

Reviewed ^{D. Lenihan}
Fred 6/28/67

Part IV. (The Credibility of the Warren Report) Why Doesn't America Believe the Warren Commission Report?

(1). Should America believe the Warren Report?

Mark Lane alleges there is not an important conclusion of the Commission which can be accepted. CBS points out that Lane is not factual. Brehm says Lane misquoted him - he never said a shot came from the grassy knoll.

Epstein(Inquest) criticized Report.

Arlen Specter: Seldom has there been a case pointing to the murderer better than this one.

Epstein questions the selection of Commissioners & Specter supports President Johnson's selection. Epstein questioned whether (eg) the FBI should have investigated allegation LHO was informant. Specter satisfied with competence of FBI.

Cronkite: Role of FBI & Secret Service "less than glorious." He quotes from Rpt: FBI took "unduly restrictive view" of its duties.
(1) He criticizes FBI testing of firing of weapons.
(2) Tests on Exhibit 399. Question of bullet on stretcher arose from FBI action.

Background

Mr. Wright, Sec. Guard at Hospital, told FBI SA of bullet & FBI said not responsible for investigation. Wright gave bullet to Secret Service man and told him where bullet came from. Secret Service man put it in his pocket.

CBS criticized Comm. for letting FBI investigate its own involvement. Criticized Comm. for taking word of FBI (affidavits) regarding whether LHO was connected with FBI. Hosty's name was in LHO's notebook.

Mrs. Marguerite Oswald says LHO was working for CIA. She mentions LHO's getting out of Marine Corps 3 months early, then got passport to travel abroad.

The Warren Comm. permitted FBI and CIA to investigate themselves & so cast shadow on the outcome.

The question of whether all relevant witnesses were called (eg) Mrs. Walther, who said she saw 2 gunmen in a different window, has been criticized. 552 witnesses were called.

Epstein says the central question that bothers him was the discrepancy between FBI report & autopsy report. Epstein says X-rays & photographs would resolve this: but these are not available

CBS points out Capt. Hume says the report has not been changed. CBS says the Commission should have looked at the pictures. CBS believes the film should be made available to independent pathologists of Capt. Hume's status for examination.

CBS also believes Zapruder's film should be released to public. Life mag. will not permit this.

John J. McCloy: He is prepared to discuss procedures and attitude of Comm. He pointed out "This was an 'investigation' - to find 'facts.'" The attitude of the Commission was not to cover up anything. The charge is "silly." 7 men are not going to concoct a conspiracy - common sense tells you this.

They visited Dallas & looked at places and evidence. The Comm. followed evidence.

The conclusions of the Comm. were not rushed.

McCloy said he would have insisted on seeing the photos of the body if he had to do it again.

There are as many disbelievers as there are because of distorted statements in criticism. More of these have been read than the Report. General distrust of Govt. accounts for this.

McCloy: Objects to charges Comm was motivated other than for truth. Nothing fraudulent or sinister about the Comm. He says he has not seen any credible evidence to change the conclusions.

Could America Believe the Report?

Seymour Lipset points out that an assassination that is part of a plot is more believable than a senseless killing for no reason.

Prof. Henry Steele Commager says there is a "conspiracy psychology" - No reason to believe "conspiracy mentality."

Another inquiry would change this. The "conspiracy mentality" rejects the ordinary explanation for the extraordinary. Result of cold war and what followed.

Eric Sevareid supported Commager. The incongruity exists in all assassinations except the attempt on Harry Truman.

It would be impossible to conceal a conspiracy. Men of the caliber of Warren & McCloy would not conceal a conspiracy. The notion is idiotic.

Conclusion: The Report is the best account of what happened. It is the easiest to believe.