

## Bob Considine

# A Bullet Hole In U.S. History

DALLAS — Dick Wheeler's first question to me on "Comment," a popular radio show in these here parts, was about a piece I wrote during the weekend of the Kennedy-Oswald murders.

"You called the Dallas cops the dumbest you had seen since the Keystone Kops," Wheeler said.

I said the ensuing years may have mellowed that accusation, made in the anger and despair of those horrible days. It was too sweeping an appraisal. I didn't know enough about the whole police force.

But the opinion still stands in regards to the handful of police officials who were in charge of Lee Harvey Oswald after several of their comrades bravely trapped him in a movie theater in the wake of his murder of the President and Officer Tippit.

Chief Curry and his posse stupidly exposed Oswald to a motley "press conference" after the arraignment, hours after the assassination. Such was the security involved that even Jack Ruby, a combination pimp, strip-tease-joint operator and ticket fixer, made the scene that dolorous Friday night, Nov. 22, 1963.

He arrived with a bag of sandwiches and coffee in paper cups and spread his largesse among all in reach.

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RUBY PROBABLY was armed that unbelievably callous night when Oswald was shown off like a wild animal. Anyway, the next time Ruby got that close to Oswald he shot him in the belly and killed him.

That was the following Sunday morning when the Dallas police were moving Oswald from one insecure lockup to the puncture-prone jail in the Criminal Courts Building. Ruby walked unchallenged into the tunnel-driveway that held the waiting police cars and when the cops led the assassin toward same Ruby fired away.

Not even the news media should have been there when Oswald was to be moved, much less Ruby. To carry the point a bit further, not even Oswald should have been there. He had been a sitting duck much too long during a hysterical and stricken period when some uncountable number of Americans would have willingly tried to kill him without pausing to consider the circumstances.

Ruby's bullet blew a hole through Oswald's gizzards. It blew a bigger hole through American history. No one will ever really know why Oswald killed Kennedy.

Oswald's shots, for all we'll ever know, may have been aimed not at the President but at Gov. John Connally of Texas, riding on the jump-seat inches in front of the President's position in the open car as it tooled past the ugly Schoolbook Depository near Dealey Square. The governor had but recently rejected Oswald's application to have his dishonorable discharge from the Marine Corps altered to something less damning.

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