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V. 108

THE "THREE-MONKEYS" THEORY

Neither beginning nor ending with Governor Connally, but dramatized by him, is the "single-bullet" theory - Arlen Specter's - that the Commission, in its Report, tries to suggest is not central to its conclusions, but really is.

With it, the Commission could pretend to account for all the shooting, even though it could not. Without it, no such possibility existed. The Report accounts for the so-called "fatal" shot, at Zapruder Frame 313. That, *according to* its evidence, indicates, struck no one else and inflicted no other wounds on the President. Another shot missed. It would not be associated with any bullet or part of a bullet that struck the car and any of its occupants. For all the wounds to have been inflicted with no more than three bullets having been fired charges the "single bullet" of that theory with causing the remaining seven non-fatal injuries to both the President and the Governor.

These wounds are said to be in the front and back of the President's neck, the back and front of the Governor's chest, through his wrist, from the upper side to the lower, and into his thigh, where a fragment lodged in the bone. These are fully discussed in WHITEWASH, in the related chapters, "The Number Of Shots" and "The Doctors And The Autopsy".

Thus it can be seen that the "single-bullet" theory is not a "theory" (though it is anything but fact), but is a necessity. If a single bullet did not have this meteoric life, at least one additional bullet had to have been fired. That required another assassin. Come what may, this the Commission was determined not to concede, for another assassin, whether or not Oswald was the first, meant a conspiracy. (Conspiracy is a combination to do wrong. It requires but two participants.)

Specter is at once the father of the single-bullet theory and the first to abandon his child (WHITEWASH II, "Magic, Mystery and Myth"). He

Maintains the polite pretense of a relationship behind the facade that it is not obligatory.

Only because during the Commission's life there was no confrontation with opposing counsel and ^{and} examined evidence was it possible to dream that a single bullet could have had this past. The disproof is abundant in the Commission files, where the staff saw to it that it remained.

The most common form is the proof that, without the missed shot, all three were entirely taken up inflicting the wounds on both victims. This is not to say that three bullets can account for all the injuries. But it is to say that until it became too obvious that the "missed" shot could not be ignored, it was ignored, by the FBI, Secret Service and the Commission staff.

The "single-bullet" theory is the invention contrived in an effort to make it seem that all the shooting could be accounted for in three shots and that Lee Harvey Oswald could have fired all three shots. Without this the Report had to acknowledge the reality no one in government was prepared to face, that the President was murdered as the consequence of a conspiracy

Without doubt, as the Commission's apologists say, the "single-bullet" theory came into existence gradually. This is not because there ⁽⁵⁹⁾ was positive evidence, for that never did exist. It is simply because the reality that the "missed" bullet could not be avoided was not immediately faced. As it became more and more apparent that there was no escaping that "missed bullet", it also became apparent that, without something to take up the slack, there would be a conspiracy Report. Thus, the extra burden placed on the 6.5 mms. of the "single" non-fatal bullet.

It is not possible to analyze and report on the autopsy and what relates to it or to the ^{Commission's} other central evidence of the assassination without

in some way dealing with the "single-bullet" theory, for it is one of the more important aspects of the case. There will, therefore, be some repetition later.

None of it will come up in later chapters
 In what immediately follows, I have not tried to exhaust the material, nor have I used all that is available. The purpose is to present at a single point a fair sampling of the information in the Commission's files but suppressed from what it reported showing that it, the FBI and the Secret Service: ~~NE~~

never conceived a "single-bullet theory" from the evidence; required all three shots they admitted were fired to explain the shooting, as they think they explained it; ^P and that only in time of dire necessity did it emerge in a temporarily successful but fraudulent effort to overcome the liabilities of the tangible and irrefutable evidence.

in support
 Aside from the unofficial accounts, which can be quoted selectively, of a number of theories of what happened, all the immediate official explanations were other than ^{the single-bullet contrivance} ~~what~~ the Commission finally fixed upon, and none coming from those who had seen the wounds supported any variant of the "single-bullet theory".

As soon as the doctors had finished their emergency treatment of the Governor and had a moment to collect themselves, the Dallas police interviewed them and obtained the information needed for their "General Offense Report" (see pp. -- --). Its language, under "Details of Offense", leaves no doubt about why there was no space for it, too, in the 900 pages of the Report, or in the interrogations of the appropriate witnesses. This official document, filed the day after the assassination, says:

"Mr. Connally sustained a gunshot wound with the point of entry located in the posterior of the right shoulder, ranging downward thru the chest, exiting on the right chest just below right nipple. The bullet continued, striking the right wrist, palmside, exiting 2 inches from the wrist joint. A fragment continued, entered the interior portion of the left thigh causing a flesh wound."

This belief/that a fragment broke off, continued, and embedded itself in the ~~right~~ thigh, eliminating an almost-perfect bullet, what Exhibit 399 is - is also that of Dr. Robert R. Shaw, one of the Connally surgeons (6H91).

The FBI summary reports of December 9 and January 13 are without comfort to "single-bullet" theoreticians, as we shall see.

By December 18, 1963, when the Secret Service made its official report (the Commission's third file), it was *cagier*, than the FBI. In its own name and on its ^{own} authority it did not say how many shots were fired or what damage each did. This may seem like something less than a Secret Service Report on the assassination of the President ~~it~~ was guarding so he would not be murdered, but it is also a report about which the Secret Service could not have been criticized for saying what was later to be unwelcome. The Secret Service played it safe: it said nothing, acknowledging on its 31st page, in its "Narrative of Events," only that, after the motorcade was on Elm Street, "there was a sharp report".

When the Secret Service can make this kind of "report" on its investigation of the murder of a President, it makes one wonder what the Secret Service really does and if the charges of neglect made against it might not have a basis. File 3 is not a report; it is an infantile evasion.

10 More important than anything else is bureaucratic security. So, to play it safe, these stalwart guardians of the President said nothing! The

Secret Service

Commission was without complaint over this callous/indifference to its official responsibilities, or to its gross incompetence, for such a childishly inadequate "report" is one of these two things - or much worse. Perhaps the Commission was grateful that in this instance the Secret Service did not give it still another hurdle to scale, further proof of the invalidity of the false conclusions it was to issue.

Even in the appended exhibits, Secret Service Chief Rowley took no chances. Here is the account of the actual assassination that, if anything, is even less meaningful:

"12:30 p.m. Because of what appeared to be the sound of a firecracker (Approx.) or gunfire, also because of unusual activity in the Presidential and follow-up cars, we immediately accelerated movement of Lead Car. Information was received over the two-way radio that we should proceed to the nearest hospital, and we were escorted speedily to the Parkland Hospital. The President and Governor Connally were placed on stretchers and were immediately taken to the Emergency Room for medical attention. (See my statement and statements from other agents as to activities during this incident.)"

How much "safer" could he play it - or how much less could he say in reporting the murder of the President!

Of course, this was not because the Secret Service did not know better, nor was it because their own investigations had not told them what had happened. The Commission, consistent with its determination to conclude that Oswald was the lone assassin and that there had been no conspiracy, simply suppressed from its Report and the appended 10,000,000 words of evidence that which disproved its predetermined conclusions.

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Example after example exists throughout the secret files. Here are a few cases:

Secret Service report of November 28, 1963, from Inspector Tom Kelley to Chief Rowley (Commission File 97, ~~Folder 2~~ Folder 2, folio 235; *(use photostats) with it type. This reads:* (see p. —.)).

"At the foot of Elm Street, at a point approximately 200 feet east of the Houston Street Triple Underpass, on the approach to the Stemmons Freeway, President Kennedy, who was seated on the right rear seat, was shot. Immediately thereafter Governor Connally, seated in the right jump seat, was shot once. The President was then shot the second time."

FBI report of November 29, 1963, by Agents Robert M. Barrett and Ivan M. Lee (Commission File 5, folio 117) (see p. —.).

"SA HOWLETT advised that it had been ascertained from the movies that President Kennedy was struck with the first and third shots fired by the assassin, while Gov. Connally was struck with the second shot."

How Secret Service Agent John Joe Howlett established this is also worthy of note, for it is exactly as the FBI, for the Commission, did it over again in May to pretend otherwise: Howlett

"advised that with the aid of a surveyor and through the use of 8 mm movie films depicting President John F. Kennedy being struck by assassin's bullets on November 22, 1963, Howlett was able to ascertain that the distance from the window ledge of the farthest window to the east in the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository Building, 411 Elm Street, to where the President was struck the first time in the neck was approximately 170 feet. He stated this distance would be accurate within two or three feet."

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Save for a few James Commissionated from several
 Wilson's (WHITEWASH 45, 206-7, WHITEWASH II
 8-5, 94, 138-9, 178, 195, 215, 220-2).

The facts hadn't changed. The Zapruder film certainly didn't

In fact, Howlett had a better print of it, an original copy. The surveyor and his instrument were constant, as was their accuracy. Accuracy to "within two or three feet" is as great or greater than ever achieved.

All that changed was the Commission's problem: it did not dare ignore the "missed" bullet. Therefore, the evidence and its meaning had to be worked around to be consistent with one shot having missed the motorcade entirely.

Among the other Secret Service records of the fact that three shots hit the car's occupants are several published in WHITEWASH II.

The Secret Service engaged Dallas Surveyor Robert West to prepare a map of the assassination area. On it was then marked the ^{location of} spot the car was when each of three shots struck (~~pp.~~ 167, 243).

During its reconstruction, the Secret Service placed a "replica" car where it says the President's was when each of the three shots struck, then photographed it in each position (~~page~~ ^{WHITEWASH II} 248). These are part of Commission File 88.

Arlen Specter, father of the "single-bullet" theory, was familiar with this file. When he was interrogating Secret Service Inspector Tom Kelley (WHITEWASH II, ~~ix~~ 166-8), he alluded to other photographs that are part of it and entered them into evidence. Specter, however, made no reference to these Secret Service pictures ¹¹⁶ that showed the President's car where it was when each of three bullets struck. Inspector Kelley was just as delicate. He remained silent about the unwelcome evidence. ^{SPECTER DID} ~~NOT ENTER~~ ^{THEM INTO EVIDENCE.}

This is not the only such occasion in the Commission's record or when Specter conducted the taking of testimony. With Dr. Humes on the stand, Specter offered into evidence what was identified as Exhibit 397 (WHITEWASH 183). Specter then identified this exhibit as identical with

Commission File 371. When Humes was asked to identify it, he said it included "various notes in longhand, or ~~rather~~ copies, rather, of various notes in longhand made by myself, in part during the performance of the examination of the late President, and in part after..."

Now these autopsy notes, not burned by Humes (WHITEWASH 187) and in his hand months later, when he was on the witness stand, are essential in any examination of the assassination or the autopsy report. Notes are the basis of it. They did exist as of the time of Humes' testimony, they were entered into evidence, the evidence Specter was in charge of, and they have been physically removed from that evidence (see Correspondence appendix).

Thus the evidence of the autopsy has been further tampered with, further suppressed, if not illegally, certainly improperly. These notes are not in any copies of File 371, not in the National Archives in any form. It is another coincidence, no doubt, that this also happened in another part of the case over which Arlen Specter had charge. ~~Remember the Secret Service pictures showing the car when each of the three shots hit, which were in the file Specter used, but he in this case kept them out of evidence? Had I not dug them up they would still be secret.~~

Naturally, it is also simply a "coincidence" that these Specter "oversights" just happen to coincide with his sponsorship of the "single-bullet" theory, which is disputed by this suppressed evidence.

In May, 1966, after I persuaded the Washington Post to read WHITEWASH, they finally came out with a story, after asking former Commission personnel questions about this evidence to which they got no satisfactory answers. Government defense against the statements in the FBI report (WHITEWASH 192-5) contradictory to the Commission's medical and autopsy

(See chapter

conclusions was that the FBI had not seen the autopsy report. Incredible (and certainly false) as this is, it was accepted. However, this cannot be claimed for the Secret Service, which immediately received all eight original copies of the autopsy, from which it then Xeroxed additional ones, and all the pictures and X-rays. This evidence was in Secret Service possession before any of the reports and conclusions here cited were prepared.

On January 30, 1964, ten days after the Commission officially had a copy of the autopsy report, Assistant Counsel David W. Belin wrote a memo to General Counsel J. Lee Rankin on the subject of Oswald's possible knowledge of the motorcade route. This, he said, could have been November 19, when the papers announced it.

The third paragraph discloses that the month-old Commission, by this early time in its "investigation", had determined to limit itself to only three shots having been fired. This is how Belin accounted for them: *(USE PHOTO COPY) IN AN EFFORT TO MAKE THIS LEGIBLE I HAVE DARKENED THE FILE COPY. H. R. R. H.*

"In determining the accuracy of Oswald, we have three major possibilities; Oswald was shooting at Connally and missed two of the three shots, the two misses striking Kennedy; Oswald was shooting at both Kennedy and Connally and all three shots struck their intended targets; Oswald was shooting only at Kennedy and the second bullet missed its intended target and hit Connally instead."

Expediently Belin ignored the "missed" shot, of which everyone in the government knew, for spray from it caused James C. Tague to bleed (WHITEWASH 158), *IT* ^{IMMEDIATELY} ~~and~~ was reported by the police. However he explained it, Belin had each shot hitting ~~it~~ - none missing. He used up three shots without accounting for all the shooting.

Of course, to the government Oswald was already the lone assassin. But with the second shot striking Connally alone, as this memo also has it, that was not possible. The only thing that later "changed" the facts, apparent to the Commission at the very beginning, was its need to account for the "missed" shot without acknowledging an additional shot. To admit a fourth shot was the same as acknowledging an additional assassin, which it would not do for that, in turn, was proof of a conspiracy to kill the President.

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Almost three months later, on April 22, the Commission was still satisfied that each of the three shots struck a man. It was still ignoring the "missed" shot. On that day Assistant Counsel Melvin A. Eisenberg drafted a "Memorandum For The Record" on the "Conference of April 21, 1964, to determine which frames of the Zapruder movies show the impact of the first and second bullets." (see pp. ⁰⁰⁰⁻⁸), Each of these shots "impacted". There never was any question of the "impact" of the third or fatal shot. That is unmistakable, unforgettably preserved in Frame 313. All participants are not named. Those who are include five doctors, three FBI agents, five Commission lawyers, including Rankin, the Connallys and Commissioner McCloy.

Specter alone dissented from the conclusion that Connally's chest wound could not have been inflicted after Frame 236.

By this time what was never proved was being assumed, that the whole bullet had been "recovered from Connally's stretcher". Only one doctor (a veterinarian) considered it even remotely conceivable that this bullet could have caused the damage to Connally's wrist. To put it another way, the "single-bullet" theory was eliminated while it was being dreamed up:

R This paragraph reads:

"In a discussion after the conference Drs. Light and Dolce expressed themselves as being very strongly of the opinion that Connally had been hit by two different bullets, principally on the ground that the bullet recovered from Connally's stretcher could not have broken his radius without having suffered more distortion. Dr. Olivier withheld a conclusion until he has had the opportunity to make tests on animal tissue and bone with the actual rifle."

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called as a witness. Thus his "very strong" scientific opinion contrary to what the Commission was cooking up is not in the evidence.

208-10
An earlier, similar conference for the identical purpose had been held April 14. Eisenberg also drafted the memo on that ^(pp 000-0) one, again under-scoring "impact of the first and second bullets". This memo also is dated April 22. Present were all three autopsy surgeons, Drs. Light and Olivier, five FBI and two Secret Service experts and three Commission lawyers, again including Specter, who noted the same dissent.

212-4
Two days later, Eisenberg prepared a memo on "Determination of the Trajectories of the Three Shots" (pp 000-0). It again accounts for all three shots without acknowledging what was known, that one had missed the motorcade entirely. He proposed what actually was staged a month later, a Dallas reconstruction. His purpose was to locate the car at each of the three "impacts". He also said that, instead of the "replica car" that was used (WHITEWASH II 164-8), "preferably, the actual car" should be used.

His paragraph 4 repeats that all "three shots struck" the men.

From the very beginning, as this memo also reflects, no consideration was given to a shot from any other point or any shot that did not strike the President or the Governor. Not until it was obvious that the "missed" shot could no longer be ignored was any consideration given to it. When it had to be accounted for, the Commission grimly refused to ^{admit} acknowledge ~~that~~ more than three shots had been fired. Acknowledging a fourth ^{concedes} ~~acknowledges~~ a conspiracy. All the evidence is that no single man, not Oswald, not the best shots the Commission could gather, could have fired even these three shots. By misrepresenting its evidence, the Commission did get ~~its~~ false claim that Oswald could have fired these three shots believed. However, there was no possibility of achieving acceptability for a "four-shot" theory.

These Commission staff and Secret Service conclusions, that all three bullets hit the two men, are amply supported by the investigations and conclusions by the FBI and the Secret Service. The very first Commission file, No. 1, is the FBI summary report of December 9, 1963, made by order of the President (^{see above} WHITEWASH 192-5). It says, "...three shots rang out. Two bullets struck President Kennedy, and one wounded Governor Connally" (see pp.).

The FBI amplified this report with another on January 13, 1964 (Commission File 107). If, as government defenders, including J. Edgar Hoover, argue, the first report was written without benefit of the autopsy report (and there is no reason why it should have been), this cannot be said of the second report, which contains reference to the autopsy findings in its second paragraph (). The FBI did not retract or withdraw what it said in the first report, that each of the three shots struck home.

Until the official position changed, the FBI's representation and reporting fact didn't change. After the first shock wore off and it got to work, it prepared elaborate scale models of the entire area, with care and infinite accuracy. It then prepared, with customary FBI neatness and trim plastic binding, a booklet of explanation. This is File 298. It is not, you may be certain, in ^{the} its Report or printed evidence, which carefully culled out all proofs of more than two impacting shots (see pp.).

Section 12 begins on page 14. It is headed, "What was the aiming Pattern of the assassin's target?" It could not be more explicit than it is in the first words of each of the first four subdivisions of this section:

L11 - Here will use photo at end of page

top 121

- "a. SHOT ONE hit the target from a distance of 167 feet...
- b. SHOT TWO hit the target from a distance of 262 feet...
- c. SHOT THREE hit the target from a distance of 307 feet...
- d. ELAPSED TIME to hit targets two and three after hitting target one."

64 There are no ifs or buts here. The FBI, like the Secret Service, told the Commission that each of the three shots it says were fired hit the target. It placed the target at the time each shot was fired, with precision. It also specified the time that elapsed between each of the shots hitting the target. There is no reference here to the "missed" shot, no reference to it that can be read in. That shot was defined out of this listing by the FBI (WHITEWASH 156-60), which knew of it.

In short, well after the beginning of the investigation, at a time when simple error could not be claimed (and could either the FBI or the Secret Service be of such unequalled incompetence - each separately and and both together - that they could make such "errors"?), the FBI told the Commission that each of the three shots hit one of the men.

There is no evasion, no qualification, ~~There~~ No conditions are stipulated. This, like the others cited, is a direct, straightforward statement: The President and the Governor were hit by all three bullets said to have been fired.

The problem is one not of fact but of integrity. There never was any doubt of the missed bullet. That James Tague was injured by it and bled from the slight injury was immediately known to the police, who, also, immediately broadcast it (WHITEWASH 158). The Report acknowledges this (R116). The broadcast was by Patrolman L. L. Hill, who told the dispatcher "I have one guy that was possibly hit by a ricochet from the bullet off the concrete". Even before this close-to-simultaneous police broadcast, Tague's wounding was known to Deputy Sheriff Eddy R. Walthers, who had gone to that area, several hundred feet from where the assassination was perpetrated,

because witnesses reported bullets striking in that area.

Although it was known - publicly known ^{and} officially recorded - both the FBI and Secret Service pretended it didn't happen and accounted for all three shots they admit were fired by having the men hit by all, thus not conceding or accounting for the bullet both knew "missed" and caused Tague's injury. When the Commission wanted examination made of the curb-stone struck by this "missed" bullet, the FBI Dallas office pretended it could not be found, even though it had been photographed immediately and the photos were available to it, as were the photographers. As late as July 17, ¹⁹⁶⁴ Dallas FBI was telling the Commission it could not find where the bullet struck. This is consistent with its certain knowledge that if three bullets only were fired and each struck the President or the Governor several hundred feet ^{from Tague,} away, one of these three could not have looped its way all the way down to about twenty feet from the Triple Underpass and still have had enough energy to damage the curb and spray concrete or fragments with enough force to wound Tague on the cheek.

J. Edgar Hoover, ultimately, assured the Commission that this "missed" bullet could not be associated with the car bullets. This unwelcome intelligence was postponed until quite late in the proceedings - August 12, 1964 - nine months after the assassination - the month before the tremendous printed Report was issued (WHITEWASH 15809)1. Should the reader wonder if this is the vaunted FBI derring-do ^{that} radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, cereal boxes, bubble gum wrappers, and everything else accessible to the FBI's publicists dun into our minds, if this is that unsurpassable FBI speed, perfection of science and infallible efficiency constantly touted, I quote Marina Oswald's immortal words, "That is the FBI for you".

Bitter-ending by the Dallas office got it nowhere. The Commission sent FBI Photographic Expert Lyndal Shaneyfelt down to Dallas to find that curbstome with the bullet mark. If this is a new kind of FBI bird-dogging, it worked. Shaneyfelt did what any high school student of average intelligence would have done. He got the existing pictures, the photographers, went where they said, looked where they said, and there it was - where it had been without moving from November 22, 1963. That curbstome's first move was when Shaneyfelt dug it up and took it back to Washington with him.

No span

(It was kept secret until after Dick Gregory and I ridiculed this/secrecy on clear-channel radio, after which it was quietly transferred to the National Archives. Here I examined it. By that time some conscientious soul, a stickler for perfection, no doubt, seems to have patched that concrete, quite possibly in too great haste, for the concrete of the patch is of a different shade and a different texture. But perhaps it is neater to have a patched curbstome to enrich the national heritage rather than an old, punctured, evidence-bearing one.)

If nothing was said about it, this is not because nothing was known about it. From the very first, this "missed" bullet loomed as a very big obstacle to be hurdled by the Commission's no-conspiracy pre-determination. Had the Commission, in the end, ignored the "missed" bullet, there would have been a frightful scandal, for it was too well known.

The single-bullet theory was less hazardous. The Commission, clearly, felt that this permitted it to stay within the artificial three-bullet limitation, that, it also felt, entitled it to claim there had been no conspiracy. It persisted in the pretense that, although the best shots it could get could not duplicate what it attributed to Oswald, that differ nonetheless had done it.

This might be termed the "Three-Monkeys" Theory.

The only alternative was the admission of conspiracy. Oswald could not have fired three such shots, as the evidence proved. To attempt to attribute four shots to either him or that junky rifle was to tempt disaster. It was safer to attribute both magic and intelligence to that super-Wagnerian Bullet 399.

At this point, with this partial recounting of some of the evidence suppressed from what was published, omitted from the "conclusions", and quietly avoided by all the official participants, fresh in the reader's mind, I should like to remind him of the felicitous phrase ^{used by} attributed to Wesley Liebeler, Epstein's legal Horatio defending the Commission bridge:

"~~Truth~~ was our only client".

The FBI and the Secret Service served the same client.

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~~That client was not Truth!~~