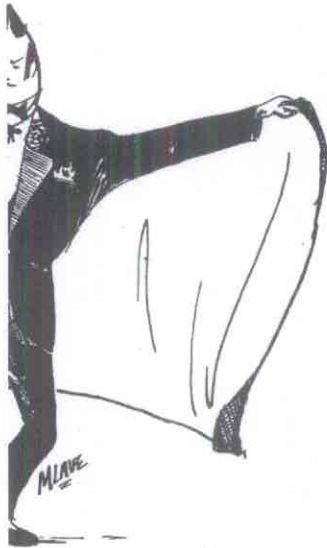
Top: Commission Exhibit 856 and the cadaver's wrist through which it was fired. Bottom: Commission Exhibit 399 and Governor Conally's wrist through which it was fired.



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"The truth is often out in the open and everybody misses it."

-Harold Weisberg
December 6, 1971

exactly what it was designed to do; it exploded, mushroomed, and fragmented upon impact and tore out the entire side of King's neck. The autopsy report bears this out.

Defense Worked Against Ray

Even the lawyers who were supposed to be defending Ray worked against his interests and the interests of justice. Haines originally refused to allow Ray to take the stand in his own defense. Forman gained access to Ray's cell without Ray's prior permission, a procedure contrary to regulations. Later, Percy Forman talked Ray into signing a contract giving sixty per cent of himself to Forman and the remaining forty per cent to William Bradford Huie. The contract stipulated that everything in excess of \$165,000.00 would go to Ray, contingent upon a guilty plea and "no unseemly conduct" in the courtroom. This seems far from a proper relationship between a lawyer and his client.

LEET ?

In Santa Claus to buy

-Penn Jones, Jr.
November 23, 1971

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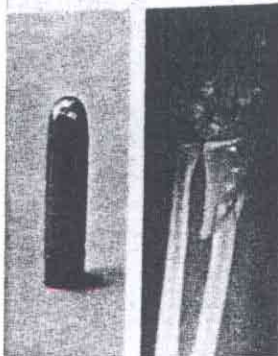
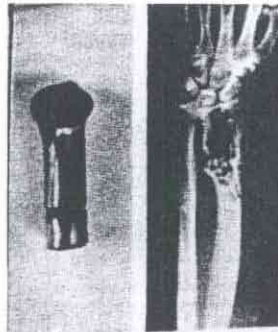
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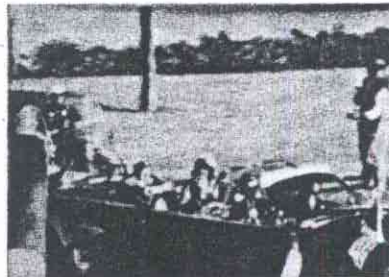
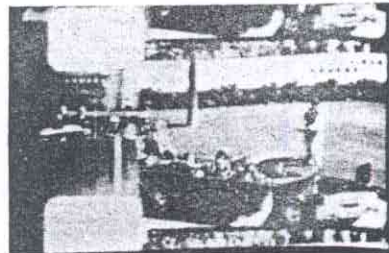
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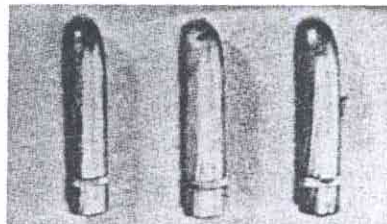
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Top: Commission Exhibit 856 and the cadaver's wrist through which it was fired. Bottom: Commission Exhibit 399 and Governor Conally's wrist through which it was fired.



Top: Frame 230 of the Zapruder film showing Governor Conally in the middle seat on the right side of the car. Conally is holding his hat in his right hand. Bottom: This is a sketch from Zapruder Frame 230 which is clearer than the original. (from Six Seconds in Dallas By Josiah Thompson).



Two of the above bullets were fired into long tubes filled with cotton. The third, according to the Commission, was fired through two people, causing seven separate wounds and shattering two large bones. (The bullet in the middle, C.E. 399, is the one purported to have done all the damage.) From: Six Seconds in Dallas by Josiah Thompson

"The United States Government has the official position that no political assassination in this country is the result of a conspiracy. They are all performed by alienated nuts." -Harold Weisberg
December 6, 1971

The Murder Of Robert F. Kennedy

Contrary to popular opinion, the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy is not clearly the act of a madman named Sirhan Sirhan. There are several points which grossly contradict the outcome of Sirhan's trial.

Penn Jones, Jr. pointed to the report of the autopsy performed on Kennedy's body. According to that report, the bullet that went into the brain was fired from a gun not more than six inches away from the edge of Kennedy's right ear. No witness has ever placed Sirhan closer than four to six feet from the late Senator.

A further contradiction is the fact that police recovered more bullets from the scene than could possibly have been fired from Sirhan's gun.

According to Jones, the trigger man for the murder was Eugene Thane Caesar, a temporary hotel body guard with a long criminal record, now working for Lockheed. The only witness completely ignored was the photographer with a picture of Caesar pointing his gun at Kennedy's head.

It would not seem altogether wild for one to speculate that there may have been a conspiracy in this case also.

Who And Why?

Who was responsible for these political assassinations? The question cannot yet be answered. If there is to be any chance of determining responsibility for the crimes, the cases must be re-opened. It is most difficult in the case of John Kennedy's murder since there is no longer anyone to defend. The defendant was executed within hours after the crime was committed. Jim Garrison tried, but failed. There will be more attempts. In the Ray case, suits have already been filed for post-conviction relief according to James Lesar, general counsel for the Committee to Investigate Assassinations. Lesar feels that the case cannot be lost - that is, if Ray survives. It may take years to get the case before the Supreme Court. There have been some rumors to the effect that Sirhan's case may be re-opened.

There is a philosophical thread that runs

through the three assassinations discussed in this article. Each of the victims began to move left shortly before being killed.

John Kennedy had fired Allen Dulles (later a key member of the Warren Commission) and had moved to drastically curtail the operations of the Central Intelligence Agency. Col. Prouty claimed that the CIA had blatantly ignored the strongest orders he had seen during his entire career as liaison between the Pentagon and the CIA. They were National Security Memoranda 55 and 57, requiring that the CIA obtain approval from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the National Security Council for each and every operation. The papers were filed away and ignored. During the month previous to his assassination, Kennedy had ordered a reversal of the Viet Nam policy (see footnote). In a Pentagon statement of re-evaluation, the withdrawal of troops was ordered. On the day of the assassination, troops were already on the way back from the war. Thirty days after the assassination, the Pentagon re-evaluated the re-evaluation and re-escalated the war.

Robert Kennedy had come out in strong opposition to the war in Viet Nam. He was gunned down moments after it became apparent that he would win the nomination and most probably the Whitehouse. That would have placed him in a position to move against the war and against those forces responsible for the death of his brother and Dr. Martin Luther King.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had begun to link poverty in America with the war in Viet Nam. According to Ralph Abernathy in an article in Look magazine, King had also given up on non-violence as a plausible solution in the United States.

Though we cannot say who bears the responsibility for these murders, we can answer the lawyers' question, "Cui bono (Who benefits)?" The intelligence-military-business complex stood nothing to lose and everything to gain. And gain they did.

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"Young people, I hope that I am crazy. I hope that none of this is true. But, in a democracy we have to have the courage to look at the facts."

-Penn Jones, Jr.
November 23, 1971

A Footnote: JFK And Vietnamization

A little known fact about the involvement of John Kennedy in Viet Nam is revealed in obscure government documents and several newspaper articles. During the month preceding his death, Kennedy had begun the program of Vietnamization. A few days after his death, as a result of that policy, the troop withdrawal began. It was a matter of weeks before that policy was reversed. A footnote on page 894 of American Foreign Policy Current Documents 1963 reads as follows, "On Dec. 3, 1963, 220 American troops debarked from Viet Nam. They represented the first contingent of a group of 1,000 to be returned to the United States by Christmas." Shortly before the assassination, McNamara and Taylor visited Viet Nam and suggested that American involvement could be de-escalated.

It is interesting to compare the Viet Nam documents of this period to those in the few months following the assassination. For example, upon returning from a later trip to South Viet Nam in 1964, McNamara and Taylor stated that, "The policy should continue of withdrawing United States personnel where their roles can be med by the Viet-

namese And of Sending Additional Men if They are Needed (emphasis added)." On page 979 of American Foreign Policy Current Documents 1964, a footnote reads, "On July 27 (1964), the Republic of Viet-Nam announced that additional U.S. troops would be sent to that country. Subsequently, U.S. officials in Washington indicated that the number would be approximately 5,000, bringing the total there to 21,000 (see The New York Times, July 28, 1964)."

Skimming those documents on Viet Nam (1963-64) reveals a clear pattern of events. There is clear-cut de-escalation in the final months of 1963 and clear-cut re-escalation after that time. For further information see the following:

- ... Public Papers of the Presidents: John F. Kennedy, 1963, p. 828.
- ... The New York Times: Oct. 31, 1963, p. 10, col. 4.
- ... Nov. 1, 1963, p. 14, col. 2.
- ... Nov. 15, 1963, p. 13, col. 1 p. 18, col. 2.
- ... Nov. 16, 1963, p. 1, col. 1.
- ... Nov. 31, 1963, p. 1, col. 2.
- ... Dec. 4, 1963, p. 1, col. 2.

A Short Bibliography

For references to primary sources of the above material and for further information, please refer to the following:

- Jim Garrison, A Heritage of Stone, (New York: Putnam, 1970).
- Penn Jones, Jr., Forgive My Grief, (Midlothian, Texas: Midlothian Press, 1966).
- Mark Lane, A Citizen's Dissent, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1963).
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- Sylvia Meagher, Accessories After the Fact, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967).
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- Harold Weisberg, Whitewash II, (Hyattstown, Md.: 1966).

All of the above books are available in the UW-SP Learning Resources Center. Information regarding the purchase of the books may be obtained in the Pointer Office. Also available is information regarding subscription to a newsletter published by the Committee to Investigate Assassinations.