

Ugly Rumors— And the Facts

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WASHINGTON—The Warren Commission sought yesterday to still the whispers and stamp out the rumors that have multiplied around the world since the Kennedy assassination.

The rumors, which have had a particularly receptive audience in Europe, include hints of conspiracies by federal and state authorities, supposed links between Lee Oswald and Jack Ruby, and other "facts" to prove Oswald could not have been the assassin.

Here, from the commission report, are some of the most prevalent rumors—called "speculation"—and the commission's findings:

Speculation

The shots that killed the President came from the railroad overpass above the triple underpass.

Finding

The shots that entered the neck and head of the President and wounded Gov. Connally came from behind and above. There is no evidence that any shots were fired at the President from anywhere other than the Texas School Book Depository building.

Speculation

An amateur 8-millimeter photograph taken 10 minutes before the assassination of President Kennedy, showed two silhouettes at the sixth floor window of the depository.

Finding

A film taken by an amateur photographer, Robert J. E. Hughes, just before the assassination, shows a shadow in the southeast corner window of the sixth floor. This has been determined after examination by the FBI and the U. S. Navy photographic interpretation center to be the shadow from the cartons near the window.

Speculation

A picture published widely in newspapers and magazines after the assassination showed Lee Harvey Oswald standing on the front steps of the School Book Depository building shortly before the President's motorcade passed by.

Finding

The man on the front steps of the building, thought or alleged by some to be Lee Harvey Oswald, is actually Billy Lovelady, an employee of the depository, who somewhat resembles Oswald. Lovelady has identified himself in the picture, and other employees of the depository standing with him, as shown in the picture, have verified that he was the man in the picture and that Oswald was not there.

Speculation

Oswald could not have fired three shots from the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle in 5½ seconds.

Finding

According to expert witnesses, exacting tests conducted from the commission demonstrated that it was possible to fire three shots from the rifle within 5½ seconds. It should be noted that the first loaded shell was already in the chamber ready for firing; Oswald had only to pull the trigger to fire the first shot and to work the bolt twice in order to fire the second and third shots.

They testified that if the second shot missed, Oswald had between 4.8 and 5.6 seconds to fire the three shots. If either the first or third shot missed, Oswald had in excess of 7 seconds to fire the three shots.

Speculation

The picture of Oswald taken by his wife in March or April 1963 showing him with

a rifle and a pistol was "doctored" when it appeared in magazines and newspapers in February, 1964. The rifle held by Oswald in these pictures is not the same rifle that was found on the sixth floor of the depository.

Finding

Life magazine, Newsweek, and the New York Times notified the commission that they had retouched this picture. In doing so, they inadvertently altered details of the configuration of the rifle. The original prints of this picture have been examined by the commission and by photographic experts who have identified the rifle as a Mannlicher-Carcano 6.5. the same kind as the one found on the sixth floor of the depository. FBI experts testified that the picture was taken with Oswald's camera.

Speculation

(Officer J. D.) Tippit and his killer (Oswald) knew each other.

Finding

Investigation has revealed no evidence that Oswald and Tippit were acquainted, had ever seen each other, or had any mutual acquaintances. Witnesses to the shooting observed no signs of recognition between the two men.

Speculation

It is probable that Oswald had prior contacts with Soviet agents before he entered Russia in 1959 because his application for a visa was processed and approved immediately on receipt.

Finding

There is no evidence that Oswald was in touch with Soviet agents before his visit to Russia. The time that it took for him to receive his visa in Helsinki for entrance to the Soviet Union was shorter than the average but not beyond the normal range for granting of such visas.

Had Oswald been recruited as a Russian agent while he was still in the Marines, it is most improbable that he would have been encouraged to defect. He would have been of greater value to Russian intelligence as a Marine radar operator than as a defector.

Speculation

Oswald was trained by the Russians in a special school for assassin at Minsk.

Finding

Commission investigation revealed no evidence to support this claim or the existence of such a school in Minsk during the time Oswald was there. Oswald belonged to a hunting club near Minsk, but there is no evidence that this was other than an ordinary hunting club.

Speculation

Marina Oswald's father was an important part of the Soviet intelligence apparatus.

Finding

Marina Oswald's father died while she was still an infant. This reference is presumably to her uncle, Ilya Prusakov, who was an executive in the lumber industry, which position carried with it the rank of lieutenant colonel or colonel in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD). Since 1953 the MVD has not been concerned with internal security or other police functions.

Speculation

Oswald never have been permitted to return to the United States if Soviet intelligence had not planned to use him in some way against the United States.

Finding

There is no evidence that Oswald had any working relationship with the Soviet government or Soviet intelligence. The Russians have permitted other American defectors to return to the United States.

Speculation

Oswald came back from Mexico City (in 1963) with \$5,000.

Finding

No evidence has ever been supplied or obtained to support this allegation. Oswald's actions in Mexico City and after his return to Dallas lend no support to this speculation.

Speculation

Oswald was an informant of either the FBI or the CIA. He was recruited by an agency of the U.S. Government and sent to Russia in 1959.

Finding

Mrs. Marguerite Oswald frequently expressed the opinion that her son was such an agent, but she stated before the commission that "I cannot prove Lee is an agent." The directors of the CIA and of the FBI testified before the commission that Oswald was never employed by either agency or used by either agency in any capacity.

Speculation

Ruby and Oswald were seen together at the Carousel Club.

Finding

All assertions that Oswald was seen in the company of Ruby or of anyone else at the Carousel Club have been investigated. None of them merits any credence.

Speculation

Oswald was seen at shooting ranges in the Dallas area practicing firing with a rifle.

Finding

Marina Oswald stated that on one occasion in March or April 1963, her husband told her that he was going to practice firing with the rifle. Witnesses have testified that they saw Oswald at shooting ranges in the Dallas area during October and November 1963. Investigation has failed to confirm that the man seen by these witnesses was Oswald.

Speculation

Mrs. Marguerite Oswald was shown a photograph of Jack Ruby by an FBI agent the night before Ruby killed her son.

Finding

On the night of Nov. 23, 1963, Special Agent Bardwell D. Odum of the FBI showed Mrs. Marguerite Oswald a picture of a man to determine whether the man was known to her. Mrs. Oswald stated subsequently that the picture was of Jack Ruby. The commission has examined a copy of the photograph and determined that it was not a picture of Jack Ruby.

Speculation

Was there a small hole in the windshield of the President's car?

Finding

"The windshield was not penetrated by any bullet. A small residue of lead was found on the inside surface of the windshield; on the outside of the windshield was a very small pattern of cracks immediately in front of the lead residue on the inside. The bullet from which this lead residue came was probably one of those that struck the President and therefore came from overhead and to the rear. Experts established that the abrasion in the windshield came from impact on the inside of the glass."

Speculation

Did Oswald seem to recognize Ruby just before he was shot?

Finding

"The commission has examined television tapes and motion picture films of the shooting and has been unable to discern any facial expression that could be interpreted to signify recognition of Ruby or anyone else in the basement of the building."