

Report Separates the Fiction From the Fact

WASHINGTON—Was Lee Harvey Oswald trained in Minsk as a Soviet undercover agent?

Did he stop off in Havana on his way to Russia in 1959?

Did he make it to Cuba by way of Mexico City eight weeks before the assassination?

These and hundreds of other questions were asked here and abroad in the weeks following President John F. Kennedy's death last Nov. 22.

Most of the speculation and rumors centered around the idea that Oswald acted as part of a conspiracy.

ONE BY ONE, the Warren Commission checked out the rumors until it concluded in Sunday's report that he was not involved in a wider plot, domestic or foreign.

U. S. agents in the Soviet Union, for example, found there was no espionage training school at Minsk, where Oswald lived.

Further inquiries showed that his open commitment to Marxist ideology made him an undesirable prospect to the Russians for undercover work.

The second rumor, when checked out, disclosed that the ship Oswald boarded at New Orleans for Russia made its first stop in France.

AS FOR Oswald's alleged Mexico-to-Cuba trip, "confidential sources of extremely high reliability" confirmed that Oswald's request for a visa was rejected by the Cuban embassy and that he returned to the United States in disgust.

So it went. Similar reports that Jack Ruby and Dallas policeman J. D. Tippit were involved conspiratorially in the Dallas tragedy likewise were proved unfounded on investigation.

The commission ticked off these other findings today:

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Rumor—Premier Fidel Castro, in a slip of the tongue, referred in a speech to "the first time Oswald was in Cuba."

Finding—A tape recording of Castro's speech showed no such reference.

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Rumor—The shots that killed Kennedy came from the railroad overpass ahead of his car.

Finding—The shots came from behind and above. There is no evidence that any shots were fired at the President from any place other than the Texas School Book Depository.

No witnesses have been located who saw shots fired from the overpass; several testified they saw the shots fired from the depository.

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Rumor—More than three shots, perhaps as many as five or six, were fired.

Finding—The weight of evidence indicates three shots were fired, of which two struck Kennedy, one passing through Kennedy's body and striking Connally.

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Rumor—Kennedy's car stopped, or almost stopped,

By Jack C. Vandenberg
United Press International

after the first shot, indicating the driver had the impression the shot came from the front.

Finding—Motion pictures show the car slowed momentarily after the shot that struck Kennedy in the head (the second shot) and then speeded up rapidly.

Finding—No bullet went through the windshield. A small residue of lead was found inside the windshield and a pattern of cracks on the outside. The lead probably came from a bullet that struck Kennedy from behind. Experts established that the impact on the windshield came from the inside.

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Rumor—Kennedy's throat wound resulted from a shot fired from the front, according to Parkland Hospital doctors.

Finding—Doctors first believed, without an examination, that the wound could have been either an entry or exit wound. After the autopsy, they agreed it was caused by a bullet leaving Kennedy's throat.

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Rumor—Oswald could not have known the motorcade route before he arrived at work Nov. 22.

Finding—The motorcade route was published in both Dallas newspapers on Nov. 19.

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Rumor—Remains of a chicken lunch on the sixth floor of the depository building indicated Oswald had an accomplice.

Finding—The lunch had been eaten shortly after noon Nov. 22 by Bonnie Ray Williams, an employe in the building who watched the Kennedy motorcade from the fifth floor after he finished eating.

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Rumor—A widely published picture showed Oswald standing on the front steps of the Book Depository building shortly before the motorcade passed.

Finding—The photograph showed Billy Lovelady, a fellow employe who resembles Oswald slightly. Lovelady was identified in the picture by others standing with him.

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Rumor—Kennedy's car was going between 12 and 20 miles per hour, presenting a target comparable to the most difficult a soldier would encounter on a battlefield.

Finding—The car was traveling at 11.2 miles per hour. Expert witnesses testified Kennedy was a favorable target because the car was going away from the assassin in a straight line.

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Rumor—Oswald could not have fired three shots from his rifle in 5½ seconds.

Finding—Expert witnesses testified it was possible to fire three shots within 5½ seconds. It should be

noted the first loaded shell was in the chamber ready for firing, meaning the bolt had to be worked only twice. Oswald may have had up to seven seconds to fire the three shots.

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Rumor—After firing the shots, Oswald could not have disposed of the rifle, gone downstairs and gotten a soft drink by the time he was seen there by a Dallas policeman.

Finding—Time tests show he had time to hide the rifle and get down to the lunchroom. He was not drinking a soft drink when the policeman spotted him; he was just entering the lunchroom.

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Rumor—Police were sealing off all exits by the time Oswald reached the second floor.

Finding—Oswald was seen heading for an exit at 12:33 p. m. Police may have started to take stations at the door by that time, but it is unlikely they had blocked them off completely until 12:37 p. m.

Oswald probably had at least seven minutes to get out of the building without being stopped.

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Rumor—Oswald did not have time for all the movements attributed to him between leaving the depository and encountering Patrolman Tippit.

Finding—Time tests show he did.

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Rumor—Oswald was on his way to Jack Ruby's apartment when he was stopped by Tippit.

Finding—There is no evidence that Oswald knew Ruby or where he lived nor any reason to believe he was on his way to the apartment.

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Rumor—Oswald was an informant for either the FBI or the Central Intelligence Agency.

Finding—Mrs. Marguerite Oswald said she thought her son was an agent, but told the commission, "I cannot prove Lee is an agent." Directors of both the FBI and CIA testified that neither had used Oswald in any capacity.

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Rumor—The FBI surveilled Oswald for some time but did not consider him a killer.

Finding—The FBI knew Oswald was in Dallas but had not interviewed him there and did not regard him as a potential killer.

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Rumor—Just before Ruby shot Oswald, Oswald looked directly at his assassin in apparent recognition.

Finding—Television tapes and motion picture films do not show any facial expression that could be interpreted to signify recognition.

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Rumor—Tippit and Ruby met in Ruby's night club with Bernard Weissman, who placed an anti-Kennedy advertisement in a Dallas newspaper Nov. 22.

Finding—No evidence to support this allegation.

(COMPLETE)