

JFK Unit Reportedly Didn't Seek CBS Film

Post 9/17/78
By Larry Kramer

The House Assassinations Committee did not ask the Columbia Broadcasting System to see controversial interviews filmed, but not aired, by CBS television 14 years ago with two witnesses in the President Kennedy assassination investigation, according to a copyrighted report in the Washington Journalism Review. It says in its forthcoming issue that in CBS interviews with Lee Harvey Oswald's housekeeper, Earlene Roberts, "who saw him shortly after the assassination," and William Whaley, "the cab driver who is supposed to have driven Oswald to his boarding house after the shooting," the two gave accounts contradicting what was reported by the Warren Commission.

The magazine also alleges that CBS in-

terviewers may have coaxed witnesses to conclusions in some 70 hours of interviews on film, but never used in the network's 1964 Warren Commission report documentary.

Although CBS has never publicly shown the interviews, WJR reports, film maker Emile de Antonio and Warren Commission critic Mark Lane saw the films 14 years ago.

"Both said then and both say now that the CBS interviewer led witnesses, some of whom, they claim, were saying things contrary to what the Warren Commission and the ensuing 1964 CBS documentary reported," WJR said in the report written by its editor, Florence Graves.

The magazine quotes House Assassination Committee chief counsel G. Robert

Blakey as saying that the film was not requested from CBS. "We sought no outtakes [film shot but not aired] from any news source because we were aware of the First Amendment principle involved."

CBS and other broadcasters have long contended that outtakes, like a reporter's notes, should be considered privileged.

De Antonio told WJR that the interview with the cab driver "contained statements which did not appear in the Warren report and which did not serve the report's conclusions."

The magazine says the cab driver's testimony "is important because some critics assert, as part of the 'second Oswald' theory, that the man Whaley transported may not have been Oswald, but someone who looked like him."