

EXPERTS CERTAIN GUN CAN FIRE FAST

Says Skeptics' Calculations
on Assassination Erred

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DALLAS, Dec. 3—Skeptics who have expressed doubt that an assassin could have fired three times on President John F. Kennedy within five or five and one-half seconds seem to have been led into a mathematical trap.

Rifle experts here point out that the time count should begin only after the first bullet had struck.

The assassin had uncounted seconds to find and hold the President in his telescopic sights before firing his first bullet. However, after having fired his first shot he then had five or five and a half seconds to operate the bolt action for two more shots.

From moving pictures of the President's death here on Nov. 22, authorities have concluded that the three shots were fired within five to five and one-half seconds. Some persons have expressed doubt that Lee H. Oswald, the accused assassin, could have had enough time to fire and reload his rifle three times and still strike a moving target.

Experts Show Mistake

The mathematical misstep say rifle specialists, stems from assuming that it took five full seconds to fire the three rounds. They point out that the first bullet had been fired when the motion picture film first showed that the President had been shot.

Thus, say the experts, the assassin had five seconds in which to fire his remaining two shots—a relatively easy task for a man familiar with a bolt-action rifle.

George R. Whittington of Amarillo, Tex., who was president of the National Rifle Association in 1958 and 1959, commented on this today. Reached by telephone in Washington, Mr. Whittington said:

"The man starts the interval himself with the first shot. Therefore, if the interval is five seconds, as some people say it was, he has to fire two shots in five seconds, not three shots.

"It is possible, and it can easily be done. It's no trick at all."

Other Rifles Tested

Authorities also have made tests with small-caliber rifles. These indicated that a man could fire three shots within five seconds.

Further evidence — which also tends to discount the notion of another assassin—shows that all three bullets came from the same rifle. This was the 6.5mm. Mannlicher-Carcano that Oswald ordered last spring from a mail-order store and that bore his finger and palm prints after the assassination.

The ballistics evidence was developed during a test on the weapon at the Federal Bureau of Investigation Laboratory in Washington. The result of the test was announced two days after the assassination on the day Oswald was slain by a Dallas citizen.

At no time since the assassination have authorities indicated that there was more than one man involved in the shooting. But some persons have continually expressed skepticism that one man could have fired the three bullets so rapidly.

Hit By 2 Bullets

The first and third bullets, said authorities, struck the President. Either could have killed him. The second bullet missed the President but struck and wounded Gov. John B. Connally Jr. of Texas, who was riding with Mr. Kennedy.

Oswald also was accused of slaying a Dallas Policeman, J. D. Tippit, while fleeing the scene of assassination. The police said today that Mr. Tippit had been cruising along in a patrol car when he saw Oswald and tried to stop him.

Mr. Tippit's police radio had broadcast an alarm for the suspected murderer.

As authorities reconstructed the scene, Mr. Tippit had stepped from his car to question Oswald when Oswald pulled out a .38-caliber revolver and shot the policeman three times.