

New Doubts in Kennedy Killing

New York

A declassified FBI report is being cited to support new challenges to the Warren Commission contention that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin of President Kennedy.

At issue mainly is whether a single bullet passed through President Kennedy's body and then wounded Governor John B. Connally of Texas.

The critics suggest it had to be a separate bullet that wounded the governor, with the firing time for Oswald's bolt-action rifle being such that there had to be a second assassin also firing.

The commission's report was that three shots apparently were fired. It found "very persuasive evidence" that the first bullet to hit the president also wounded Connally, and said a later bullet inflicted a massive, fatal

head wound on the President.

One shot, it said, "probably missed," with evidence "inconclusive" on whether this was the first, second or third.

Viking Press will publish on June 29 a book evolved from a Cornell University master's thesis, "Inquest," by Edward Jay Epstein, including 36 pages of the FBI report.

Holt, Rinehart & Winston plans to publish on September 8 a book, "Rush to Judgment," by Mark Lane, for a white counsel retained by Oswald's mother.

The FBI report is also being cited in a book, "White-wash," published in Hyattstown, Md., by its author, Harold Weisberg, former Senate Civil Liberties Subcommittee investigator.

It is to be mentioned also in "The Oswald Affair," by Leo Sauvage, correspondent of the newspaper Le Figaro, of Paris, due September 6 from

the World Publishing Company.

The report by the FBI had first been described by a Philadelphia lawyer, Vincent J. Salandria, in the April issue of the magazine, "The Minority of One."

These followed an Award Books paperback, "The Unanswered Questions about President Kennedy's Assassination," by Sylvan Fox, lat city editor of the New York World-Telegram and the Sun, out since October.

One statement in the FBI "Summary Report" dated December 9, 1963, said "Medical examination of the President's body revealed that one of the bullets had entered just below his shoulder to the right of the spinal column at an angle of 45 to 60 degrees downward, that there was no point of exit, and that the bullet was not in the body."

The FBI's "Supplemental

Report" dated January 13, 1964, adds, "Medical examination of the President's body had revealed that the bullet which entered his back had penetrated to a distance of less than a finger length." The FBI documents are in the National Archives in Washington.

By contrast, the report of the autopsy performed November 22, signed by three military surgeons, says the bullet had "entered the right superior posterior thorax above the scapula," traversed soft tissues, produced contusions on a lung and neck muscles and "made its exit through the anterior surface of the neck," or entry in the upper back, five and a half inches below the right shoulder joint tip, and out the front of the neck.

The clinical summary notes the autopsy had been followed by a telephone talk November 23 with Dr. Mal-

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col mPerry, Dallas surgeon. This developed information that, in trying to save the President's life, "A tracheotomy was performed by extending" what had been a small wound of "the low anterior neck."

Epstein, a 31-year-old New Yorker, now a Harvard doctoral student, asserts the assassination film indicates the President and governor were both wounded within 1.8 seconds. So, he argues, "either both men were hit by the same bullet, or there were two assassins."

The evidence, he contends in his book, "indicates that the FBI reports are not erroneous." He says two FBI agents were present at the autopsy. He quotes testimony by two Secret Service agents that autopsy doctors "could not find a path for the bullet" through the President's body.

He offers a surgeon's diagrams made during the autopsy and FBI pictures taken of the President's jacket and shirt to contend a bullet entering the back would have had to turn upward to go out the neck.

In rebuttal, J. Lee Rankin, the commission's former general counsel, and Norman Redlich, who was his deputy, say the so-called "FBI Summary Report" as already evaluated and discarded during the Warren inquiry.

Arlen Specter, now district attorney of Philadelphia, who is credited with having developed the "single-bullet" hypothesis as the commission's assistant counsel, says he has not yet seen the Epstein book. But he asserts "the report is solidly based on the evidence."

The FBI has declined comments.

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