



BOB CONSIDINE

Acid of Truth

WASHINGTON — The Warren Commission report rates high among the greatest documents of its kind ever compiled.

Though the parallel may be obscure, it ranks with the biblical account of the Crucifixion, Emile Zola's dissertation on the Dreyfus case and all other efforts by man to put down on paper an objective record of horrendous and emotionally moving events.

It never intended to be a literary work, this 888-page report that was dumped into the lap of the world Sunday night. Its prose is bare-boned and couched in basic English. Its simply stated notes add up in the end of a towering symphony of man's inhumanity, his essential senselessness. No single piece of fiction that comes readily to mind can touch the blow-after-blow impact of this blunt and sometimes brutal account of how a man met death in the streets of Dallas last Nov. 22 and what happened after that.

It must disappoint those persons who were sure that when it appeared, after 10 months in preparation, it would somehow confirm every wild conjecture they had heard or dreamed up. Some of the brethren who fed like jackals on these false and sometimes vicious dreams were crushed under the weight of 300,000 words of fact, never, let's hope, to rise again.

Oswald did it alone. Nobody directed him. He had been wanting to kill since the age of 15, when he expressed a desire to assassinate President Eisenhower for "exploiting the working class."

He had no accomplices, needed no ideological urging. He never saw Jack Ruby until the man pumped a .38 into

his belly. Ruby never heard of him, Oswald, until the day of the assassination.

Rumor, myth, legend, fake, all dissolve under the acid of the truth flowing at flood tide from this report.

We learn for the first time of the struggle Jacqueline Kennedy had to put up to stay with her dead husband in Dallas and save the body from an autopsy there. We wince for her as she scrambles across the trunk of the car—of which agony she has no memory. We turn away from her, "I love you, Jack," as she cradled his blasted head in her lap.

We live with Oswald and his wife and neighbors in this report, enter the strange world of Jack Ruby, don white coat and go into bloody operating rooms, sit by while JFK casually talks of the danger of being President a couple of hours before a portion of his head was blown away.

NOT EVEN Lincoln's tragedy had a cast of characters anywhere comparable to this one. No master of the mystery novel, no author of a British White Paper, no titan of biography could come up with quite the likes of the Presidents involved in the Warren report, nor with police people who range from J. Edgar Hoover to a cop named Tippit, its noblemen and knaves, dignitaries and dames.

In the end, I kept thinking of three of the 300,000 words. They were the entire text of that portion of John Fitzgerald Kennedy's autopsy which was titled "Pathological Diagnosis."

The words were "gunshot wound, head."

[Hear Bob Considine over KGO Radio (810) Monday through Friday, 6:50 p. m.]