

Weapon

- 11/22/63** [4th lead] The murder weapon reportedly was a 30-30 rifle. *AP*, 1:50 p.m. CST
- 11/22/63** 4<sup>th</sup> add 4<sup>th</sup> lead Dallas -- Lt. Erich Kaminski of the Secret Service bureau said the assassin's weapon appears to have been a "high-powered army or Japanese rifle of about .25 caliber. The rifle had a scope on it, he said. *AP*, A34dn, 2:12 p.m. CST
- 11/22/63** DN11 wire photo says this gun killed Kennedy. have we had story of gun recovery?, At 2:15 p.m. PST [4:15 p.m. CST] San Francisco messaged Dallas
- 11/22/63** Note A34DN mentions gun recovered, but doesn't definitely say it [the] gun. Checking for confirmation. 4:30 p.m. CST [2:30 p.m. PST] Dallas replied
- 11/22/63** Dallas - It seemed evident that there was some planning behind the assassination. In the *Texas School Book Depository* building, overlooking the underpass, officers found an old .30 caliber Enfield with telescopic sights, spent cartridges and scraps of fried chicken. The rifle was partly hidden behind books on the second-floor of the five-story building. The bullets had come from about a 45-degree angle. *AP*, Frank Cormier, 5:18 p.m. CST
- 11/22/63** Dallas - The fatal shot came from the second floor of the *Texas Schoolbook Depository* Building, at a 45-degree angle, 100 yards away.
- Police know this. They found the rifle, partly hidden behind some books. It was a bolt action model, believed to be of Japanese make, with telescopic sights. *AP*, Raymond Holbrook, 6:48 p.m. CST
- 11/22/63** Correction: "... an old .30 caliber rifle with telescopic sights, etc." [deleting Enfield] *AP*, 6:49 p.m. CST
- 11/22/63** Correction: " ... from the fifth floor of the six-story Texas etc." [correcting floor] *AP* 7:24 p.m. CST
- 11/22/63** Correction: "officers ... described it as a bolt-action, 6.5 mm weapon, apparently of Italian make, with a telescopic sight." *AP* 7:32 p.m. CST
- 11/22/63 (?)** From notes taken in 4/64, from *The Fateful Hours*, a *Capitol Custom* record [RB-2278] by *KLIF*, Dallas, issued earlier in the year.
- Time not given. Announced the rifle had been found with which President Kennedy was shot -- on the fifth floor of the Sexton [*Texas School Book Depository*] Building. One shell found in the camber, three more shells nearby, just husks of bullets.
- 11/22/63** Dallas - A Dallas TV reporter said he saw a rifle being withdrawn from a window on the fifth or sixth floor of an office building shortly after the gunfire. ...

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The Dallas Sheriff's Department said a rifle had been found in a staircase on the fifth floor of a building near the scene of the assassination. It was a 7.65 Mauser. The German-made army rifle had a telescopic sight with one shell left in the chamber. Three spent shells were found nearby. *News CB, UPI*, p. 5

**11/23/63** Price of gun, *AP* 7:21 p.m., CST, Peggy Simpson

**11/23/63** Dallas, [11/22] - In a search of the buildings in the area, a German-made Mauser rifle was found on a fifth floor landing of one tall structure. One shell remained in the rifle's chamber. Three shots had been fired. *New York Times*

**11/23/63** Dallas - ... Captain Fritz said it was of obscure foreign origin, possibly Italian, of about 1940 vintage, of an unusual undetermined caliber. He displayed a bullet he said fitted the gun. It was about .30 caliber and about 2½ inches long, with a narrow tapered nose. *New York Times*, Gladwin Hill

**11/23/63** Dallas - The 7.65 mm [roughly .30 caliber] bolt action Mauser German army rifle with 4-power sniperscope was found tucked among books on the sixth floor. Near it were gnawed chicken bones and an empty soda bottle. *News CB, UPI and AP*

**11/23/63** Dallas - Attorney Henry Wade ... said investigators learned from Oswald's Russian-born wife that he had a rifle of the type used to kill the President and had it with him the night before the assassination. *News CB*, p. 2, *UPI and AP*

**11/23/63** Dallas -- The foreign made rifle believed used in the assassination of President Kennedy had no fingerprints on it, police reported last night.

The weapon -- a German army .765 Mauser -- was turned over to the FBI and was being sent to Washington for exhaustive investigation and analysis.

It was found on a fifth floor stairwell of the *Texas Schoolbook Depository* Building about 100 yards from where Mr. Kennedy was shot to death. Three empty shells were found nearby. *San Francisco Chronicle, UPI and AP*

**11/23/63** Dallas -- Police said it was established that at the time of the assassination Oswald was in a building a block from the presidential car where a .765 Mauser rifle was found on a fifth floor landing. *San Francisco Chronicle, UPI and AP*

**11/23/63** Dallas - Oswald also was accused of slaying a pursuing policeman, another charge he denied although he admitted he owned the snub-nosed .38 caliber pistol which felled the officer. *News CB*, p. 2, *UPI and AP*

**11/23/63** "Creviston said the rifle is an Italian military carbine of uncommon size and distinctive style. When he saw a photo of it, he said, he immediately recognized it as a used weapon offered for sale in a magazine distributed by *Klein's Sporting Goods Co.* of

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Chicago. Dayton, OH -- Rifle [A217C0] pls sub for fifth graf "Creviston ... Chicago firm." *AP* 12:04 a.m. EST

[See *San Francisco Chronicle*, 11/24, *A Lead on the Killer's Weapon*]

- 11/23/63** Dallas - Mrs. Oswald, mother of a two-month-old child, was quoted by Wade as reporting her husband had in his possession as recently as Thursday night a rifle matching in description the one used by the assassin. *AP*, 4:21 AES, Frank Cormier
- 11/23/63** *AP's* description of gun is corrects Dallas homicide bureau says. Description will be repeated in night leads. It is not Mauser as *UPI* says. *AP*, 1:01 p.m. CST
- 11/23/63** Dallas - The assassination weapon was found, partly hidden behind books amid scraps of fried chicken, on the sixth floor: The police homicide bureau said it was a 6.5mm bolt action rifle, apparently of Italian make.
- Curry told an *AP* reporter he believes Oswald carried the rifle to work with him yesterday morning and passed it off as window shades wrapped in heavy brown paper to the man who gave him a ride downtown. *AP*, Peggy Simpson, 1:50 p.m. CST
- 11/23/63** Dallas - [Fritz] said the rifle had definitely been purchased by mail order from Chicago, but he declined to say who had bought it. *AP*, 7:21 p.m. CST, Peggy Simpson
- 11/23/63** Chief of Police Jesse Curry later announced that the FBI had a letter in Oswald's handwriting addressed to a Chicago mail order firm seeking to purchase a rifle priced at \$12.78. He said the letter used an alias and a Dallas Post Office box number. *AP*, 7:40 p.m. CST, Add, above
- 11/23/63** Dallas - Dallas police said tonight they have photographs that link accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald with the rifle used to kill President Kennedy.
- Homicide Capt. Will Fritz ... would not elaborate on the photographs to say when or where they had been taken. ... Fritz said police also have photographs that place Oswald with the pistol used in the slaying of the policeman. *AP*, 7:21 p.m. CST, Peggy Simpson
- 11/24/63** *Klein's Sporting Goods* advertisement, *San Francisco Examiner*, p. 3.
- 11/24/63** Dallas - Dallas police said yesterday they have an airtight case against Lee Harvey Oswald ..., including photos of him holding the rifle that was used.
- The photographs found at Oswald's home showed him with the pistol strapped around his waist, holding the rifle in his hand.

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Behind him could be seen two periodicals. One had the headline "Be Militant." The other had a line reading "The Worker." *San Francisco Chronicle* [UPI], p. 1

**11/24/63** Dallas - Curry said photographs found in the home of Oswald's Russian-born wife link him with the rifle used in the daylight assassination.

The pictures, taken before the shooting, were found in the wife's home in suburban Irving, TX. *AP*, AP2dn, 3:10 a.m. CST, [Kennedy investigation story filed early Sunday morning protective service]

**11/24/63** Dallas - from interview with Mrs. Ruth Paine on Oswald and his family.

... Thursday night, Oswald went to the Paine garage where the family belongings were stored.

"I thought nothing of it," said Mrs. Paine. She didn't know what he went after, but she remembered he did because he left the garage light burning.

The next day, she found a blanket that had once contained something bulky - lying empty on a work table.

Mrs. Paine said Marina had told police she had once opened that blanket and thought she remembered seeing the butt of a gun. *AP*, 6:50 p.m. CST, Patricia Curran

**11/24/63** Dallas - Three ejected shells, of an odd caliber that came from the assassination rifle found on the floor, were discovered by the box where Oswald's print was found. *AP*, 1026 p.m. CST

**11/24/63** Dallas - Mrs. Oswald told officers through a Russian interpreter she had seen her husband at home Thursday night in possession of a rifle similar to the assassination weapon.

... Oswald's wife said the rifle he owned was in Irving Thursday night but was not there Friday. *AP*, Peggy Simpson

[Also see *New York Times*, Gladwin Hill]

**11/24/63** Dallas - Police Chief Jesse Curry said the FBI had reported that Oswald bought the Italian 6.5 Carcano bolt-action rifle with a telescopic sight from a Chicago mail-order house for \$12.78. The rifle had earlier been identified as a Mauser. *UPI*

**11/25/63** Dallas, [11/24] - Dallas policemen obtained a statement from Oswald's Russian-born wife, Marina, that he had a rifle in the garage

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of her living quarters on the night before the assassination. The young woman also said the rifle was not there on the next day. Authorities said the wife's testimony would not have been possible in Texas courts, however. *New York Times*, Fred Powledge

**11/25/63** Dallas - [package wrapped in brown paper] Curry said ... investigators found some heavy paper crumpled on the floor near the window from which the assassin fired the bullets at the President. *News CB*, p. 6, *AP*

**11/25/63** New York -- from statement at news conference by Henry Wade: ... three ejected shells were found ... of an odd caliber. The gun was hidden on this same [6<sup>th</sup>] floor behind some boxes and bookcases. *AP*

**11/25/63** Dallas, [11/24] - [Story lists items of evidence released by police.]

... A search of Mrs. Oswald's living quarters produced photographs showing her husband holding a rifle and a pistol. *New York Times*, p. 1, Fred Powledge

**11/25/63** Dallas - ... Curry said the picture showed Oswald in "at attention posture," holding the rifle by the stock in one hand.

In his other hand, Curry said, Oswald held copies of *The Daily Worker*, a Communist newspaper, and *The Militant*, a Fascist publication. *News CB*, p. 6, *AP*

Wade said they found a photograph showing Oswald holding the rifle, at what he called an "at attention" stance. In one hand, Oswald held the rifle and in the other copies of *The Daily Worker* and a fascist publication, *The Militant*. *AP*, 3:08 am CST, Peggy Simpson

**11/25/63** New York

Reporter: "Did you say the gun was mailed to a post office box in Dallas in March?"

Wade: "March of this year."

Reporter: "Was he living in Dallas then?"

Wade: "Yes. I presume he was. He got it here."

Reporter: "I see."

Reporter: "Previously he lived in New Orleans."

Reporter: "He said he'd only been here two months."

Reporter: "Mr. Wade ... "

Wade: "He came to Fort Worth sometime in the fall of '62. And then moved here a while, and apparently went to New Orleans for a while and came back. And when the period to that is, I'm not sure." *AP* report of press conference by Henry Wade

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- 11/25/63** Dallas - Wade spoke to newsmen last night [nine hours after Oswald shot].
- ... He said Oswald bought the Italian-make assassination rifle last March from a Chicago mail order firm, at a cost of slightly more than \$12. The FBI, he said, confirmed the serial number of the mail order rifle matched that of the rifle that fired the shots at Kennedy.
- Wade said they found a photograph showing Oswald holding the rifle, at what he called an "at attention" stance. In one hand, Oswald held the rifle and in the other copies of *The Daily Worker* and a fascist publication, *The Militant*. AP 3:08 a.m. CST, Peggy Simpson
- 11/25/63** Dallas - Wade spoke to newsmen last night [nine hours after Oswald shot].
- ... He was driven into town by a neighbor from Irving, a Dallas suburb. Wade said Oswald usually stayed there with his wife only on weekends, and at other times lived in a rented room in Dallas.
- Oswald was carrying a package, which he said contained window shades. The package was long enough to have held a rifle. Oswald's wife said the rifle he owned was in Irving Thursday night but was not there Friday. AP, 3:08 am CST, Peggy Simpson
- 11/25/63** DN (KX) ... San Francisco Chronicle says *The Militant* is a radical socialist publication - not fascist. 7:44 a.m. PST
- Correction, Dallas - "Wade said they found ... *Worker* and a socialist publication, *The Militant*." [not fascist] AP, 10:11 a.m. CST
- 11/25/63** New York, [11/25] - [Transcript of Wade's statement and news conference late 11/24.]
- ... "Pictures were found of the defendant with this gun and a pistol on his - in his - holster." AP, 3:45 a.m. CST
- 11/25/63** Portland messaged Dallas: Mbr asks if Oswald got gun and scope for \$12.78. They talking with scope expert who says it looks far too expensive for that; and scope usually has to be fitted by gunsmith for accuracy. Does not recall anything about that angle and asks if it been developed. AP, 4:08 p.m. PST
- 11/25/63** Portland to Washington [Chicago]: Will FBI say if Oswald's scope sight came with mail order gun? If not, what was source. Mbr comments scope appeared too costly to accompany cheap gun and normally requires expert sighting by gunsmith. [Chicago: what does supplier say?] AP 5:47 p.m. PST
- 11/25/63** Dallas to Portland: Dallas City Det. H. A. Moore says has not been determined whether scope came with gun. *Kleins*, Chicago,

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provided gun. FBI says info must come from Washington office. *AP*, 7:22 p.m. CST

**11/25/63** Chicago to Portland [Dallas]: Milton Klein of *Klein Sporting Goods Stores Inc.* from which gun was purchased, says gun could be bought with or without a scope but that Oswald's purchase definitely included the scope. The sales price with the scope was \$19.95. *AP* 8:27 p.m. CST

**11/26/63** Washington - Wade ... revealed what he said were the facts gathered by Dallas police. These were:

... That on the morning of the assassination [Oswald] carried to work an oblong package and when stopped by a 4 policeman, he said it contained window shades, whereas, police later said, it held the fateful rifle.

... That witnesses saw him on the sixth floor of the book warehouse with the oblong package. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 'Our correspondent'

**11/26/63** Dallas, [11/25] - The district attorney said the police had traced the serial number of the murder weapon, an Italian rifle with a telescopic sight, to the Chicago mail-order house that had sold Oswald a rifle last spring. *New York Times*, Fred Powledge

**11/26/63** Undated [New York] long feature on "Oswald, the accused assassin".

... a 6.5 Italian carbine Oswald bought for \$12.78 from a Chicago sporting goods firm ..., *AP* 5:56 a.m. EST, Sid Moody

**11/26/63** ... an Italian carbine with scope that Oswald bought for \$19.95 from a x x x [inserting "with scope" and upping purchase price due to scope. Gun sold alone for \$12.78.] *AP*, 7:00 a.m. EST, this correction moved.

**11/26/63** San Francisco asked Dallas [for Oakland] if there is any official estimate of elapsed time from first through third shots at President. *AP*, 12:46 p.m. PST

**11/26/63** Washington -- Sidebar on rifle.

Paraphrase: Leonard Davis, an official in the *National Rifle Association*, said in response to a newsman's questions that it would be possible to fire three shots in about five seconds with the type of rifle allegedly used to kill President Kennedy.

But he said such rapid and accurate fire as was displayed would seem to require "a true expert, which -Oswald didn't seem to be" on the basis of his record in the Marine Corps.

... the weapon police said was used was a 6.5 mm bolt action rifle, apparently of Italian make but without any identifying marks.

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It was advertised for sale as a Carcano, which is a modification of the German Mauser design.

... Davis said the Carcano rifle has a maximum accuracy of about 600 yards. He said the rifle's telescopic sight magnifies the image of the target four times.

The cars in the procession were moving slowly, at a few miles an hour, making easier one element of the shooter's problem.

But it was pointed out he needed to shoot at a downward angle, which is more difficult than aiming horizontally. *AP*, 2:19 p.m. CST

**12/26/63** Dallas replied: Know of no one who has estimated elapsed time. Note B154 today Oswald-Rifle [wherein *National Rifle Association* official in Washington said would have been possible to fire three shots in about five seconds with rifle allegedly used but would require a true expert, which Oswald didn't seem to be on basis of his Marine record]. Senator Ralph Yarborough said at time that it sanded bang-bang-bang, like measured fire, not like a burst. *AP*, 3:02 p.m. CST

**11/27/63** New York - If the Italian surplus military rifle [a Model 1938, 6.5mm, bolt-action rifle] ... were in standard condition the assassin could easily have fired a series of shots in eight seconds or less.

... In a number of tests made yesterday by a firearms expert of the *National Rifle Association* in Washington, the same kind of gun ... was used.

The rifle is odd in the manner of its loading. A clip or charger is required for rapid firing. Six cartridges are loaded into the charger, which is then inserted in the action of the rifle. To be in standard condition, the rifle must be equipped with a charger, as it was in the expert's tests. *New York Times*, Oscar Godbout

**11/29/63** Dallas [11/28] - That weapon, a .38-caliber pistol, has been turned over to the FBI ... It was reported that Oswald bought the pistol about two months ago and that the police have traced the point of its purchase. *New York Times*, John Herbers

**11/29/63** Dallas, [11/28] A gunsmith from Irving, TX, said today he mounted a telescopic sight on a gun for a man named Oswald about a month ago.

The gunsmith, Dial D. Ryder, said he could not remember what the gun looked like, nor could he remember the customer.

... "Many people have this kind of work done," Mr. Ryder said. He said he believed a close examination of the Oswald weapon would show that he had not done the work. *New York Times*, John Berbers

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- 11/29/63** Dallas - An elevator operator said Oswald carried the package to the deserted fifth floor storeroom from which the shots were fired. *San Francisco Chronicle, Chicago Daily News*, M.W. Newman and Henry Hanson
- 11/29/63** ... And near the fifth floor landing, half-hidden behind crates of textbooks, they found an Italian-made kind of 6.5-mm. rifle fitted with a four-power telescopic sight ... *Time*, p 24, The Assassination.
- 11/29/63** Dallas - When Dial M. Ryder was shown pictures of the gun that killed President Kennedy, he said it was not the same type of rifle that had been brought to him. ... His records show Ryder got \$6 for the job from a man named Oswald, but Ryder said, "I am sure I would have remembered that type gun and none like that has been brought to me." *News CB, UPI*
- 11/30/63** Dallas, [11/29] - A postal inspector, Harry Holmes, said Oswald rented a post office box in his own name in Dallas on 10/9/62.
- On 3/20/63, a gun from a mail order house in Chicago was delivered to the box. It was addressed to A. Hidell, a name authorities said Oswald had used as an alien. [alias?]
- This was the gun the Federal Bureau of Investigation said was used to kill President Kennedy.
- On 5/10, Oswald had the box order transferred to New Orleans, where he lived until late September.
- On 11/2, after he had returned to Dallas, Oswald rented another box in his own name.
- He also listed as organization names the *Fair Play for Cuba Committee* and the *American Civil Liberties Union*. He listed A. Hidell as authorized to receive mail through the box.
- Both organizations said Oswald had not represented them in any capacity.
- Mr. Holmes said no person other than Oswald was authorized to receive mail through the first box he rented, but this did not prevent him from ordering a gun through an alias.
- "This is for the protection of the box holder," Mr. Holmes said. "If a package comes to a person not authorized to receive mail, the box holder can refuse it."
- Another postal inspector, Ralph Thomas, said no references were required for persons renting post office boxes. He also said no identification was required.
- Mr. Holmes said Oswald had received Soviet newspapers and first class mail through the box, but there was no record of any

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packages other than the rifle.

He said the box was still listed in Oswald's name at the time of the assassination. *Special New York Times*

- 12/6/63** ... Once Marina found a carbine wrapped in a blanket and hidden in the Paines' garage. It was Oswald's. He had bought it from a Chicago mail-order house on 3/20, along with a fair-power telescopic sight. He had paid \$19.95 for gun and sight and had instructed a gunsmith, located near the Paine home, not only to mount the scope but to sight the weapon for him [cost; \$6]. ... *Time, The Man Who Killed Kennedy*, p. 33b
- 12/6/63** Oswald's wife seems to have been generally ignorant about his activities and particularly about his assassination plot. When police officers came to ask her, after the shooting, whether her husband had a gun, she said he had, led them to the place where Oswald usually kept his carbine - and gasped, as they did, to find that it was not there and that she had hopelessly incriminated her husband. *Life- Memorial Edition*
- 12/7/63** Washington - At the time of the Walker shooting, Dallas police reported the bullet was from a .30-06 caliber rifle. The weapon apparently used to kill Mr. Kennedy was an Italian 6.5mm weapon, equivalent to about .270 caliber. *San Francisco Chronicle, UPI, AP*
- 12/7/63** Dallas, [12/6] - An Italian-made Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, a 1938 model of 6.5mm caliber, was received by Oswald at his Dallas Post Office box on 3/20. [No attribution.], *New York Times*, Joseph A. Loftus
- 12/7/63** Washington - The gun was described as an Italian-made military carbine called a Mannlicher-Carcano, a bolt-action, six-shot, clip-fed rifle of 6.5 mm. [25 caliber] bore. It was equipped with a four-power telescopic sight.
- ... Milton P. Klein, president of *Klein's Sporting Goods*, a Chicago mail order firm, confirmed 11/24 that it was his firm which sold the rifle that was identified as Oswald's.
- Klein said a copy of the sales slip [date of order] showed it was shipped to Dallas in 3/63. The total bill was \$19.95 - \$12.78 for the rifle and \$7.17 for the scope.
- The FBI said it was sent to a Dallas post office box rented by Oswald. The box was rented in the name of "A. Hidell." The gun arrived 3/20. *AP*, J. W. Davis
- 12/7/63** Dallas, [12/6] - The Oswald rifle was a distinctive bolt-action type that required special military ammunition. *New York Times*, Joseph A. Loftus

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- 12/7/63** Washington -- long feature roundup on weapon, repeats basic features of the FBI version. *AP*, J.W. Davis
- 12/7/63** Dallas - The assassin rested his 6.5-mm six-shot rifle on a stack of boxes at the half-opened sixth-floor window in the southeast corner of the book building. ... The rifle barked once. Then twice more.
- ... The assassin dashed to the opposite corner of the building and tossed the rifle behind a stack of boxed basic readers. *AP*, p:39 p.m. CST, Jules Loh
- 12/11/63** Washington [12/10] - Brown threads caught on an assassin's rifle helped to weave what the FBI considers a conclusive case against Lee Harvey Oswald ...
- Government sources disclosed ... that the threads, identified as from Oswald's shirt, were found snagged in the mechanism of the Italian-made bolt action rifle which also bore his palm print. *San Francisco Chronicle, AP*
- 12/14/63** Lee Oswald slipped out of the building, his absence noticed only after police took a roll call of all building employees. The police then broadcast an alarm: "Unknown white male, - 30, slender build, 5-6, 160 pounds, thought to be carrying a 30-06 or 30-30 rifle." *Saturday Evening Post*, Ben E. Bagdikian, p. 26
- 12/20/64** Washington - The bullet that killed President Kennedy may have ricocheted off the President's automobile before striking him on the back of the head, an expert on wound ballistics said yesterday. ... Or the assassin may have used soft-nosed, incompletely jacketed hunting-type bullets in an effort to produce maximum size wounds, Dr. James Beyer said.
- Dr. Beyer, a pathologist at Arlington, VA., hospital who formerly was with the Army Surgeon General's office [wrote the section on wound ballistics in the Army's official medical history of World War II], is not connected in any way with the Kennedy case.
- But he said that these possibilities concerning either the course or character of the fatal bullet appear to offer about the only satisfactory explanation for the extent of the President's lethal wound as described by Dallas doctors who attended him minutes after the shooting - and by a reliable source familiar with findings of a still-unannounced autopsy report.
- ... Dr. Beyer also had this to say: "I'm still surprised at the reported size of the head wound if a normal, completely jacketed, military type bullet was used - and if it did not strike some object, such as a portion of the President's limousine, before hitting the President's head."
- Ordinarily, he said, a military-type bullet, if fired from a range of about 100 yards as the fatal bullet apparently was, would cause only a relatively small wound at the point of entry, and would not necessarily cause extensive damage inside the skull. In contrast, he said, a soft-nosed hunting-type bullet - whose soft nose tends to "mushroom out" after striking' a target - would cause a head

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wound of the devastating type described even though the initial entrance wound was not large. Also, he said, if an ordinary military-type bullet was used and "just grazed" a portion of the limousine before striking the President - without losing much of its energy - the slight instability imparted to the missile by the ricochet could have resulted in the large wound described. *San Francisco Chronicle, AP*

**12/21/63** ... First press accounts quoted various members of the Dallas police force as saying the assassin's weapon was a .30 caliber Enfield and a 7.65mm Mauser. One Secret Service man said he thought the weapon was an "army or Japanese rifle" of .25 caliber. The same accounts reported that the rifle was found on the second floor of the building by a window, in the fifth floor staircase, by an open sixth-floor window, and hidden behind boxes and cases on the second or sixth floors.

It was not until the FBI said it had discovered that Oswald had purchased an Italian-made 6.5mm rifle from a Chicago mail-order house that the confusion was dispelled. Then all accounts and all sources agreed: The former .30 caliber Enfield-7.65 Mauser was not a 6.5mm Italian made rifle with a telescopic sight. It was also at this time that all sources began agreeing that the gun had been found on the sixth floor – though some still held out for the open-window location, while others argued for the buried-behind-the-boxes theory. ... *The New Republic, Seeds of Doubt*, by Jack Minnis and Staughton Lynd. [p. 5 of typed copy]

**12/21/63** ... Powledge's story of the 25<sup>th</sup>, quoted above, states that the stretcher bullet and the fragmented bullet matched bullets fired by FBI men from the rifle found inside the building. The rifle [identified variously as an Enfield and a Mauser] was found early in the afternoon of 11/22. So were the two bullets. They were in the possession of the Dallas police and the FBI presumably, from then on. Sometime on 11/23 the rifle became a Mannlicher-Carcano. Is it the custom of Italian rifle-makers to leave their names off their products, so that they cannot be identified immediately? We don't know.

We do know that the more damage done to the surface of the bullet the more dubious becomes the accuracy of laboratory comparison with other bullets to determine which gun of a given make it was fired from, even if the make of the gun can be determined. Thus the identification of the gun that supposedly fired the assassination bullets seems to rest primarily, not on the fragmented bullet, but on a bullet allegedly found by a Secret Service man on a stretcher in *Parkland Hospital*, Dallas, after the President was shot.

It is not clear at this point just where this bullet came from and how it came to be on "a stretcher." *The New Republic, Seeds of Doubt*, by Jack Minnis and Staughton Lynd. [p. 5 of typed copy]

**1/64** p. 16, lists unanimous initial reports by various press reporters that the weapon was a Mauser. *The Minority of One*, pp. 16-23, article by Eric Norden

**1/3/64** Ed Wallace of *World Telegram* bought 20 bullets, fired them in an open field; only 3 went off; 17 duds. A friend of Lane's at *ABC-TV* said someone there fired 12 rounds; only 3 went off. This ammunition goes back to 1936 and even to World War I and

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is very unreliable. Radio interview of Mark Lane by Chris Koch and Robert Potts, *WBAI*, New York; no date. From notes made when tape broadcast by *KPFA*, Berkeley, 1/3/64

- 1/3/64** The clerk handled the rifle, for the television cameras, without gloves, before the FBI or anyone else had checked it for fingerprints. Radio interview of Mark Lane by Chris Koch and Robert Potts, *WBAI*, New York; no date. From notes made when tape broadcast by *KPFA*, Berkeley, 1/3/64
- 1/3/64** Wade had the weapon for 7 hours; said it was a German Mauser. Next day FBI said it was an Italian carbine. After this Wade stated for the first time it was an Italian gun. Lane Interview
- 1/9/64** Mrs. Paine did not know that Oswald owned a rifle. [Further investigation led me to the inescapable conclusion that he did own a rifle and that the rifle was in all likelihood store while wrapped in a blanket, in the Paine garage in Irving.] *National Guardian*, Mark Lane
- 2/7/64** Washington, [2/6] – [From text of prepared statement issued by Earl Warren, at the conclusion of Marina's testimony:]
- Mrs. Oswald has identified the rifle that was found on the sixth floor of the *Texas School Book Depository Building* in Dallas immediately after the assassination as the one which her husband kept at their home prior to the assassination. *New York Times*, William M. Blair
- 2/8/64** "Marina Oswald has been brainwashed by the Secret Service. She was held incommunicado for eight weeks, and knows nothing that has not been told to her by Secret Service agents.
- "Among other things, she told the Dallas police on Friday, 11/22, that the rifle shown her was NOT her husband's rifle. Cross-examination would bring this contradiction out in an open hearing." *NCB*, George Dushek, account of Mark Lane press conference.
- 2/11/64** Washington -- Mark Lane ... told newsmen that Oswald's young widow, Marina, originally failed to identify the presumed assassination weapon as belonging to her husband.
- ... Lane ... said he was able to state that the mother [Marguerite] ... gave the commission this testimony:
- That on the afternoon of 11/22, a few hours after the assassination in Dallas, the young widow was confronted in Dallas police headquarters with the Italian-made carbine found ... where Oswald worked;
- That upon returning home, the young woman told her mother-in-law that the police had asked her whether Oswald had owned a

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gun, and that she had replied: "mama, I told them the truth, I told them yes;"

-- That Marina then was asked whether the gun in police hands was her husband's, and that she replied: "Mama, I told them I did not think so because it did not look like Lee's gun."

... Noting that [Marina] ... testified last week that the presumed assassination weapon was in fact the rifle which Oswald purchased by mail last March and kept in their home, Lane said the discrepancy between that testimony and her earlier words to her mother-in-law indicated she had been "brainwashed."

"That was the only evidence that would be admissible in court," he said.

"The testimony today, therefore, tends to weaken the only valid testimony given by Marina and tends to show what her impression was when it was freshest. It indicates that there has been a classical example of brainwashing." *AP*, 6:33 p.m. CST, Sterling Green

**2/19/64** A secret photograph showing Lee Harvey Oswald holding the gun with which he is believed to have assassinated President Kennedy was revealed yesterday.

... The photograph was obtained by reporter Gene Roberts of the *Detroit Free Press* and published by that newspaper without further explanation as to its source.

... It is believed that the snapshot was taken sometime in April of 1963 by Oswald's wife, Marina. *San Francisco Chronicle*

**2/19/64** Yesterday, Dallas police added a new piece of evidence to the case already built up around the Oswald carbine.

A ballistics test report indicated that the same weapon was used in the unsuccessful sniper attack on former General Edwin Walker.

The report was made public by Chief Jesse Curry and Chief of Detectives M.W. Stevenson. Stevenson said points of comparison of the slug which missed General Walker match fragments of the bullets which took the President's life.

"The ballistics report cannot be final or conclusive," Stevenson said. "But generally the comparison points of the slugs were good." *San Francisco Chronicle*

**2/27/64** Report on article by Auguste Marcelli, correspondent for Italian magazine *L'Europeo*. Marcelli wrote of interview with Milton Klein, in which Klein said it would not have been necessary to have had a telescopic sight mounted on the rifle shipped to

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"Oswald", since it was shipped "with the telescope already mounted and with bores for the screws already drilled." He had already given this information to the FBI, "but it doesn't seem to me that they gave it much importance."

Marcelli quotes Klein as having said "the FBI has warned me to keep my trap shut." *National Guardian*, Jack A. Smith

[See Marcelli interview, *LA Free Press*, 6/21/68]

- 3/64** On 12/8, the *New York Journal American* published a "step by stealthy step" account of the assassination ... by Gene Roberts originally published in the *Detroit Free Press* and then syndicated to various other newspapers across the country. Somewhere in the middle of that story, the following lines appeared:
- "The storage room seemed made to order for an assassin. It was, cluttered with rows of book cartons, some of them in stacks six feet high. Five depository employees had worked in the storage room until noon, covering its floor with plywood. ... "
- ... since it now ... appears that Oswald could not, because of the exceptional activity going on there all morning, have used the convenient hiding places of the sixth floor, where did he keep his rifle from sight until noon? When did he take it out from where he had hidden it? How did he get it to the sixth floor window in time for the murder without being seen? *Commentary*, Leo Sauvage
- 3/64** The rifle which killed President Kennedy, as all the world has been told, was a Mannlicher-Carcano 1938. As is well known by now, European experts - including technicians of the *Beretta Company* which manufactured it and Italian army instructors who used it during World War II - say that this type of rifle does not lend itself to three accurate shots within five or six seconds. Other experts - in Sweden and the United States - disagree. But practically every expert who thinks it possible for such a rifle to achieve so high a degree of rapid-fire accuracy also says that it would require a crack shot, one who was intimate with the weapon and was practicing on it constantly. *Commentary*, Leo Sauvage
- 3/64** There is also the .38 revolver which, according to the Dallas authorities, Oswald used to kill Officer Tippit and with which he later tried to kill Officer MacDonald in the movie theater. While many things, true and false, have been said about the Italian rifle, no evidence whatever connected with the .38 has ever been given to the press. If the official investigators have tried to trace its origins, they have told us nothing about the results of their efforts. Nor have they ever established it as a fact that Oswald carried a revolver, or even owned one. It is true that on ... 11/26, Captain Fritz suddenly "revealed" to newsmen ... that Oswald had confessed to ownership of the .38. This confession had never been mentioned before, not even by ... Wade [whose press conference was held on the evening of Oswald's death], and like several other "revelations" in the case, it was soon to drop out of mention again - presumably because the Dallas authorities realized that the world would be reluctant to accept Captain Fritz's belated word for a confession Oswald allegedly made during the two days of his interrogation by the police without benefit of counsel.

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... The housekeeper, Mrs. Earlene Roberts, did indeed see him take the jacket, but she saw no revolver. [She had, by the way, never noticed a revolver or a holster in his room, though the police claim to have found an empty holster there when they first searched the premises on Friday afternoon.] *Commentary*, Leo Sauvage

3/64

From the very beginning there had been some question about the rifle with the telescopic sight because of the price Oswald was said to have paid for it. Every newspaper in the world had already dozens of times mentioned the \$12.78 second-hand rifle used to kill John F. Kennedy, when a reproduction in the *New York Times* of the *Klein's Sporting Goods* ad showed that \$12.78 was the price of the "6.5 Italian Carbine" without telescopic sight [item No. C20-1196]. The same rifle "with brand new 4 X scope" was listed as costing \$19.95 [item No. C-20-750]. Besides, Oswald would also have had to buy item No. #20-751 ["6.5mm. Italian military ammo, 108 rds"] which, together with a free 6-shot clip, amounted to another \$7.50. Captain Fritz, in answer to questions, said that the announcement of the price as \$12.78 had been an error, and that Oswald received the gun "fully equipped, you bet." Mr. Milton P. Klein, President of *Klein's Sporting Goods* in Chicago, confirmed that the rifle sent to Oswald's P.O. Box in Dallas under the name of A. Hidell was the \$19.95 item with telescopic sight. Mr. Klein did not mention the ammo. Neither did Captain Fritz, and it may be noted here, as another curious detail of the case, that while the search conducted in Irving as well as in the North Beckley Avenue rooming house in Dallas produced a great number of letters, photographs, and other documents, not a single 6.5mm bullet was ever announced as having turned up. *Commentary*, Leo Sauvage

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According to the cashier of the *Texas Theater*, there were perhaps twenty people in the audience when the police entered, and ... they switched on the lights. Thus some twenty people ... watched the arrest of a man whom they were later told was the assassin of President Kennedy.

... Yet no witnesses have been brought forward to testify that Oswald was carrying a gun when he was arrested. What is even more disturbing, no witnesses have come forward on their own to testify to the gun. For it is hard to imagine that some, at least, of the, twenty moviegoers who had just had the adventure of their lives would not rush forward to tell the story of how Lee Harvey Oswald tried to shoot his way out of the theater. It is, however, possible to imagine that some of these twenty residents of the Oak Cliff section of Dallas, having seen no revolver in the hands of Oswald, might hesitate to stick their necks out by contradicting the police. *Commentary*, Leo Sauvage

3/2/64

... Then three weeks ago a *Life* photographer received an anonymous phone call, offering him exclusive shots of Oswald [including one of him holding a rifle]. The photos apparently had been collected by police officials during the investigation, and the best guess was that some official source had passed them on to the seller. *Life's* lawyers decided against buying them on the ground that the documents actually belonged to Marina Oswald and that she could sue. The photographer then went to James Martin, an ex-motel manager and Marina Oswald's business adviser, seeking the originals. Martin had the photo of Oswald and the rifle and sold exclusive North American rights to *Life* for less than \$5,000.

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Unfortunately for *Life*, at least two other packets of Oswald photos were subsequently being circulated [but not by Martin]. Gene Roberts, an enterprising 30-year-old reporter for the *Detroit Free Press*, decided to go after them and managed to buy some twenty photos [including the one *Life* had bought for only \$200. The *Free Press* rushed the Oswald - with -rifle picture onto its front page early last week and then turned it over to the *Associated Press* -- on the day that *Life* hit the stands with the some photo on the cover.

By the weekend, attorneys for *Life* and Marina Oswald were both talking about legal action against the *Free Press*, and Oswald's mother was thinking of suing *Life* on the astounding ground that the magazine's story was "inaccurate" and that the front-page photo may have been her son's head superimposed on somebody else's body. "The legs," she said, "do look very long." *Newsweek*, p. 80 *A Big Sale*

- 3/4/64** It is interesting to note that the name of O. H. Lee, an alias, was released immediately, although some investigation was required to secure that alias; but the name A. Hidell was not released as an alias until after the FBI report was made indicating that Oswald had purchased a rifle under that name, although that alias, if the District Attorney's office is being frank with us in the description of how they determined that alias, that alias was known to the District Attorney's office at the moment of Oswald's arrest and search. Lane testimony before Commission, p. 5
- 3/4/64** p. 1 Testimony on photo of Oswald with rifle, and refusal of *AP* to supply glossy print and information on original source of picture. Quotes "Mr. Dirkson" of *Photo Desk, AP*, New York: "This is not a normal picture, and this is not the normal situation." *AP* had previously supplied other pictures to Mr. Lane. Mark Lane's testimony before Warren Commission
- 3/4/64** p. 4-5 - Description of rifle changed from Mauser to Carcano, after FBI report that A. Hidell had ordered Carcano. Alias of A. Hidell not given out by police until after this FBI report although known to them at the time of Oswald's arrest. Another alias, O. H. Lee, had been reported promptly. Mark Lane's testimony before Warren Commission
- 3/4/64** p. 5 - Mr. Rider's employer called all of the Oswalds in the Irving-Dallas community, and was unable to find anyone there who stated they had brought a rifle in to have a telescopic sight mounted during November. Mark Lane's testimony before Warren Commission
- 3/4/64** p. 5 - Lane quoted Milton Klein, owner of *Klein's Sporting Goods Store*, as saying, "The FBI agents told me, ordered me, not to discuss this case." Mark Lane's testimony before Warren Commission
- [Klein not called to testify]
- 3/8/64** ... On his right side tucked beneath his belt was a .38 snub-nosed revolver, a Smith & Wesson ... he were wrestling for that gun ... he suddenly plunged it forward into my chest and pulled the trigger, but my hand over the gun slowed the action of the hammer

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and it only dented the primer. I could hear the snap, but no bullet was fired ..." *Parade*, [Oakland Tribune] *The Man Who Captured Lee Oswald*, by Lloyd Shearer. [feature on Officer M.N. MacDonald, his account of capturing Oswald in *the Texas Theater*]

**3/16/64** "There is not a single witness to link Oswald to the crime," Mark Lane said in an interview.

[Has 9 witnesses who heard shots fired from grassy overpass knoll -- Gonzalez, named as one, denied it.].

Paraffin tests showed Oswald could have fired a revolver, but not a rifle. No nitrates on face.

Claimed photos showing Oswald holding rifle had been "obviously doctored" before printed in newspapers and magazines. Some versions show telescopic sight, others do not, and in any event the rifle shown is not the murder weapon as identified by Dallas police. *San Francisco Examiner*

**4/26/64** Paris - ... The first picture originally appeared here last February on the cover of the biggest magazine in Paris, *Paris Match*, which bought it from *Life* Magazine. It shows Oswald holding a rifle with a telescopic sight. "The end of the mystery of Kennedy's death," *Paris Match* boldly proclaimed.

Earlier this month other French papers and magazines published an apparently identical picture of Oswald holding a rifle, but this time the telescopic sight was missing. This picture had been bought from *Newsweek*. The original source of both pictures was said to have been the Dallas police. *San Francisco Chronicle* [*Chicago Daily News*]

**5/9/64** Mark Lane, in a statement to the *Guardian* 5/4 ... said he has learned that a second rifle, not the one attributed to Oswald, was found on the roof of the *Texas Schoolbook Depository* building the day the President was murdered.

... At one point during their meeting, [Thayer] Waldo [reporter for *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*] asked Mike Howard [Secret Service agent] whether there was any truth to the story that another rifle was found on the roof of the schoolbook building, a story that had previously been denied. Mike Howard replied: "Yes, we found a rifle on the roof, but it was dropped by a Dallas police officer earlier in the day and he forgot to pick it up." *National Guardian*

**7/6/64** New York, [7/3] - "The rifle that was found on the sixth floor of the *Book Depository* Building less than one hour after the assassination is not the same rifle now alleged to be the murder weapon," said Mark Lane ...

... Lane charged that the Dallas authorities "have switched rifles in order that a rifle allegedly mailed to Oswald's post office box in March appeared to be the murder weapon." Lane, who testified before the Warren Commission on 7/2, was permitted to examine the weapon which allegedly was used by Oswald to assassinate President Kennedy.

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During January, Lane revealed that he had in his possession a photostatic copy of an affidavit on file in the Dallas District Attorney's office. That affidavit, signed by a Dallas police officer who found a rifle on the sixth floor of the *Book Depository* Building ... contained the sworn statement by the officer that the weapon was a German Mauser, Caliber 7.65. The following day the Dallas District Attorney stated that the murder weapon was an Italian Carbine, Caliber 6.5 and it was the weapon which was discovered on the sixth floor of the *Book Depository* Building and erroneously identified by the officer.

Those defending the official view argued that the officer, after examining the weapon, mistakenly concluded that it was a German Mauser, Caliber 7.65, because it bore no identifying markings. Mr. Lane, in his July appearance before the Warren Commission, while examining the rifle read into the record those markings which appeared on the rifle and which were indelibly engraved thereon in large letters. The markings were: "Made Italy" and CAL 6.5."

"There can be but one explanation," charged Lane, "and that is that the local law enforcement authorities have switched rifles in order to 'prove' Oswald's guilt." News Release, *Citizen's Committee of Inquiry*, New York

**9/64** Several photographs have been published of the alleged murder weapon, On 2/21, *Life* magazine carried on its cover a picture of "Lee Oswald with the weapons he used to kill President Kennedy and Officer Tippitt." On p. 80, *Life* explained that the photograph was taken during March or April of 1963. According to the FBI, Oswald purchased his pistol in 9/63. The *New York Times* carried a picture of the alleged murder weapon being taken by police into the Dallas police station. The rifle is quite different. Experts have stated that no rifle resembling the one in the *Life* picture has ever been manufactured. *The New York Times* also carried the same photograph as *Life*, but left out the telescopic sights. On 3/2, *Newsweek* used the same photograph but painted in an entirely new rifle. Then on 4/13 the Latin American edition of *Life* carried same picture on its cover as the U.S. edition had on 2/21, but in the same issue on page 18 it had the same picture with the rifle altered. *The Minority of One, 16 Questions on the Assassination*, Bertrand Russell, p. 7

**9/64** The only witness produced to show that Oswald carried a rifle before the assassination stated that he saw a brown paper parcel about two feet long in the back seat of Oswald's car. The rifle which the police "produced" was almost 3½ feet long. *The Minority of One, 16 Questions on the Assassination*, Bertrand Russell, p. 8

**9/64** [visiting; Dallas in 6/64, Feldman was escorted by Marguerite on a tour of the Oak Cliff area']

... we went to the rooming house near 8<sup>th</sup> and Neely where Lee and Marina lived at the time [when Marina allegedly locked him in his room to prevent his trying to shoot Richard Nixon] ... she went from room to room, pointing out that none of the doors had ever had locks on them.

Before we left, she photographed the fence against which Lee was supposed to be standing when he had his picture taken for

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future reference, holding a rifle, a gun and a Bolshevik: newspaper. "Look here," she said, and pointed to the bottom of the fence, obviously very different from what appeared on the dubious cover of *Life ... The Realist*, p 12. *The Unsinkable Marguerite Oswald*, by Harold Feldman.

- 9/29/64** Dallas's sense of relief at release of *Warren Report*, including comment, including some by Henry Wade:"... Now I never saw the gun. I wouldn't know a Mauler from a ..." *Washington Post*, Laurance Stern
- 10/64** The affidavit of Seymour Weitzman is the only one in the District Attorney's office, in the terms of the person who found the gun. Affidavit signed 24 hours after the gun was found. Weitzman described it as 7.65 Mauser bolt-action equipped with a 4/13 scope with thick leather brownish-black sling. *Lane-Belli debate*, San Francisco, [at 101' on tape]
- 10/2/64** Learned from testimony before Warren Commission that Warren Caster, of the *Southwestern Publishing Co.* which has offices in the *Texas School Book Depository Building*, took two rifles into the building before the assassination, according to testimony Roy Truly gave the FBI on 11/22/63.
- One was a .22 Caster said he had bought for his son, the other a larger rifle Caster said he had bought for deer hunting. Showed them to Truly, who had sighted the larger rifle and then returned it to Caster. Said Oswald may have seen him with the rifle "within the past few days.
- Warren Report supplements containing the above not released until 11/23/64. *Washington Evening Star*
- 10/3/64** The rifle, according to the Warren Commission, is 3 feet 4.2 inches long. ... The document published in the Commission report allegedly sent by Oswald to the Chicago firm, in fact, orders another rifle entirely - one two and one-half pounds lighter in weight than the alleged assassination weapon, and 4.2 inches shorter in length and different in terms of two other clearly identified features: the contour of the barrel sleeve and the placement of the hinge for the sling. *National Guardian*, Mark Lane
- 10/3/64** The Commission ... states that Oswald carried a rifle wrapped in a brown paper bag into the *Book Depository Building* on the morning of 11/22. ... The Commission concedes that only one person actually saw Oswald enter the building: "One employee, Jack Dougherty, believes that he saw Oswald coming to work, but he does not remember that Oswald had anything in his hands as he entered the door. No other employee had been found who saw Oswald enter that morning." *National Guardian*, Mark Lane, p, 133
- 10/3/64** It is plain that a rifle that states so clearly upon its face that it was made in Italy and caliber 6.5, should not ordinarily be described in a sworn statement by a police officer as a weapon of different nationality and different size. The Commission distorted our argument as follows:

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"Speculation. The name of the rifle used in the assassination appeared on the rifle. Therefore the searchers who found the rifle on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the *Texas Schoolbook Depository* should have been able to identify it correctly by name.

"Commission Finding. An examination of the rifle does not reveal any manufacturer's name. An inscription on the rifle shows that it was made in Italy" [p. 645]

We, of course, never asserted that the manufacturer's name appeared.

One cannot recall anyone ever having stated that the name appeared on the rifle. The Commission, then, presented a total distortion of a valid point which we presented ... *National Guardian*, Mark Lane

**10/28/64** In its Oct. issue, the authoritative *Mechanix Illustrated* magazine puts the knock on several rifles - the first [and apparently worst] being the Mannlicher-Carcano, which it describes as "crudely made, poorly designed, dangerous and inaccurate." *San Francisco Chronicle*, Herb Caen

**11/64** In 11/64 Mr. Thomson wrote to the *Western Cartridge Company*, named by the Warren Commission as the manufacturer of the cartridge, cartridge cases and bullet found. Mr. Thomson ordered identical cartridges, listing the exact specifications given in the Report [555/3]. *Western Cartridge Company* replied that the cartridge "is not being produced commercially by our company. At one time this ammunition was produced on a government contract basis and any ammunition being made available on the market today is government surplus."

Mr. Thomson wrote again to ask when the ammunition was manufactured and if it had been made for the United States government or for a foreign government. Reply said "ammunition of this type is not manufactured by our company" and ignored the second half of the question.

*Warren Report* [555/3]: The cartridge is readily available for purchase from mail-order houses, as well as a few gun shops; some 2 million rounds have been placed on sale in the United States. *The Quest for Truth*, George C. Thomson

**11/64?** Mr. Thomson wrote to *Kleins Sporting Goods*, Chicago, ordering rifle presumably similar to C2766. Date of letter not given. Letter was returned with handwritten note on it, "Sorry! None available." *The Quest for Truth*, George C. Thomson

**11/9/64** "The authorities in Dallas [ Fritz and Lt. Day] have informed us solemnly that Kennedy was murdered by a Mauser. The men who made this first statement did so after an examination of . the weapon. I believe them. They informed us later that the President was killed by a Carcano. I believe that, also. I am forced to the conclusion that there were two weapons. I deduce that there were two assassins. ... *The New Leader*, p. 8 *In Defense of a Theory*, by Thomas G. Buchanan [rebutting criticism by Leo Sauvage in previous issue]

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- 3/22/65** Dallas - Mrs. Lee Harvey Oswald has asked a court to name her administrator of her husband's estate, it was disclosed today ... The application appeared to be chiefly a legal maneuver. Oswald owned no real estate and had little money. *New York Times*, [UPI]
- [For sale of rifle, etc., to John J. King, see cards Weapon, sale.]
- 5/65** ...I thought from the *Warren Report* that the FBI had traced the mail-order purchase by its own unaided methods and, moreover, that the rifle was the only one of its type with the serial number C2766. Imagine my astonishment when I read an FBI letter to the Warren Commission dated 4/30/64 [CE2562] and learned that.
- In the 1930s Mussolini ordered all arms factories to manufacture the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle. Since many concerns were manufacturing the same weapon, the same serial number appears on weapons manufactured by more than one concern. Some bear a letter prefix and some do not. *The Minority of One*, Letter to the Editor, Sylvia Meagher, NY,p. 31.
- 8/27/65** ... Mussolini's armorers had come to the conclusion that, while the Mannlicher-Carcano's standard 6.5 mm ammunition might be satisfactory for slaughtering Ethiopian tribesmen, something heftier would be desirable if L1 Duce proposed to gobble up a share of Europe. Therefore in 1938 the design was modified for the gun to fire a more lethal 7.35-mm slug. The notion, like many another conceived in Italy in those days, was disastrous. With distressing frequency Italian ordnance delivered new-sized bullets to outfits equipped with old-sized guns, or vice versa. By the time C2766 came off the line at Terni in 1940, a prudent decision had reduced the bore back to the more modest 6.5 mm for which ammunition was in more plentiful supply. Thus C2766 ended up having the appearance of a heftier weapon than it really was ... *Life, Cursed gun – the track of C2766*, by Keith Wheeler. p. 62.
- 1/3/66** A survey of evidence ignored or belittled by the Warren Commission.
- Sauvage was told by Klein that Oswald ordered no ammunition for the Carcano, nor a clip. FBI testimony said ammo purchased for this rifle comes in 20-shot boxes. If Oswald bought a 20-shot box, what happened to the unused cartridges?
- "The Report is extraordinarily discreet regarding the origin of the cartridges. In fact, it never says bluntly that Oswald did not buy a clip and ammunition when he bought the rifle. ... but does say the rifle probably was sold without a clip.
- Indicates no check elsewhere as to Where cartridges were bought. *The New Leader, The Case Against Mr. X*, by Leo Sauvage, p. 18
- 6/13/66** Discussion of defect in telescopic sight.

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... Other witnesses ... testified it was inconceivable that Oswald's cheap Japanese sight, jolting around in the back of a station wagon all the way from New Orleans to Dallas and later being moved from place to place in the Paine garage, would not have developed wayward tendencies of which Oswald himself could not have been aware without test-firing the gun. He apparently never did so.

Yet the commission record turns this defect, which would make accurate sighting impossible, into an aid to accuracy. The tendency of the rifle to shoot high, Frazier explained, would virtually eliminate the necessity to "lead" the target, and the quirk that resulted in the rifle's throwing shots to the right might also have been an advantage, because the curve of Elm Street would help to bring the target into line.

Of course, all such fancy theories depend upon the supposition that Oswald was such an ignorant marksman he would not attempt to lead his target or compensate for the Elm Street curve; for, if he had tried to make such routine allowances, without having previously test-fired the rifle, he would have insured a set of misses. *The Nation*, Fred J. Cook, p. 714

**10/10/66**

p. 58 - Q. Much is also made, Mr. Specter, of the report that the first police officer identified a different rifle - a Mauser - as compared to -

A. Well, the Mannlicher-Carcano, which it was identified as being, apparently had a reboring of the hole, and you're dealing with a rifle which had many characteristics of the Mauser.

That is the type of error which could have easily been made.

That type of error in identification on a fast glance is relatively unimpressive in the light of the more detailed evidence [ballistic tests, Klein order, photographs, identification by Marina] - all of which ought to be reviewed by the critical reader at the same time they hear that a police officer made a contrary tentative identification. ...

Q. Is it possible that there were any other weapons or that there could have been any switch of weapons?

A. All that can be said on the subject of whether there were any other weapons or any switch of weapons is that the painstaking investigation showed no evidence of any other weapon, or any switch. *U. S. News & World Report*, Interview of Arlen Specter

**10/10/66**

. p. 58 - Q. Was the rifle's telescopic sight accurate or inaccurate, under examination by the experts? It has been alleged that he had a defective sight -

A. Yes.

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But ... what we are dealing with is the evidence after the fact. The weapon was found a good distance from the point of the place where the assassin stood, ... over near the stairs leading down and out of the building.

This leads to a very reasonable inference that, when the shooting was completed, the man took the rifle with him to see what he encountered, and, as he got near the steps to exit from the building, he most assuredly didn't place it on the ground with great care to preserve it for its next use; he gave it a pretty good toss, by all standards which are reasonable, that could have damaged the sight.

It would be hard to think otherwise, under the circumstances - which goes to point up the great difficulty of examining evidence, even after one event has transpired, and drawing finite conclusions about its condition before that event. *U. S. News & World Report*, Interview of Arlen Specter

**11/1/66** Washington - The federal government took legal title today to the great mass of evidence considered by the Warren commission ... It ordered that the evidence be preserved for the ages in the National Archives.

This includes what the commission ... designated as the death weapon - "one 6.5-mm. Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, with telescopic sight, serial number C2766, including sling and cartridge clip."

It also includes a .38 Special Smith and Wesson revolver which, the commission found, was used by ... Oswald to kill J. D. Tippitt ... *AP* 1248 pes

**11/5/66** Dr. James B. Rhoads, deputy archivist at the National Archives, said today that the mass of Warren Commission evidence delivered by the Justice Department last week would be available for study by researchers in about a month.

These include all of the physical evidence except Oswald's rifle and revolver [which] have been kept in Dallas where they were the subject of litigation ... A department spokesman said the FBI 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. *New York Times*

**3/18/67** Joe Tonahill, at a meeting of the *American Trial Lawyers Association* where he said 99 per cent of the evidence against Oswald came from his widow and could not have been used against him in an ordinary court, said:

"She is the only person who ever identified the rifle as his." He added she was also the only person to link the purchase of the rifle under an assumed name to Oswald. *AP* B29 Las Vegas

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**3/24/67** From Considine's story on interview of District Attorney Henry Wade; quoting Wade:

"Congress passed a law some time ago giving the federal government all physical evidence in cases of this general nature. Oswald's rifle and pistol are either with the FBI or Archives. Some fellow in Denver is suing the government over the rifle. He paid Oswald's widow \$10,000 for it but never got it. Now he wants the rifle or his \$10,000 back. The case is waiting to come up here in Dallas." *San Francisco Examiner*, Bob Considine

**5/67** Author, described as firearms and forensic ballistics expert, criticizes Warren Commission for neglecting this angle. Says at least two types of fragmenting ammunition were made for the Carcano which would have done the job the Warren Commission says Oswald's rifle did, and that he might have got such on the black market.

Laments that Exhibit 399 was washed in Hydrosol, a blood solvent, before it got to the FBI lab and thus foreclosed possibility of identifying the blood of whom it had passed through, if anyone.

Also says the Carcano was fired more than 100 times in tests, when a duplicate was available, and thus after two or three firings the bullet-ballistic evidence of the gun is destroyed forever. *Guns, Backfire*, Shelley Braverman, p. 20.

**6/22/67** New Orleans-- Garrison says there was a second rifle found by officers after the assassination -- a rifle never mentioned in the Warren Report. Garrison says he has viewed a film taken in front of the *Texas Book Depository* building in Dallas immediately after the assassination showing officers holding this second rifle. "Now what happened to that awe second rifle," Garrison said to me. "It took them 15 minutes to find Oswald's gun in that building. This gun was found immediately and it was not Oswald's. It had no telescopic sights." "You cannot find that second weapon anywhere in the 26 volumes of the Warren Commission report. Is it hidden under a bed? Was it burial under a building? Was it dropped in a vat of acid?" All I know is that it has disappeared." *Nashville Tennessean*, Jim Squires

**6/22/67** Garrison says Kennedy was shot by members of the crack assassination team while they were concealed behind a stone wall on a grassy knoll ... showed me a copy of a widely publicized picture of the ... scene. "Look here, there is a figure behind that wall holding an automatic rifle." I looked where he pointed. I could not distinguished the figure ... but then Garrison pointed to the inset which he said was a blowup segment of the overall scene. This inset clearly shows a man holding a rifle. Garrison told me he recently visited New York and viewed a film there taken outside the book depository building which shows officers holding the second rifle. ... *Nashville Tennessean*, Jim Squires

**9/15/67** "We located a picture of the assassin's gun ... being brought down from the Book Depository, and we found the person who took the picture, timed the picture; it was five minutes after one; this gun did not have a telescopic sight on it. This is 25 minutes before Oswald's gun was found." *KNEW*, Oakland, *Joe Dolan* telephone interview with Garrison, Transcribed from tape.

## Weapon

**3/1/68**

*LA Free Press* prints long interview with Roger Craig and Penn Jones, Jr. Craig says he saw the shells on the floor of the *Texas School Book Depository* and all were within 3/4 of an inch of one another and all pointed the same direction. Saw rifle when it was found, and it was within a pile of books in such a way that it could not have been placed there -- it would have had to be dropped in. "There wasn't a scratch on that rifle, and the scope was not one fraction out of kilter." Says there was a Mauser found on the *Texas School Book Depository* roof. Says Capt. Glen King told Thayer Waldo later that it was dropped there by a security officer. *LA Free Press*