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Loopholes Missed Again

Jim Garrison's trial of Clay Shaw was important for all of us. Despite what the press says, we owe a great debt to this big man.

We do feel he overlooked an opportunity to clear up some of the loopholes in the Warren Commission Report. Since Garrison, himself, was not in the court room more than one percent of the time, we feel he should have taken the necessary precaution of having had someone present at all times who was well versed with the testimony and exhibits of the Warren Commission. We had assumed that Mark Lane was to fill this role, but Lane was excluded from the courtroom as it was anticipated he would be a witness.

In a number of instances during the trial, only one or two more questions could have cleared up some points which have long been puzzling those who have studied the 26 Volumes. During the coming weeks we plan to publish a few of these oversights.

One such failure was in not asking FBI photograph expert, Lyndal L. Shaneyfelt about the doctoring done to the Phil Willis assassination photos. Shaneyfelt was on the witness stand all one morning and was followed on the stand that afternoon by amateur photographer Willis. (Willis, incidentally, was a salesman for Downtown Lincoln-Mercury Co. on the day of the assassination.)

Willis was present when his film was developed by the Eastman Co., and he knows his film was not altered or retouched at that time because he saw the finished color slides. But the film was then taken and kept by the FBI for five weeks.

Proof that the film had some objects painted out was first discovered by either Fred Newcomb of Los Angeles or Dick Sprague of New York. Both are photography experts who have done much work regarding interpretation of assassination photographs. Life magazine of November 24, 1967 reproduced the Willis slides along with those of Wilma Bond and others all taken within seconds of each other. It was then evident that the film by Willis had been retouched.

In the Willis picture on page 93 a train boxcar has been removed from behind the pagoda-like structure at the top of the grassy knoll. But the boxcar is clearly shown in the Wilma Bond film on page 95 of the Life story. Why the funny business with the slides?

We think the boxcar was eliminated from the picture to try to erase all traces of the three men who were arrested in a boxcar behind the pagoda just after the shooting. These men, along with others, were taken to the Sheriff's office, but were released without even being required to give their names after the capture of Oswald.

Every effort is being made in Dallas to eradicate the landmarks in the area of the assassination. This tampering started within thirty minutes after the assassination with the removal of a very important highway sign which may have been hit by a bullet. But even more important, this sign would have been invaluable in an interpretation of photographs taken then.

We suspect the School Book Depository will be gone within twelve months. The short piece of railroad track has already been taken up from behind the pagoda. The entire spur was not taken away, just the last 100 feet of the spur on which this mysterious railway car stood. These tracks, which have been there for at least fifty years, were changed shortly after President Kennedy was killed. And there is no authority to ask why, just as there was no one to ask FBI man Shaneyfelt why the alterations on the Phil Willis' slides.