

ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE SPRING MEETING OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF TRIAL LAWYERS
ON MARCH 16, 1964 AT MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA -- by Leon Jaworski

Following the President's assassination there were a series of swift-moving events. An employee in the building from ~~which~~ which the shots were fired was missing. His description was broadcast and a pick-up order issued. A cruising policeman who sought to interrogate a suspect fitting the description was slain. A suspicious acting man reportedly was seen entering a theater. He was observed to move about from place to place in the lower auditorium. Police surrounded the building--then entered the theater where the suspect was pointed out. Approached by the officers, he was told to stand up and as one of them undertook to search him, the suspect struck the ~~x~~ officer with his fist--then reached for his pocket and drew a pistol. The gun was wrested from him but ~~not~~ not until after the trigger had been pulled and the cartridge failed to fire. The suspect, shouting "police brutality" was removed from the theater, placed in a car with four officers. On the way to the police station, he repeatedly shouted: "What do you want with me? All you have on me is that I was in possession of a pistol." The suspect was identified as ~~X~~ Lee Harvey Oswald, an employee in the building from which the assassin's shots were fired.

Quickly unraveling circumstances pointed to Harvey Oswald as the assassin. But at the time these ~~ix~~ circumstances were far from conclusive. When interrogated by the authorities he was surly, arrogant and scoffed at their efforts to discuss the assassination with him. "I know my rights," he sneered.

(End p.1)

Across the land, lawyers in particular, as well as some laymen who were following television and newspaper accounts of the investigation became perturbed. True, it appeared that Oswald may be the despised assassin, but what about his legal rights? Is an aroused and emotionally-charged public to forget that even a strongly-suspected assassin is to be accorded the legal rights guaranteed to an accused under our system of law? Would the authorities, in their eagerness to solve so great a crime, become unmindful of his rights under the judicial process?

Regrettably, much too much had already been telecast about the purported evidence that pointed to his guilt. Yet ~~x~~ not a word had been said about this man being represented by counsel to advise him and to stand ready to resist any encroachment on his legal rights.

Leaders of the Bar became uneasy. "It must not be said that this man, although already hated and scorned, was denied his constitutional rights" thought leaders of the Bar. Here was a case that may well put to a test our system of equal justice under law. Action was taken to determine the facts.

In such a time of strain and stress, birth is given to many rumors and speculation runs rampant. Fortunately, in this instance, the true facts are available for your appraisal.

On his own initiative and implementing the suggestion of others, Louis Nichols, the then president of the Dallas Bar Association, called on Lee Harvey Oswald to ascertain the facts regarding his desire for the services of counsel. I have his report of what occurred, and I shall read to you the pertinent excerpts.... (End p. 2)

... It has been my privilege to attend a number of the Commission's sessions. (p. 11)
The Attorney General, Dean Storey and I alternate in attending these hearings. I have been impressed by the thoroughness of the work performed by the staff serving the Commission. Two of our Fellows, Joe Ball and Bert Jenner, are serving on this staff.

Only one who has some knowledge of the piles of exhibits, the numerous reports that need to be studied and analyzed, the many witnesses that need to be heard and the tedious task of separating the grain from the chaff can appreciate the length of time this undertaking will consume. It is hoped that in the end the public at large and lawyers in particular will find that they can give their approval to this important undertaking.

Now I realize that some of you had hoped that in these ~~xxxx~~ remarks there would be a disclosure of some of the results of the investigative work done so far, including perhaps some conclusions that might have been reached. From that standpoint, at least, my ~~xxx~~ comments have been a ~~failure~~ failure.... (Ends with ~~ix~~ joke: boy brings home bad report card; father said "Well, one thing is certain. He sure as hell didn't cheat.")

PP. 1, 2, 11(*) OF JAWORSKI'S 3/16/64 SPEECH.
SORRY; THIS IS THE BEST IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE
COPY. WORTH THE EFFORT TO READ. AT LEAST PP 1-2
Paul

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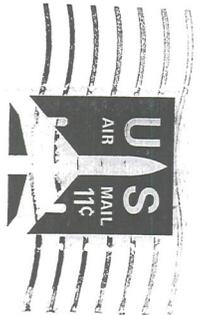
serving as Special Counsel and has aided materially in providing helpful analysis in Dallas in addition to other functions.

It has been my privilege to attend a number of the Commission's sessions. The Attorney General, Dana Stone, and I always rate in attending these hearings. I have been impressed by the thoroughness of the work performed by the staff serving the Commission. Two of our Fellows, Joe Bail and Perry Jenner, are serving on this staff.

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Now I realize that some of you had hoped that in these reports there would be a disclosure of some of the results of the investigative work done so far, including perhaps some conclusions that might have been reached. From that standpoint, at least, my comments have been a failure. In that regard my situation is no different from that of the boy who brought home a miserable report card. He not only failed every subject but made the lowest possible grade that could be given in each. His disheartened father read the card over and over again and shaking his head finally said: "Well, one thing is certain. He sure as hell didn't cheat."

Paul L. Hoch
1735 Highland Place, #25
Berkeley, CA 94709

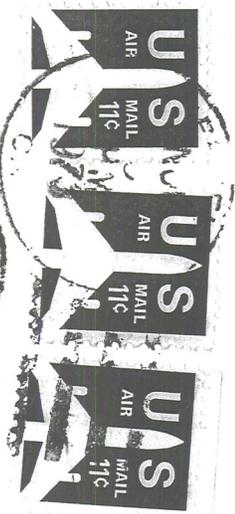


Harold Weisberg
Route 8

Frederick, MD 21701

HOCH
1735 HIGHLAND PL #25
BERKELEY, CA 94709

HAROLD WELLSBERG
ROUTE 8
FREDERICK, MD 21701



AIR MAIL

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