

Speculations and Rumors

Myths have traditionally surrounded the dramatic assassinations of history. The rumors and theories about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln that are still being publicized were for the most part first bruited within months of his death. Wherever there is any element of mystery in such dramatic events misconceptions often result from sensational speculations.

Lacking the testimony of Lee Harvey Oswald, it has been necessary to reconstruct painstakingly all of the facts that led the Commission to the conclusion that Oswald assassinated President Kennedy, acting alone and without advice or assistance. The Commission has found no credible evidence that he was a member of a foreign or domestic conspiracy of any kind. Nor was there any evidence that he was involved with any criminal or underworld elements or that he had any association with his slayer, Jack Ruby, except as his victim. The evidence on these issues has been set forth in great detail in this report.

In addition the Commission has inquired into the various hypotheses, rumors, and speculations that have arisen from the tragic developments of November 22-24, 1963. It is recognized that the public judgment of these events has been influenced, at least to some extent, by these conjectures.

Many questions have been raised about the facts out of genuine puzzlement or because of misinformation which attended some of the early reporting of the fast-crowding events of these 3 days. Most of the speculation and attempted reconstruction of these events by the public centered on these basic questions: Was Lee Harvey Oswald really the assassin of the President; why did he do it; did he have any accomplices; and why did Ruby shoot Oswald? Many of the theories and hypotheses advanced have rested on premises which the Commission feels deserve critical examination.

Many people who witnessed the assassination and the killing of Oswald or were present in the area were a major source of diverse and often contradictory information. As is easily understood under such circumstances, all of the witnesses did not see and hear the same thing or interpret what they saw and heard the same way and many changed their stories as they repeated them. Moreover, they were interviewed at different times after the event by different people and often under circumstances which made accurate reporting extremely difficult.

Even the occupants of the cars in the Presidential motorcade were not entirely in agreement in their accounts because they, too, saw and heard what happened from different positions. Moreover, those closest to the assassination were subjected to a physical and emotional

strain that tended to affect their recollections of what they thought they saw or heard. Consequently, the presentation of the news from Dallas included much misinformation. This, to some extent, was unavoidable, but the widespread and repetitive dissemination of every scrap of information about the President's assassination and its aftermath has helped to build up a large number of erroneous conclusions. The manner in which local authorities released information about the investigation, sometimes before it could be verified in all detail, has further contributed to the fund of ill-founded theories. Typographical mistakes in the press and failure to transcribe sound accurately from tapes resulted in errors, some of which have remained uncorrected in print at the time of the publication of this report.

Much of the speculation that has persisted in one form or another since November 22-24 came from people who usually spoke in good faith. Some of the errors have resulted simply from a lack of complete knowledge at the time of the event. In this category are the statements attributed to doctors at Parkland Memorial Hospital who attended the dying President and described his wounds to the press afterward. It remained for the autopsy in Washington, completed early the next morning, to ascertain the full facts concerning the wounds. The correction of earlier assertions of fact on the basis of later and fuller analysis or investigation is a normal part of the process of accumulation of evidence. But it is not often that the process is conducted in such an intense glare of worldwide publicity, and later corrections have difficulty overtaking the original sensational reports.

There is still another category of speculation and rumor that complicated and broadened the work of the Commission. Numerous people claimed to have seen Oswald or Ruby at various times and places in the United States or abroad. Others insisted that during the days following the assassination, they had detected significant actions on television that were witnessed by no one else. Still others assumed from a widely published picture that Oswald was standing on the steps of the entrance to the Texas School Book Depository at the time the President was shot. Throughout the country people reported overheard remarks, conversations, threats, prophecies, and opinions that seemed to them to have a possible bearing on the assassination. More than a few informants initially told their speculations or professed firsthand information to newspaper and television reporters. Later, many of them changed or retracted their stories in telling them to official investigators.

The U.S. investigative agencies expended much valuable time and effort inquiring into these leads. Investigations of a vast number of rumors and speculations reached into almost every part of the United States and to most of the other continents of the world.

The Commission's work was also handicapped by those witnesses and other persons connected with the investigation who sold for publication evidence pertinent to the investigation. These persons sold pictures and documents and even recollections, sometimes before the

Commission had an opportunity to receive their evidence. Some of the evidence thus published was changed from its original form and gave misleading impressions to the public. The piecemeal release of this evidence, sometimes in distorted or exaggerated form, and often out of context, provided the basis for new speculations and rumors or served to reinforce already current ones. The practice was frequently harmful to the work of the Commission and a disservice to the public.

This appendix is intended to clarify the most widespread factual misunderstandings. False or inaccurate speculations concerning the assassination and related events are set forth below together with brief summary statements of what the Commission has found to be the true facts. The citation following each Commission finding is either to that portion of the report in which the subject is discussed more fully, to the evidence in the record supporting the finding, or to both. For complete answers to these speculations, the sources cited in the footnotes should be consulted. The speculations are considered under the following headings:

1. The source of the shots.
2. The identity of the assassin.
3. Oswald's movements between 12:33 and 1:15 p.m. on November 22, 1963.
4. The murder of Patrolman Tippit.
5. Oswald after his arrest.
6. Oswald in the Soviet Union.
7. Oswald's trip to Mexico City.
8. Oswald and U.S. Government agencies.
9. Conspiratorial relationships.
10. Miscellaneous charges.

THE SOURCE OF THE SHOTS

There have been speculations that some or all of the shots aimed at President Kennedy and Governor Connally came from the railroad overpass as the Presidential automobile approached it, or from somewhere other than the Texas School Book Depository Building. Related speculations maintain that the shots came from both the railroad overpass and the Texas School Book Depository Building. These are supported by a number of assertions that have been carefully examined by the Commission in the course of its investigation and rejected as being without foundation. They are set forth below, together with the results of the Commission's investigation.

Speculation.—The shots that killed the President came from the railroad overpass above the triple underpass.

Commission finding.—The shots that entered the neck and head of the President and wounded Governor Connally came from behind and above. There is no evidence that any shots were fired at the Presi-

dent from anywhere other than the Texas School Book Depository Building.¹

Speculation.—The railroad overpass was left unguarded on November 22.

Commission finding.—On November 22 the railroad overpass was guarded by two Dallas policemen, Patrolmen J. W. Foster and J. C. White, who have testified that they permitted only railroad personnel on the overpass.²

Speculation.—There are witnesses who alleged that the shots came from the overpass.

Commission finding.—The Commission does not have knowledge of any witnesses who saw shots fired from the overpass. Statements or depositions from the 2 policemen and 13 railroad employees who were on the overpass all affirm that no shots were fired from the overpass. Most of these witnesses who discussed the source of the shots stated that they came from the direction of Elm and Houston Streets.³

Speculation.—A rifle cartridge was recovered on the overpass.

Commission finding.—No cartridge of any kind was found on the overpass nor has any witness come forward to claim having found one.⁴

Speculation.—A witness to the assassination said that she saw a man run behind the concrete wall of the overpass and disappear.

Commission finding.—Mrs. Jean L. Hill stated that after the firing stopped she saw a white man wearing a brown overcoat and a hat running west away from the Depository Building in the direction of the railroad tracks. There are no other witnesses who claim to have seen a man running toward the railroad tracks. Examination of all available films of the area following the shooting, reexamination of interviews with individuals in the vicinity of the shooting, and interviews with members of the Dallas Police Department and the Dallas County sheriff's office failed to corroborate Mrs. Hill's recollection or to reveal the identity of the man described by Mrs. Hill.⁵

Speculation.—Immediately after the shooting a motorcycle policeman was seen racing up the grassy embankment to the right of the shooting scene pursuing a couple seeking to flee from the overpass.

Commission finding.—There are no witnesses who have ever stated this and there is no evidence to support the claim. A motorcycle policeman, Clyde A. Haygood, dismounted in the street and ran up the incline. He stated that he saw no one running from the railroad yards adjacent to the overpass. Subsequently, at 12:37 p.m., Haygood reported that the shots had come from the Texas School Book Depository Building.⁶

Speculation.—More than three shots, perhaps as many as five or six, were fired at the President and Governor Connally.

Commission finding.—The weight of the evidence indicates that three shots were fired, of which two struck President Kennedy. There is persuasive evidence from the experts that one of these two bullets also struck Governor Connally. Some witnesses claimed that they

heard more than three shots but, as fully described in chapter III, the great majority heard only three shots.⁷

Speculation.—At least four or five bullets have been found.

Commission finding.—After the assassination, metal remains of bullets were recovered. These included an almost whole bullet of 158.6 grains, fragments weighing 44.6 grains and 21.0 grains, and other fragments too small to be identified. These metal remains indicate that at least two shots were fired. The Commission believes that three shots were fired.⁸

Speculation.—A bullet was found on the stretcher used for President Kennedy at Parkland Hospital.

Commission finding.—No bullet was found on the stretcher used by President Kennedy. An almost whole bullet was found when it rolled off the stretcher used by Governor Connally.⁹

Speculation.—A bullet was found in the grass near the scene of the assassination shortly afterward by a deputy sheriff of Dallas County, E. R. Walthers.

Commission finding.—Walthers has denied that he found a bullet at any time or that he told anyone that he had found one. With another deputy sheriff he made a diligent search for such a bullet 2 or 3 days after the assassination.¹⁰

Speculation.—The Presidential car stopped momentarily or almost came to a complete halt after the first shot. This is evidence that the driver had the impression that the first shot came from the front and therefore hesitated to drive closer to the overpass.

Commission finding.—The Presidential car did not stop or almost come to a complete halt after the firing of the first shot or any other shots. The driver, Special Agent William R. Greer, has testified that he accelerated the car after what was probably the second shot. Motion pictures of the scene show that the car slowed down momentarily after the shot that struck the President in the head and then speeded up rapidly.¹¹

Speculation.—The Presidential car had a small round bullet hole in the front windshield. This is evidence that a shot or shots were fired at the President from the front of the car.

Commission finding.—The windshield was not penetrated by any bullet. A small residue of lead was found on the inside surface of the windshield; on the outside of the windshield was a very small pattern of cracks immediately in front of the lead residue on the inside. The bullet from which this lead residue came was probably one of those that struck the President and therefore came from overhead and to the rear. Experts established that the abrasion in the windshield came from impact on the inside of the glass.¹²

Speculation.—The throat wound sustained by the President was the result of a shot fired from the front according to doctors at Parkland Hospital.

Commission finding.—Doctors at Parkland Hospital originally believed that the throat wound could have been either an entry or exit wound, but they made no examination to determine entry and exit

wounds. Subsequently, when the evidence of the autopsy became available, the doctors at Parkland agreed that it was an exit wound.¹³

Speculation.—It is inconceivable that the doctors at Parkland Hospital did not turn the President over on his face and notice the bullet hole in the back of his neck.

Commission finding.—Doctors at Parkland Hospital have testified that the President remained on his back while he was at Parkland Hospital for treatment and that they did not turn him over at any time; they were busy trying to save his life. Consequently, they were never aware of the hole in the back of his neck until they were notified of it later.¹⁴

Speculation.—The first shot struck the President in the throat as the car was proceeding along Houston Street toward the Texas School Book Depository. The car then made a left turn on to Elm Street and proceeded for some distance before additional shots were fired at the President.

Commission finding.—Before the autopsy findings made it clear that the shots were fired from the rear, there was speculation that the first shot may have been fired before the Presidential car turned on to Elm Street. As this report demonstrates, all of the shots that struck the President were fired from the rear and in a time period inconsistent with the theory that the first shot struck him while his car was coming down Houston Street. Motion pictures taken at the time show that the first shot struck the President after the car had turned onto Elm Street and was proceeding away from the Depository.¹⁵

THE ASSASSIN

Speculations tending to support the theory that Oswald could not have assassinated President Kennedy are based on a wide variety of assertions. Among these are statements that Oswald could not have been acquainted with the motorcade route before he came to work on November 22, that he may well have carried curtain rods rather than a rifle in a brown paper package he brought with him, that there may have been other people in the building who could have fired the rifle, that Oswald could not have fired the shots in the time available to him, that he was not a good enough marksman to have scored the hits with the rifle, that there were other people in the lunchroom of the Depository Building when he was confronted by Patrolman M. L. Baker, and that there are no eyewitnesses who could identify Oswald as having been in the window. Each of these speculations is dealt with below in the light of the testimony and evidence considered by the Commission.

Speculation.—Oswald could not have known the motorcade route before he arrived at work on November 22.

Commission finding.—The motorcade route was published in both Dallas papers on November 19 and was therefore available at least 72 hours before Oswald reported for work on November 22.¹⁶

Speculation.—The route as shown in the newspaper took the motorcade through the Triple Underpass via Main Street, a block away from the Depository. Therefore, Oswald could not have known that the motorcade would pass directly by the Texas School Book Depository Building.

Commission finding.—The motorcade route as published showed the motorcade turning right off Main Street onto Houston for one block and then left on Elm to the access road to the Stemmons Freeway. This route was clearly indicated in published descriptions and maps of the motorcade route. There was no mention of continuing on Main Street through the Triple Underpass.¹⁷

Speculation.—The motorcade route was changed on November 22 after the map had been printed. The motorcade was shifted from Main Street over to Elm Street to bring it by the Texas School Book Depository Building.

Commission finding.—The motorcade route was decided upon on November 18 and published in the Dallas newspapers on November 19. It was not changed in any way thereafter. The route called for the motorcade to turn off Main Street at Houston, go up to Elm, and then turn left on Elm Street.¹⁸

Speculation.—The normal and logical route would have been straight down Main Street through the Triple Underpass to the Stemmons Freeway. It is possible to drive from Main onto the access road to the Stemmons Freeway from a point beyond the underpass.

Commission finding.—The normal, direct, and only permissible route to the Stemmons Freeway from Main Street is via Houston and Elm Streets. Any attempt to turn onto the access road to the Stemmons Freeway from Main Street beyond the Triple Underpass would have been extremely difficult because of a concrete strip dividing Elm and Main Streets. Such an attempt would have required making an S-turn beyond the strip at a very tight angle, thereby slowing the Presidential car almost to a stop.¹⁹

Speculation.—Oswald may well have carried curtain rods to work on November 22 in the brown paper package he was observed to bring into the building because he lived in a room where he needed them.

Commission finding.—According to Oswald's landlady at 1026 North Beckley Avenue, Mrs. A. C. Johnson, the room had venetian blinds, curtain rods, and curtains while Oswald was living there. The curtain rods in the Paine garage that belonged to Mrs. Paine were still there after Oswald went to work on November 22. Mrs. Paine and Marina Oswald testified that Oswald had not spoken to them about curtain rods. After the assassination the empty package was found near the window from which the shots were fired, but no curtain rods were found.²⁰

Speculation.—Oswald spent the morning of November 22 in the company of other workers in the building and remained with them until they went downstairs to watch the President go by, no later probably than 12:15.

Commission finding.—Oswald did not spend the morning in the company of other workers in the building, and before the assassination he was last seen in the building on the sixth floor at about 11:55 a.m. by Charles Givens, another employee.²¹

Speculation.—It is probable that the chicken lunch, remains of which were found on the sixth floor, was eaten by an accomplice of Oswald who had hidden on the sixth floor overnight.

Commission finding.—The chicken lunch had been eaten shortly after noon on November 22 by Bonnie Ray Williams, an employee of the Texas School Book Depository, who after eating his lunch went to the fifth floor where he was when the shots were fired. Oswald did not eat the chicken lunch, nor did he drink from the soft drink bottle found near the chicken lunch.²²

Speculation.—Laboratory tests showed remains of the chicken lunch found on the sixth floor were 2 days old.

Commission finding.—The chicken lunch remains had been left there shortly after noon on November 22 by Bonnie Ray Williams.²³

Speculation.—An amateur 8-millimeter photograph taken at 12:20 p.m., 10 minutes before the assassination of President Kennedy, showed two silhouettes at the sixth-floor window of the Depository.

Commission finding.—A film taken by an amateur photographer, Robert J. E. Hughes, just before the assassination, shows a shadow in the southeast corner window of the sixth floor. This has been determined after examination by the FBI and the U.S. Navy Photographic Interpretation Center to be the shadow from the cartons near the window.²⁴

Speculation.—A picture published widely in newspapers and magazines after the assassination showed Lee Harvey Oswald standing on the front steps of the Texas School Book Depository Building shortly before the President's motorcade passed by.

Commission finding.—The man on the front steps of the building, thought or alleged by some to be Lee Harvey Oswald, is actually Billy Lovelady, an employee of the Texas School Book Depository, who somewhat resembles Oswald. Lovelady has identified himself in the picture, and other employees of the Depository standing with him, as shown in the picture, have verified that he was the man in the picture and that Oswald was not there.²⁵

Speculation.—The post office box in Dallas to which Oswald had the rifle mailed was kept under both his name and that of A. Hidell.

Commission finding.—It is not known whether Oswald's application listed the name A. Hidell as one entitled to receive mail at the box. In accordance with U.S. Post Office regulations, the portion of the application listing the names of persons other than the applicant entitled to receive mail was discarded after the box was closed on May 14, 1963. During the summer of 1963, Oswald rented a post office box in New Orleans, listing the name "Hidell" in addition to his own name and that of his wife. Hidell was a favorite alias used by Oswald on a number of occasions. Diligent search has failed to re-

veal any person in Dallas or New Orleans by that name. It was merely a creation for his own purposes.²⁶

Speculation.—The President's car was going at a speed estimated at from 12 to 20 miles per hour, thus presenting a target comparable to the most difficult that a soldier would encounter under battlefield conditions.

Commission finding.—During the period between the time that the first and second shots struck the President, the Presidential car was traveling at an average speed of approximately 11.2 miles per hour. Expert witnesses testified that the target is regarded as a favorable one because the car was going away from the marksman in a straight line.²⁷

Speculation.—Oswald could not have fired three shots from the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle in 5½ seconds.

Commission finding.—According to expert witnesses, exacting tests conducted for the Commission demonstrated that it was possible to fire three shots from the rifle within 5½ seconds. It should be noted that the first loaded shell was already in the chamber ready for firing; Oswald had only to pull the trigger to fire the first shot and to work the bolt twice in order to fire the second and third shots. They testified that if the second shot missed, Oswald had between 4.8 and 5.6 seconds to fire the three shots. If either the first or third shot missed, Oswald had in excess of 7 seconds to fire the three shots.²⁸

Speculation.—Oswald did not have the marksmanship ability demonstrated by the rifleman who fired the shots.

Commission finding.—Oswald qualified as a sharpshooter and a marksman with the M-1 rifle in the Marine Corps. Marina Oswald testified that in New Orleans her husband practiced operating the bolt of the rifle. Moreover, experts stated that the scope was a substantial aid for rapid, accurate firing. The Commission concluded that Oswald had the capability with a rifle to commit assassination.²⁹

Speculation.—The name of the rifle used in the assassination appeared on the rifle. Therefore, the searchers who found the rifle on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository should have been able to identify it correctly by name.

Commission finding.—An examination of the rifle does not reveal any manufacturer's name. An inscription on the rifle shows that it was made in Italy. The rifle was identified by Captain Fritz and Lieutenant Day, who were the first to actually handle it.³⁰

Speculation.—The rifle found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository was identified as a 7.65 Mauser by the man who found it, Deputy Constable Seymour Weitzman.

Commission finding.—Weitzman, the original source of the speculation that the rifle was a Mauser, and Deputy Sheriff Eugene Boone found the weapon. Weitzman did not handle the rifle and did not examine it at close range. He had little more than a glimpse of it and thought it was a Mauser, a German bolt-type rifle similar in appearance to the Mannlicher-Carcano. Police laboratory technicians

subsequently arrived and correctly identified the weapon as a 6.5 Italian rifle.³¹

Speculation.—There is evidence that a second rifle was discovered on the roof of the Texas School Book Depository or on the overpass.

Commission finding.—No second rifle was found in either of these places or in any other place. The shots that struck President Kennedy and Governor Connally came from the rifle found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository.³²

Speculation.—It is possible that there was a second Mannlicher-Carcano rifle involved in the assassination. The Irving Sports Shop mounted a scope on a rifle 3 weeks before the assassination.

Commission finding.—Dial D. Ryder, an employee of the Irving Sports Shop, has stated that he found on his workbench on November 23 an undated work tag with the name "Oswald" on it, indicating that sometime during the first 2 weeks of November three holes had been bored in a rifle and a telescopic sight mounted on it and bore-sighted. However, Ryder and his employer, Charles W. Greener, had no recollection of Oswald, of his Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, of the transaction allegedly represented by the repair tag, or of any person for whom such a repair was supposedly made. The rifle found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository had two holes in it bored for the installation of a scope prior to shipment to Oswald in March 1963. The Commission concluded that it is doubtful whether the tag produced by Ryder was authentic. All of the evidence developed proves that Oswald owned only the one rifle—the Mannlicher-Carcano—and that he did not bring it or a second rifle to the Irving Sports Shop.³³

Speculation.—Ammunition for the rifle found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository had not been manufactured since the end of World War II. The ammunition used by Oswald must, therefore, have been at least 20 years old, making it extremely unreliable.

Commission finding.—The ammunition used in the rifle was American ammunition recently made by the Western Cartridge Co., which manufactures such ammunition currently. In tests with the same kind of ammunition, experts fired Oswald's Mannlicher-Carcano rifle more than 100 times without any misfires.³⁴

Speculation.—The assertion that Oswald's palmprint appeared on the rifle is false. The FBI told newsmen in an off-the-record briefing session that there was no palmprint on the rifle.

Commission finding.—The FBI confirmed that the palmprint lifted by the Dallas police from the rifle found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository Building was Oswald's palmprint. The FBI informed the Commission that no FBI agent made statements of any type to the press concerning the existence or nonexistence of this print.³⁵

Speculation.—If Oswald had been gloveless, he would have left fingerprints on the rifle because he would not have had time to wipe the prints off the rifle after he had fired it.

Commission finding.—An FBI fingerprint expert testified that the poor quality of the metal and wooden parts would cause them to absorb moisture from the skin, thereby making a clear print unlikely. There is no evidence that Oswald wore gloves or that he wiped prints off the rifle. Latent fingerprints were found on the rifle but they were too incomplete to be identified.³⁶

Speculation.—Gordon Shanklin, the special agent in charge of the Dallas office of the FBI, stated that the paraffin test of Oswald's face and hands was positive and proved that he had fired a rifle.

Commission finding.—The paraffin tests were conducted by members of the Dallas Police Department and the technical examinations by members of the Dallas City-County Criminal Investigation Laboratory. The FBI has notified the Commission that neither Shanklin nor any other representative of the FBI ever made such a statement. The Commission has found no evidence that Special Agent Shanklin ever made this statement publicly.³⁷

Speculation.—Marina Oswald stated that she did not know that her husband owned a rifle nor did she know that he owned a pistol.

Commission finding.—There is no evidence that Marina Oswald ever told this to any authorities. On the afternoon of November 22, she told the police that her husband owned a rifle and that he kept it in the garage of the Paine house in Irving. Later, at Dallas police headquarters, she said that she could not identify as her husband's the rifle shown her by policemen. When Marina Oswald appeared before the Commission she was shown the Mannlicher-Carcano 6.5 rifle found on the sixth floor of the Depository and identified it as the "fateful rifle of Lee Oswald."³⁸

Speculation.—The picture of Oswald taken by his wife in March or April 1963 and showing him with a rifle and a pistol was "doctored" when it appeared in magazines and newspapers in February 1964. The rifle held by Oswald in these pictures is not the same rifle that was found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository Building.

Commission finding.—Life magazine, Newsweek, and the New York Times notified the Commission that they had retouched this picture. In doing so, they inadvertently altered details of the configuration of the rifle. The original prints of this picture have been examined by the Commission and by photographic experts who have identified the rifle as a Mannlicher-Carcano 6.5, the same kind as the one found on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository. FBI experts testified that the picture was taken with Oswald's camera.³⁹

Speculation.—The rifle picture of Oswald was a composite one with Oswald's face pasted on somebody else's body.

Commission finding.—Marina Oswald has testified that she took this picture with a camera owned by her husband and subsequently identified as Oswald's Imperial Reflex camera. She identified the man in the picture as her husband. Experts also state the picture was not a composite.⁴⁰

Speculation.—After firing the shots, Oswald could not have disposed of the rifle and descended the stairs to the lunchroom in time to get a drink from a soft drink machine and be there when Patrolman Baker came in.

Commission finding.—A series of time tests made by investigators and by Roy S. Truly and Patrolman M. L. Baker at the request of the Commission, show that it was possible for Oswald to have placed the rifle behind a box and descended to the lunchroom on the second floor before Patrolman Baker and Truly got up there. Oswald did not have a soft drink bottle in his hand at the time he was confronted by Baker and he was not standing by the soft drink machine. He was just entering the lunchroom; Baker caught a glimpse of him through the glass panel in the door leading to the lunchroom vestibule.⁴¹

Speculation.—There were other people present in the lunchroom at the time that Baker and Truly saw Oswald there.

Commission finding.—Baker and Truly have both stated that there was no one in the lunchroom other than Oswald at the time that they entered. No other witness to this incident has been found.⁴²

Speculation.—Police were sealing off all exits from the building by the time Oswald got to the second floor.

Commission finding.—Police may have begun to take up positions at the exits to the building as early as 12:33, but it is unlikely that they had blocked them off completely until 12:37 p.m. at the earliest. Oswald was seen in an office, walking toward an exit leading to the front stairway, at about 12:33 p.m. Oswald probably had at least 7 minutes in which to get out of the building without being stopped.⁴³

OSWALD'S MOVEMENTS BETWEEN 12:33 AND 1:15 P.M.

One of the major theses urged in support of the theory that Oswald did not murder Patrolman Tippit was that his known movements after he left the Texas School Book Depository would not have permitted him to have arrived at 10th Street and Patton Avenue in time to encounter Tippit by 1:16 p.m. Careful reenactments by investigative agencies and by members of the Commission staff of Oswald's movements from the time he left the Texas School Book Depository until he encountered Tippit verified that Oswald could reach his rooming-house at 1026 North Beckley Avenue at approximately 1 p.m. or earlier. The housekeeper at the roominghouse testified that Oswald spent only a few minutes at the house, leaving as hurriedly as he had arrived. During police interrogation after his arrest, Oswald admitted to riding both bus and taxi in returning to his roominghouse after the assassination of the President. From 1026 North Beckley Avenue, Oswald could easily have walked the nine tenths of a mile to 10th Street and Patton Avenue where he encountered Tippit.

Speculation.—A detailed and remarkably clear description of Oswald was sent over the police radio in Dallas at 12:36 p.m., November 22, 1963.

Commission finding.—The radio logs of the Dallas Police Department and the Dallas County Sheriff's Office show that no description of a suspect in the assassination of the President was broadcast before 12:45 p.m. on that day. No reference to Oswald by name was broadcast before he was arrested. The description of the suspect that was broadcast was similar to that of Oswald, but it lacked some important specific details such as color of hair and eyes. The information for the initial broadcasts most probably came from Howard Brennan, who saw Oswald in the window when he was firing the rifle.⁴⁴

Speculation.—Oswald did not have time for all of the movements imputed to him between his departure from the Texas School Book Depository and his encounter with Tippit.

Commission finding.—Time tests of all of Oswald's movements establish that these movements could have been accomplished in the time available to him.⁴⁵

Speculation.—Oswald was stopped by police as he left the building and was permitted to pass after he told them he worked in the building.

Commission finding.—The Commission has found no witness who saw Oswald leave the building. This speculation is probably a misinterpretation of the fact that he was stopped in the lunchroom by Patrolman Baker before he left the building and was allowed to proceed after Truly, the Depository superintendent, identified him as an employee there. Police did not seal off the building until at least several minutes after Oswald could have left.⁴⁶

Speculation.—The log of the cabdriver who took Oswald to North Beckley Avenue, William W. Whaley, shows that Oswald entered his cab at 12:30 p.m. Since this occurred at some distance from the point of the President's assassination, Oswald could not have shot the President.

Commission finding.—Whaley's log does show 12:30 p.m., but he has testified that he was not accurate in logging the time that passengers entered his cab, that he usually logged them at 15-minute intervals, and that it was undoubtedly some time later than 12:30 when Oswald entered his cab. Sometimes he did not make entries in his logbook until three or four trips later. The bus transfer in Oswald's possession was issued after 12:36 p.m. The Commission has determined that Oswald probably entered Whaley's cab at about 12:47 or 12:48 p.m.⁴⁷

Speculation.—The distance from the Greyhound terminal in Dallas, where Oswald entered the cab, to North Beckley Avenue, where he probably left the cab, is something over 3 miles—normally a 10-minute cab drive. Given the traffic jam that existed at the time, it is doubtful that Whaley could have made the trip in less than 15 minutes. One estimate has placed the time at 24 minutes from the Greyhound terminal to Oswald's roominghouse.

Commission finding.—The distance from the Greyhound bus terminal at Jackson and Lamar Streets to the 500 block of North Beckley

is 2.5 miles. Oswald actually got out in the 700 block of North Beckley. The distance was, therefore, less than 2.5 miles. Whaley has testified to the Commission that the trip took 6 minutes. Test runs made by members of the Commission staff under traffic conditions somewhat similar to those that existed on November 22, took approximately 5 minutes and 30 seconds. To walk from Beckley and Neely, which is the 700 block of Beckley, where Oswald probably left the cab, to 1026 North Beckley, took Commission staff members 5 minutes and 45 seconds.⁴⁸

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

Commission finding.—There is no evidence that Oswald and Ruby knew each other or had any relationship through a third party or parties. There is no evidence that Oswald knew where Ruby lived. Accordingly, there is neither evidence nor reason to believe that Oswald was on his way to Ruby's apartment when he was stopped by Tippit.⁴⁹

MURDER OF TIPPIT

Speculations on the murder of Tippit centered about assertions that he was elsewhere than he was supposed to be when he was shot, that he knew the man who shot him, and that the description of the murderer given by one of the eyewitnesses did not fit Oswald's description.

The Commission found that Tippit was unquestionably patrolling in an area to which he had been directed by police headquarters. There was no evidence to support the speculation that Tippit and Oswald knew each other or had ever seen each other before. The description of the murderer imputed to one of the witnesses was denied by her and had no support from any other eyewitness.

Speculation.—Tippit was driving alone in his police car even though standing orders for police in Dallas were that radio cars of the type Tippit was driving must have two policemen in them.

Commission finding.—Dallas police officials stated that department policy required about 80 percent of the patrolmen on the day shift, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., to work alone. Tippit was one of the patrolmen assigned to work alone that day.⁵⁰

Speculation.—Tippit was violating an order he had received the day before not to leave the sector to which he had been assigned. This sector was supposed to be in downtown Dallas at the time he stopped Oswald.

Commission finding.—A review of Tippit's file in the Dallas Police Department and the department's radio log revealed that following the shooting of the President, Tippit was directed to move into and remain in the central Oak Cliff area available for any emergency.⁵¹

Speculation.—The police had been withdrawn from the area in which Tippit found Oswald.

Commission finding.—Other police cars were operating in the Oak Cliff area at the same time as Tippit. They participated in the subsequent search for and apprehension of Tippit's slayer.⁵²

Speculation.—Tippit violated a procedure governing radio cars when he failed to notify headquarters that he was stopping to question a suspect.

Commission finding.—The Dallas Police Department had no requirement or regulation for police officers to notify headquarters when stopping to question a suspect. Therefore, Tippit did not violate any police radio procedure in failing to notify the radio dispatcher that he was stopping Oswald.⁵³

Speculation.—Tippit could not have recognized Oswald from the description sent out over the police radio.

Commission finding.—There is no certain way of knowing whether Tippit recognized Oswald from the description put out by the police radio. The Dallas Police Department radio log shows that the police radio dispatcher at 1:29 p.m. noted a similarity between the broadcast descriptions of the President's assassin and Tippit's slayer. It is conceivable, even probable, that Tippit stopped Oswald because of the description broadcast by the police radio.⁵⁴

Speculation.—Tippit and his killer knew each other.

Commission finding.—Investigation has revealed no evidence that Oswald and Tippit were acquainted, had ever seen each other, or had any mutual acquaintances. Witnesses to the shooting observed no signs of recognition between the two men.⁵⁵

Speculation.—Mrs. Helen Markham, a witness to the slaying of Tippit, put the time at just after 1:06 p.m. This would have made it impossible for Oswald to have committed the killing since he would not have had time to arrive at the shooting scene by that time.

Commission finding.—The shooting of Tippit has been established at approximately 1:15 or 1:16 p.m. on the basis of a call to police headquarters on Tippit's car radio by another witness to the assassination, Domingo Benavides. In her various statements and in her testimony, Mrs. Markham was uncertain and inconsistent in her recollection of the exact time of the slaying.⁵⁶

Speculation.—Mrs. Helen Markham is the only witness to the killing of Tippit.

Commission finding.—Other witnesses to the killing of Tippit include Domingo Benavides, who used Tippit's car radio to notify the police dispatcher of the killing at 1:16 p.m., and William Scoggins, a cabdriver parked at the corner of 10th Street and Patton Avenue. Barbara Jeanette Davis and Virginia Davis saw a man with a pistol in his hand walk across their lawn immediately after they heard the sound of the shots that killed Tippit. The man emptied the shells from his pistol and turned the corner from 10th Street onto Patton Avenue. All of these witnesses, except Benavides, subsequently picked Oswald out of a lineup as the slayer. Benavides did not feel that he could make a positive identification and never attended a lineup for the purpose.⁵⁷

Speculation.—Mrs. Markham said that the man she saw shooting Tippit was about 30, short, with bushy hair, and wearing a white coat. Since Oswald does not fit this description he could not be the killer.

Commission finding.—In evaluating Helen Markham's testimony the Commission is aware of allegations that she described the killer of Patrolman Tippit as short, stocky, and with bushy hair, which would not be a correct description of Oswald. It has also been alleged that Mrs. Markham identified Oswald in the lineup because of his clothing rather than his appearance. When Oswald appeared in the lineup at which Mrs. Markham was present, he was not wearing the jacket which he wore at the time of the shooting, and Mrs. Markham has testified that her identification was based "mostly from his face."⁵⁸ Moreover, Mrs. Markham has denied that she ever described the man who killed Tippit as short, stocky, and with bushy hair. The Commission reviewed the transcript of a telephone conversation in which Mrs. Markham was alleged to have made such a description. In the transcription Mrs. Markham reaffirmed her positive identification of Oswald and denied having described the killer as short, stocky, and bushy haired.⁵⁹

Speculation.—Another witness to the slaying of Patrolman Tippit, an unidentified woman, was interviewed by the FBI but was never called as a witness by the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. This witness is alleged to have stated that she saw two men involved in the shooting and that they ran off in opposite directions afterward.

Commission finding.—The only woman among the witnesses to the slaying of Tippit known to the Commission is Helen Markham. The FBI never interviewed any other woman who claimed to have seen the shooting and never received any information concerning the existence of such a witness. Two women, Barbara Jeanette Davis and Virginia Davis, saw the killer immediately after the shooting as he crossed the lawn at the corner of Patton Avenue and 10th Street, but they did not witness the shooting itself. They were both interviewed by the FBI and appeared before the Commission. The Commission has no evidence that there was any witness to the slaying other than those identified in chapter IV.⁶⁰

Speculation.—No witness saw Oswald between the time he was supposed to have reloaded his gun near the scene of the slaying and his appearance at the shoestore on Jefferson Boulevard.

Commission finding.—Six witnesses identified Oswald as the man they saw in flight after the murder of Tippit. The killer was seen, gun in hand, by Ted Callaway and Sam Guinyard in the block of Patton Avenue between 10th Street and Jefferson Boulevard after the shooting of Tippit. They saw him run to Jefferson and turn right. On the evening of November 22, Callaway and Guinyard picked Oswald out of a police lineup as the man they saw with the gun. Two other men, Warren Reynolds and Pat Patterson, saw a man with a pistol in his hand running south on Patton Avenue. They followed him for a block on Jefferson Boulevard and then lost sight

of him. Both men subsequently identified pictures of Oswald as the man they saw with the gun. Harold Russell also saw a man with a gun running south on Patton Avenue and later identified him from pictures as Oswald. Mrs. Mary Brock saw a man she later identified as Oswald walk at a fast pace into the parking lot behind the service station at the corner of Jefferson and Crawford, where Oswald's jacket was found shortly after.⁶¹

Speculation.—When Oswald left his roominghouse at about 1 p.m. on November 22 he had on a zipper-type tan plaid jacket.

Commission finding.—The jacket that Oswald was wearing at the time of the slaying of Tippit was a light-gray jacket. According to Marina Oswald, her husband owned only two jackets—one blue and the other light gray. The housekeeper at 1026 North Beckley Avenue, Mrs. Earlene Roberts, was not certain about the color of the jacket that Oswald was wearing when he left the house.⁶²

Speculation.—Oswald wore an olive-brown plain jacket which is visible in all the pictures of him after his arrest.

Commission finding.—At the time of his arrest, Oswald was not wearing a jacket. The jacket that was subsequently recovered in a parking lot and identified as Oswald's was a light-gray one. There are no witnesses who have stated that Oswald was wearing an olive-brown jacket immediately before or after his arrest. The Commission has seen no pictures of Oswald taken subsequent to his arrest that show him in such a jacket. Pictures taken shortly after his arrest show him in the shirt that Mrs. Bledsoe described him as wearing when she saw him on the bus at approximately 1:40 p.m.⁶³

Speculation.—Oswald's landlady, Mrs. A. C. Johnson, said that Oswald never had a gun in the room.

Commission finding.—In her testimony before the Commission, Mrs. Johnson said that he "never brought that rifle in my house. * * * He could have had this pistol, I don't know, because they found the scabbard."⁶⁴ As shown in chapter IV, Oswald kept his rifle in the Paine garage in Irving while he was living in Dallas during October and November. The pistol was small and easily concealed.⁶⁵

Speculation.—There was absolutely no place to hide a gun in Oswald's room at 1026 North Beckley Avenue.

Commission finding.—In the search of Oswald's room after his apprehension police found a pistol holster. Oswald's landlady, Mrs. A. C. Johnson, stated that she had not seen the holster before. There is no reason to believe that Oswald could not have had both a pistol and the holster hidden in the room. Oswald's pistol was a small one with the barrel cut down to 2¼ inches. It could have been concealed in a pocket of his clothes.⁶⁶

Speculation.—Oswald did not pick up the revolver from his room at 1 p.m.

Commission finding.—There is reason to believe that Oswald did pick up the revolver from his room, probably concealing it beneath his jacket. This likelihood is reinforced by the finding of the pistol holster in the room after the assassination, since this indicates that

Oswald did not store the pistol at the home of Mrs. Paine where he spent the night before the assassination.⁶⁷

Speculation.—No one saw Oswald enter the Texas Theatre.

Commission finding.—A nearby shoe store manager, Johnny C. Brewer, and the theatre cashier, Julia Postal, saw Oswald enter the lobby of the theatre from where he went on into the theatre proper.⁶⁸

Speculation.—Not a single one of the people in the Texas Theatre at the time of Oswald's arrest has come forward or been brought forward to give an eyewitness account of the arrest.

Commission finding.—Johnny C. Brewer, the shoe store manager, and two patrons of the theatre—John Gibson and George Jefferson Applin, Jr.—were present in the theatre and testified before the Commission on the circumstances of Oswald's arrest at the Texas Theatre. Only 6 or 7 people were seated on the main floor of the theatre.⁶⁹

Speculation.—There is no independent witness aside from the police who testified that Oswald was carrying a gun when arrested by the police.

Commission finding.—Johnny Brewer testified before the Commission that he saw Oswald pull a gun and that he saw it taken away from him by a policeman.⁷⁰

OSWALD AFTER HIS ARREST

The Commission found that assertions that the Dallas police treated Oswald brutally and denied him his constitutional rights to legal counsel had no foundation in fact. Insinuations that Dallas police officials and District Attorney Henry M. Wade fabricated or altered evidence to establish the guilt of Oswald were baseless. It is true that police officials and the district attorney made errors in giving evidential information to the press, but these were clearly the result of misapprehensions or ignorance rather than intent, and at the worst represent bad judgment. At least one imputed fabrication of fact, further embellished by repetition, never really occurred. Sinister connotations were evoked by the attribution to the district attorney of the statement that a taxicab driver named Darryl Click drove Oswald from downtown Dallas to the area of his roominghouse in Oak Cliff. It has been correctly ascertained that no such taxicab driver existed in Dallas. On the other hand, the district attorney, who was quoted in a newspaper transcript as making the statement, never made the statement nor did any one else. Audio tapes of the district attorney's press conference make clear that the person who transcribed the conference rendered a reference to the "Oak Cliff" area of Dallas as a person, "Darryl Click". This error in transcription is the sole source for the existence of a "Darryl Click" as a taxicab driver.

Speculation.—Oswald was the victim of police brutality.

Commission finding.—Oswald resisted arrest in the Texas Theatre and drew a gun. He received a slight cut over his right eye and a

bruise under his left eye in the course of his struggles. During the time he was in police custody, he was neither ill-treated nor abused.⁷¹

Speculation.—Oswald was never formally charged with the assassination of the President; he was charged only with the shooting of Patrolman J. D. Tippit.

Commission finding.—Oswald was arraigned for the murder of President Kennedy before Justice of the Peace David Johnston on the fourth floor of the Police Department building at 1:35 a.m., November 23. Previously, he had been arraigned before Johnston for the murder of Tippit at 7:10 p. m., November 22.⁷²

Speculation.—The police questioned Oswald extensively about the Tippit murder on the first day of his detention. They did not question him about the assassination of President Kennedy.

Commission finding.—Dallas police officials stated that they questioned Oswald repeatedly on November 22 about the assassination of President Kennedy and his relationship to it. At the first interrogation, Captain Fritz asked Oswald to account for himself at the time the President was shot. FBI agents who were present also stated that he was questioned about the assassination of the President.⁷³

Speculation.—Oswald's attempts to get legal counsel were deliberately thwarted by the police and he was cut off from outside calls that would have permitted him to obtain a lawyer.

Commission finding.—On November 23, Oswald was visited by the president of the Dallas Bar Association, H. Louis Nichols, who offered him help in getting a lawyer; Oswald refused the offer. Oswald was told by the police that he could use the telephone when he wished, and he did make telephone calls. He attempted to call attorney John Abt in New York but was unsuccessful in reaching him. Mrs. Paine testified that at Oswald's request she tried without success to reach Abt. Oswald was also visited by his wife, mother, and brother, to any of whom he could have turned for help in getting counsel.⁷⁴

OSWALD IN THE SOVIET UNION

Oswald's residence in the Soviet Union for more than 2½ years aroused speculation after his arrest that he was an agent of the Soviet Union or in some way affiliated with it. This speculation was supported by assertions that he had received exceptionally favored treatment from the Soviet Government in securing permission to enter and leave the country, especially the latter, because his Russian wife and child were permitted to leave with him. The careful analysis of these speculations in chapter VI of this report led to the Commission's conclusion that there is no credible evidence that Oswald was an agent of the Soviet Government and that he did not receive unusually favorable treatment in entering or leaving the Soviet Union or in returning to the United States.

Speculation.—A young private in the Marine Corps in the 1950's could not study Marxism, learn Russian, and read Soviet newspapers without any adverse repercussions in his unit.

Commission finding.—Although Oswald's interest in the Soviet Union was well known, his interest in Marxism was apparently known to only a few of his fellow marines. While stationed in California, he studied Russian. In February 1959, while still in the Marines, he took an official test on his proficiency in Russian and was rated "Poor." In California at about this time he probably read a Russian-language newspaper. The reactions of his fellow Marines who were aware of his interests in Marxism and the Soviet Union were apparently not antagonistic and did not deter him from pursuing these interests.⁷⁵

Speculation.—Oswald learned Russian during his service in the Marines as part of his military training.

Commission finding.—Oswald never received any training from the Marine Corps in the Russian language. His studies of Russian were entirely on his own time and at his own initiative.⁷⁶

Speculation.—Oswald could not have saved \$1,600 from his Marine pay for his trip to Russia in 1959.

Commission finding.—In November 1959, Oswald told an American reporter in Moscow, Aline Mosby, that he had saved \$1,500 (not \$1,600) while in the Marines. It is entirely consistent with Oswald's known frugality that he could have saved the money from the \$3,452.20 in pay he received while he was in the Marines. Moreover, despite his statement to Aline Mosby, he may not actually have saved \$1,500, for it was possible for him to have made the trip to Russia in 1959 for considerably less than that amount.⁷⁷

Speculation.—It is probable that Oswald had prior contacts with Soviet agents before he entered Russia in 1959 because his application for a visa was processed and approved immediately on receipt.

Commission finding.—There is no evidence that Oswald was in touch with Soviet agents before his visit to Russia. The time that it took for him to receive his visa in Helsinki for entrance to the Soviet Union was shorter than the average but not beyond the normal range for the granting of such visas. Had Oswald been recruited as a Russian agent while he was still in the Marines, it is most improbable that he would have been encouraged to defect. He would have been of greater value to Russian intelligence as a Marine radar operator than as a defector.⁷⁸

Speculation.—Soviet suspicion of Oswald is indicated by the fact that he was sent off to work in a radio plant in Minsk as an unskilled hand at the lowest rate of pay although he qualified as a trained radar and electronics technician.

Commission finding.—The Soviet Government probably was suspicious of Oswald, as it would be of any American who appeared in Moscow and said he wanted to live in the Soviet Union. Under the circumstances it is to be expected that he would be placed in a position that would not involve national security. Moreover, Oswald had been a radar operator, not a technician, in the Marines. His total income in Russia was higher than normal because his pay was sup-

plemented for about a year by payments from the Soviet "Red Cross," an official agency of the Soviet Government. Oswald believed that these payments really came from the MVD. It is a policy of the Soviet Government to subsidize defectors from Western nations who settle in the Soviet Union, in order that their standard of living may not be too much lower than their previous standard in their own country.⁷⁹

Speculation.—Oswald was trained by the Russians in a special school for assassins at Minsk.

Commission finding.—Commission investigations revealed no evidence to support this claim or the existence of such a school in Minsk during the time Oswald was there. Oswald belonged to a hunting club near Minsk, but there is no evidence that this was other than an ordinary hunting club.⁸⁰

Speculation.—Marina Oswald's father was an important part of the Soviet intelligence apparatus.

Commission finding.—Marina Oswald's father died while she was still an infant. This reference is presumably to her uncle, Ilya Prusakov, who was an executive in the lumber industry, which position carried with it the rank of lieutenant colonel or colonel in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD). Since 1953 the MVD has not been concerned with internal security or other police functions.⁸¹

Speculation.—It was most exceptional that Oswald was able to bring his wife and child out of the Soviet Union with him.

Commission finding.—There is no reason to believe that the Oswalds received unusually favorable treatment in being permitted or assisted to leave the Soviet Union together. Other American citizens have brought their Russian wives out of the Soviet Union, both before and after Oswald.⁸²

Speculation.—Oswald never would have been permitted to return to the United States if Soviet intelligence had not planned to use him in some way against the United States.

Commission finding.—There is no evidence that Oswald had any working relationship with the Soviet Government or Soviet intelligence. The Russians have permitted other American defectors to return to the United States.⁸³

Speculation.—Since the exit visa for Marina Oswald was granted so promptly the Soviet authorities must have wanted Marina to accompany her husband.

Commission finding.—Marina Oswald's exit visa application was not acted upon with unusual rapidity. It took at least 5½ months from the time the Oswalds applied until they were notified of permission in December 1961. There have been many instances where visas were granted more quickly to other Soviet wives of American citizens.⁸⁴

Speculation.—Soviet authorities gave Oswald notice a month and a half in advance that they had granted him an exit visa, an unprecedented act for the Soviet Government.

Commission finding.—The Oswalds were notified on December 25, 1961, that their requests for exit visas had been granted by Soviet authorities. Marina Oswald picked up her visa, valid until December 1, 1962, on January 11, 1962, 17 days after receiving notice that it was available. Oswald did not pick up his visa until May 22. The Soviets did not give the Oswalds any advance notice; the visas could have been picked up immediately had the Oswalds so desired. Because his exit visa had a 45-day expiration time after date of issuance, Lee Oswald delayed picking it up until he knew when he was leaving. He could not arrange a departure date until he received permission from the Department of State in May to return to the United States.⁸⁵

OSWALD'S TRIP TO MEXICO CITY

Oswald's trip to Mexico City in late September and early October 1963, less than 2 months before he assassinated President Kennedy, has provoked speculation that it was related in some way to a conspiracy to murder the President. Rumors include assertions that he made a clandestine flight from Mexico to Cuba and back and that he received a large sum of money—usually estimated at \$5,000—which he brought back to Dallas with him. The Commission has no credible evidence that Oswald went to Mexico pursuant to a plan to assassinate President Kennedy, that he received any instructions related to such an action while there, or that he received large sums of money from any source in Mexico.

Speculation.—Oswald could not have received an American passport in June 1963 within 24 hours without special intervention on his behalf.

Commission finding.—Oswald's passport application was processed routinely by the Department of State. No person or agency intervened specially on his behalf to speed the issuance of the passport. The passports of 24 other persons, on the same list sent to Washington from New Orleans, were authorized at the same time. The Passport Office of the Department of State had no instructions to delay issuance of or to deny a passport to Oswald.⁸⁶

Speculation.—The Walter-McCarran Act specifically requires anyone who has attempted to renounce his U.S. citizenship to file an affidavit stating why he should receive a U.S. passport. Therefore, Oswald should have been required to file such an affidavit before receiving his passport in June 1963.

Commission finding.—The Internal Security Act of 1950 (Walter-McCarran Act) contains no reference to an affidavit being required of a U.S. citizen who has attempted to expatriate himself.⁸⁷

Speculation.—Oswald did not have money for his trip to Mexico in September 1963.

Commission finding.—An analysis of Oswald's finances by the Commission indicates that he had sufficient money to make the trip to and from Mexico City. There is no evidence that he received any

assistance in financing his trip to Mexico. The total cost of his 7-day trip has been reliably estimated at less than \$85.⁸⁸

Speculation.—Oswald was accompanied on his trip to Mexico City by a man and two women.

Commission finding.—Investigation has revealed that Oswald traveled alone on the bus. Fellow passengers on the bus between Houston and Mexico City have stated that he appeared to be traveling alone and that they had not previously known him.⁸⁹

Speculation.—While in Mexico, Oswald made a clandestine flight to Havana and back.

Commission finding.—The Commission has found no evidence that Oswald made any flight to Cuba while he was in Mexico. He never received permission from the Cuban Government to enter Cuba nor from the Mexican Government to leave Mexico bound for Cuba. A confidential check of the Cuban airline in Mexico City indicates that Oswald never appeared at its office there.⁹⁰

Speculation.—Oswald came back from Mexico City with \$5,000.

Commission finding.—No evidence has ever been supplied or obtained to support this allegation. Oswald's actions in Mexico City and after his return to Dallas lend no support to this speculation.⁹¹

Speculation.—On November 27, 1963, in a speech at the University of Havana, Fidel Castro, under the influence of liquor, said "The first time that Oswald was in Cuba * * *." Castro therefore had knowledge that Oswald had made surreptitious visits to Cuba.

Commission finding.—Castro's speeches are monitored directly by the U.S. Information Agency as he delivers them. A tape of this speech reveals that it did not contain the alleged slip of the tongue. Castro did refer to Oswald's visit to the "Cuban Embassy" in Mexico which he immediately corrected to "Cuban consulate." The Commission has found no evidence that Oswald had made surreptitious visits to Cuba.⁹²

OSWALD AND U.S. GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Rumors and speculations that Oswald was in some way associated with or used by agencies of the U.S. Government grew out of his Russian period and his investigation by the FBI after his return to the United States. Insinuations were made that Oswald had been a CIA agent or had some relationship with the CIA and that this explained the supposed ease with which he received passports and visas. Speculation that he had some working relationship with the FBI was based on an entry in Oswald's notebook giving the name and telephone number of an agent from the FBI office in Dallas. The Directors of the CIA and the FBI have testified before the Commission that Oswald was never in the employ of their agencies in any capacity. The Commission has concluded on the basis of its own investigations of the files of Federal agencies that Oswald was not and had never been an agent of any agency of the U.S. Government (aside

from his service in the Marines) and was not and had never been used by any U.S. Government agency for any purpose. The FBI was interested in him as a former defector and it maintained a file on him.

Speculation.—Oswald was an informant of either the FBI or the CIA. He was recruited by an agency of the U.S. Government and sent to Russia in 1959.

Commission finding.—Mrs. Marguerite Oswald frequently expressed the opinion that her son was such an agent, but she stated before the Commission that “I cannot prove Lee is an agent.”⁹³ The Directors of the CIA and of the FBI testified before the Commission that Oswald was never employed by either agency or used by either agency in any capacity. Investigation by the Commission has revealed no evidence that Oswald was ever employed by either the FBI or CIA in any capacity.⁹⁴

Speculation.—Oswald told Pauline Bates, a public stenographer in Fort Worth, Tex., in June 1962, that he had become a “secret agent” of the U.S. Government and that he was soon going back to Russia “for Washington.”

Commission finding.—Miss Bates denied a newspaper story reporting that Oswald had told her that he was working for the U.S. Department of State. She stated that she had assumed incorrectly that he was working with the Department of State when he told her that the State Department had told him in 1959 that he would be on his own while in the Soviet Union.⁹⁵

Speculation.—The FBI tried to recruit Oswald. An FBI agent’s name, telephone number, and automobile license number were found among Oswald’s papers.

Commission finding.—FBI officials have testified that they had never tried to recruit Oswald to act on behalf of the FBI in any capacity. The Commission’s investigation corroborates this testimony. An FBI agent, James P. Hosty, Jr., had given his name and telephone number to Mrs. Ruth Paine so that she could call and give him Oswald’s address in Dallas when she learned it. Mrs. Paine and Marina Oswald have stated that Mrs. Paine gave Oswald a slip of paper with the agent’s name and telephone number on it. Marina Oswald had taken down the license number of Hosty’s car on one of his visits and given it to her husband.⁹⁶

Speculation.—Dallas police must have known where Oswald was living in the city because Mrs. Paine had given the address of Oswald’s room on North Beckley Avenue to the FBI some time before the assassination.

Commission finding.—Mrs. Paine had never given the address of Oswald’s roominghouse to the FBI, nor had she known the address prior to the assassination. Therefore, the Dallas police could not have learned the address from the FBI which did not know the address before the assassination. The Dallas Police did not know that Oswald was in the city before the assassination.⁹⁷

Speculation.—It has been FBI policy for 20 years to inform employers of Communists or suspected Communists employed by them.

It is a mystery, therefore, how Oswald retained his job at the Texas School Book Depository.

Commission finding.—The FBI advised the Commission that it has never been its policy to inform employers that they have Communists or suspected Communists working for them and that the FBI does not disseminate internal security information to anyone outside the executive branch of the U.S. Government. FBI agents had no contacts with Texas School Book Depository officials until after the assassination.⁹⁸

Speculation.—Municipal and Federal police had observed Oswald closely for some time but had not regarded him as a potential killer.

Commission finding.—The Dallas police had not been aware of Oswald's presence in the city before the assassination. The FBI knew that Oswald was in Dallas from an interview with Mrs. Paine, but no FBI agents had interviewed him there before the assassination. The FBI had not regarded him as a potential killer.⁹⁹

Speculation.—The FBI probably knew that Oswald had the rifle before the President's murder because it was most unlikely that it could have traced the ownership of the rifle within 1 day if it had not already had information on the rifle.

Commission finding.—The FBI successfully traced the purchase of the rifle by Oswald within 24 hours of the assassination. It had had no previous information about the rifle.¹⁰⁰

Speculation.—The FBI interviewed Oswald 10 days before the assassination.

Commission finding.—The last FBI interview with Oswald, before the assassination, took place in New Orleans in August 1963, when he asked to see an FBI agent after his arrest by police for disturbing the peace, the outcome of his distribution of Fair Play for Cuba handbills. Neither Special Agent Hosty nor any other FBI agent saw or talked with Oswald between his return to Dallas, on October 3, and November 22. Hosty did interview Mrs. Paine at her home about Oswald on November 1 and 5, 1963. He also saw Marina Oswald briefly on November 1 at Mrs. Paine's house, but he did not interview her.¹⁰¹

CONSPIRATORIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Rumors concerning accomplices and plots linked Oswald and Ruby with each other, or with others, including Patrolman J. D. Tippit, Gen. Edwin A. Walker, and Bernard Weissman of the nonexistent American Factfinding Committee, in a conspiratorial relationship. The Commission made intensive inquiry into the backgrounds and relationships of Oswald and Ruby to determine whether they knew each other or were involved in a plot of any kind with each other or others. It was unable to find any credible evidence to support the rumors linking Oswald and Ruby directly or through others. The Commission concluded that they were not involved in a conspiratorial relationship with each other or with any third parties.

Speculation.—Lee Harvey Oswald, Jack Ruby, and Patrolman J. D. Tippit lived within a few blocks of each other.

Commission finding.—Oswald's room was 1.3 miles from Ruby's apartment and Tippit lived 7 miles away from Ruby. Tippit's residence was about 7 miles from Oswald's room.¹⁰²

Speculation.—Since Oswald did not have the money to repay the \$435.61 he had received from the Department of State to cover part of the expenses of his return from Russia, he must have received help from some other source. Ruby lent Oswald money to pay back the loan and lent him small amounts of money thereafter.

Commission finding.—The Commission has no credible evidence that Oswald received any money from Ruby or anyone else to repay his State Department loan, nor that he received small amounts of money from Ruby at any time. An exhaustive analysis of Oswald's income and expenditures, made for the Commission by an Internal Revenue Service expert, reveals that Oswald had sufficient funds to make the State Department repayments from his earnings.¹⁰³

Speculation.—Just before Oswald was shot by Ruby, he looked directly at Ruby in apparent recognition of him.

Commission finding.—The Commission has been unable to establish as a fact any kind of relationship between Ruby and Oswald other than that Oswald was Ruby's victim. The Commission has examined television tapes and motion picture films of the shooting and has been unable to discern any facial expression that could be interpreted to signify recognition of Ruby or anyone else in the basement of the building.¹⁰⁴

Speculation.—The Dallas police suspected Oswald and Ruby of being involved in an attack on General Walker and planned to arrest the two when the FBI intervened, at the request of Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, and asked the police not to do so for reasons of state.

Commission finding.—This allegation appeared in the November 29, 1963, issue (actually printed on November 25 or 26) of a German weekly newspaper, Deutsche National Zeitung und Soldaten Zeitung, published in Munich. The allegation later appeared in the National Enquirer of May 17, 1964. The Commission has been reliably informed that the statement was fabricated by an editor of the newspaper. No evidence in support of this statement has ever been advanced or uncovered. In their investigation of the attack on General Walker, the Dallas police uncovered no suspects and planned no arrests. The FBI had no knowledge that Oswald was responsible for the attack until Marina Oswald revealed the information on December 3, 1963.¹⁰⁵

Speculation.—Ruby and Oswald were seen together at the Carousel Club.

Commission finding.—All assertions that Oswald was seen in the company of Ruby or of anyone else at the Carousel Club have been investigated. None of them merits any credence.¹⁰⁶

Speculation.—Oswald and General Walker were probably acquainted with each other since Oswald's notebook contained Walker's name and telephone number.

Commission finding.—Although Oswald's notebook contained Walker's name and telephone number there was no evidence that the two knew each other. It is probable that this information was inserted at the time that Oswald was planning his attack on Walker. General Walker stated that he did not know of Oswald before the assassination.¹⁰⁷

Speculation.—Patrolman J. D. Tippit, Bernard Weissman, and Jack Ruby met by prearrangement on November 14, 1963, at the Carousel Club.

Commission finding.—Investigation has revealed no evidence to support this assertion. Nor is there credible evidence that any of the three men knew each other.¹⁰⁸

Speculation.—Ruby's sister, Mrs. Eva Grant, said that Ruby and Tippit were "like two brothers."

Commission finding.—Mrs. Grant has denied ever making this statement or any statement like it, saying it was untrue and without foundation. Ruby was acquainted with another Dallas policeman named Tippit, but this was G. M. Tippit of the special services bureau of the department, not the Tippit who was killed.¹⁰⁹

Speculation.—Jack Ruby was one of the most notorious of Dallas gangsters.

Commission finding.—There is no credible evidence that Jack Ruby was active in the criminal underworld. Investigation disclosed no one in either Chicago or Dallas who had any knowledge that Ruby was associated with organized criminal activity.¹¹⁰

Speculation.—The shooting in Dallas on January 23, 1964, of Warren A. Reynolds, who witnessed the flight of Patrolman Tippit's slayer on November 22 and followed him for a short distance, may have been connected in some way with the assassination of President Kennedy and the slaying of Patrolman Tippit. A man arrested for the attempt on Reynolds, Darrell Wayne Garner, was released as a result, in part, of testimony by Betty (Nancy Jane Mooney) MacDonald, who had allegedly worked at one time as a stripper at Jack Ruby's Carousel Club.

Commission finding.—This rumor, originally publicized by a newspaper columnist on February 23, 1964, was apparently based on the alleged connection between Betty MacDonald and the Carousel Club. Investigation revealed no evidence that she had ever worked at the Carousel Club. Employees of the club had no recollection that she had ever worked there. Betty MacDonald was arrested and charged with disturbing the peace on February 13, 1964. After being placed in a cell at the Dallas city jail, she hanged herself. The Commission has found no evidence that the shooting of Warren Reynolds was in any way related to the assassination of President Kennedy or the murder of Patrolman Tippit.¹¹¹

OTHER RUMORS AND SPECULATIONS

Many rumors and speculations difficult to place in the categories treated above also required consideration or investigation by the Commission. In some way or other, much of this miscellany was related to theories of conspiracy involving Oswald. The rest pertained to peripheral aspects that were of sufficient import to merit attention. The Commission's findings are set forth below.

Speculation.—Oswald was responsible in some way for the death of Marine Pvt. Martin D. Schrand.

Commission finding.—This rumor was mentioned by at least one of Oswald's fellow Marines. Private Schrand was fatally wounded by a discharge from a riot-type shotgun while he was on guard duty on January 5, 1958, near the carrier pier, U.S. Naval Air Station, Cubi Point, Republic of the Philippines. The official Marine investigation in 1958 found that Schrand's death was the result of an accidental discharge of his gun and that no other person or persons were involved in the incident. The rumor that Oswald was involved in Schrand's death in some way may have had its origin in two circumstances: (1) Oswald was stationed at Cubi Point at the time of Schrand's death; (2) on October 27, 1957, while stationed in Japan, Oswald accidentally shot himself in the left elbow with a .22 derringer that he owned. The Commission has found no evidence that Oswald had any connection with the fatal shooting of Private Schrand.¹¹²

Speculation.—The Texas School Book Depository is owned and operated by the city of Dallas, and Oswald was therefore a municipal employee. Accordingly, he could have secured his job at the Depository only if someone in an official capacity vouched for him.

Commission finding.—The Texas School Book Depository is a private corporation unconnected with the city of Dallas. Oswald therefore was not a municipal employee. He obtained his position at the Depository with the assistance of Mrs. Ruth Paine, who learned of a possible opening from a neighbor and arranged an interview for him with Superintendent Roy S. Truly at the Depository.¹¹³

Speculation.—Prior to the assassination Dallas police searched other buildings in the area of the Texas School Book Depository but not the School Book Depository itself.

Commission finding.—The Dallas police and the Secret Service both notified the Commission that, other than the Trade Mart, they had searched no buildings along the route of the President's motorcade or elsewhere in Dallas in connection with the President's visit. It was not Secret Service practice to search buildings along the routes of motorcades.¹¹⁴

Speculation.—Sheriff E. J. Decker of Dallas County came on the police radio at 12:25 p.m. with orders to calm trouble at the Texas School Book Depository.

Commission finding.—The final edition of the Dallas Times-Herald of November 22 (p. 1, col. 1) reported that "Sheriff Decker came on the air at 12:25 p.m." and stated: "I don't know what's happened. Take

every available man from the jail and the office and go to the railroad yards off Elm near the triple underpass.'” The article in the Times-Herald did not mention the time that the President was shot. The radio log of the Dallas County Sheriff’s Office shows that Sheriff Decker came on the air at 40 seconds after 12:30 p.m. and stated: “Stand by me. All units and officers vicinity of station report to the railroad track area, just north of Elm—Report to the railroad track area, just north of Elm.” The radio log does not show any messages by Sheriff Decker between 12:20 p.m. and 40 seconds after 12:30 p.m.¹¹⁵

Speculation.—Police precautions in Dallas on November 22 included surveillance of many people, among them some who did no more than speak in favor of school integration.

Commission finding.—The Dallas Police Department notified the Commission that on November 22 it had no one under surveillance as a precaution in connection with President Kennedy’s visit except at the Trade Mart. The Commission received no evidence that the Dallas police had under surveillance people who spoke in favor of school integration.¹¹⁶

Speculation.—Oswald was seen at shooting ranges in the Dallas area practicing firing with a rifle.

Commission finding.—Marina Oswald stated that on one occasion in March or April 1963, her husband told her that he was going to practice firing with the rifle. Witnesses have testified that they saw Oswald at shooting ranges in the Dallas area during October and November 1963. Investigation has failed to confirm that the man seen by these witnesses was Oswald.¹¹⁷

Speculation.—Oswald could drive a car and was seen in cars at various places.

Commission finding.—Oswald did not have a driver’s license. Marina Oswald and Ruth Paine have testified that he could not drive a car, and there is no confirmed evidence to establish his presence at any location as the driver of a car. Mrs. Paine did give Oswald some driving lessons and he did drive short distances on these occasions.¹¹⁸

Speculation.—Oswald received money by Western Union telegraph from time to time for several months before the assassination of President Kennedy.

Commission finding.—An employee in the Western Union main office in Dallas, C. A. Hamblen, made statements that he remembered seeing Oswald there on some occasions collecting money that had been telegraphed to him. In his testimony before the Commission, Hamblen was unable to state whether or not the person he had seen was Lee Harvey Oswald. Western Union officials searched their records in Dallas and other cities for the period from June through November 1963 but found no money orders payable to Lee Oswald or to any of his known aliases. A Western Union official concluded that the allegation was “a figment of Mr. Hamblen’s imagination.”¹¹⁹ The Commission has found no evidence to contradict this conclusion.¹²⁰

Speculation.—On his way back from Mexico City in October 1963, Oswald stopped in Alice, Tex., to apply for a job at the local radio station.

Commission finding.—This rumor apparently originated with the manager of radio station KOPY, Alice, who stated that Oswald visited his office on the afternoon of October 4 for about 25 minutes. According to the manager, Oswald was driving a battered 1953 model car and had his wife and a small child in the car with him. Oswald traveled from Mexico City to Dallas by bus, arriving in Dallas on the afternoon of October 3. The bus did not pass through Alice. On October 4, Oswald applied for two jobs in Dallas and then spent the afternoon and night with his wife and child at the Paine residence in Irving. Investigation has revealed that Oswald did not own a car and there is no convincing evidence that he could drive a car. Accordingly, Oswald could not have been in Alice on October 4. There is no evidence that he stopped in Alice to look for a job on any occasion.¹²¹

Speculation.—Oswald or accomplices had made arrangements for his getaway by airplane from an airfield in the Dallas area.

Commission finding.—Investigation of such claims revealed that they had not the slightest substance. The Commission found no evidence that Oswald had any prearranged plan for escape after the assassination.¹²²

Speculation.—One hundred and fifty dollars was found in the dresser of Oswald's room at 1026 North Beckley Avenue after the assassination.

Commission finding.—No money was found in Oswald's room after the assassination. Oswald left \$170 in the room occupied by his wife at the Paine residence in Irving. At the time of his arrest Oswald had \$13.87 on his person.¹²³

Speculation.—After Oswald's arrest, the police found in his room seven metal file boxes filled with the names of Castro sympathizers.

Commission finding.—The Dallas police inventories of Oswald's property taken from his room at 1026 North Beckley Avenue do not include any file boxes. A number of small file boxes listed in the inventory as having been taken from the Paine residence in Irving contained letters, pictures, books and literature, most of which belonged to Ruth Paine, not to Oswald. No lists of names of Castro sympathizers were found among these effects.¹²⁴

Speculation.—Oswald's letters vary so greatly in quality (spelling, grammar, sentence structure) that he must have had help in preparing the better constructed letters or someone else wrote them for him.

Commission finding.—There is no evidence that anyone in the United States helped Oswald with his better written letters or that anyone else wrote his letters for him. His wife stated that he would write many drafts of his more important letters. His mother indicated that he would work hard over the drafts of some of his letters. It is clear that he did take greater pains with some of his letters than with others and that the contrasts in quality were accordingly substantial.

It is also clear that even his better written letters contained some distinctive elements of spelling, grammar, and punctuation that were common to his poorer efforts. Oswald wrote in his diary that he received help from his Intourist Guide, Rima Shirokova, in the preparation of his letter of October 16, 1959, to the Supreme Soviet.¹²⁵

Speculation.—A Negro janitor who was a witness to the shooting and was supposed to be able to identify Oswald as the killer was held in protective custody by the Dallas police until he could appear before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy.

Commission finding.—Investigation revealed that this story had no foundation in fact. No such witness was kept in protective custody by the Dallas police for appearance before the Commission. The story had its origin in a newspaper account based on hearsay.¹²⁶

Speculation.—The Secret Service incarcerated Marina Oswald immediately after the assassination.

Commission finding.—Marina Oswald was given protection by the Secret Service for a period of time after the assassination. She had freedom to communicate with others at anytime she desired, to go where she pleased, or to terminate the protection at any time.¹²⁷

Speculation.—Mrs. Marguerite Oswald was shown a photograph of Jack Ruby by an FBI agent the night before Ruby killed her son.

Commission finding.—On the night of November 23, 1963, Special Agent Bardwell D. Odum of the FBI showed Mrs. Marguerite Oswald a picture of a man to determine whether the man was known to her. Mrs. Oswald stated subsequently that the picture was of Jack Ruby. The Commission has examined a copy of the photograph and determined that it was not a picture of Jack Ruby.¹²⁸

Speculation.—The son of the only witness to the Tippit slaying was arrested after talking to some private investigators and soon plunged to his death from an unbarred jail window.

Commission finding.—According to Mrs. Helen Markham, one of the witnesses to the Tippit slaying, Mrs. Marguerite Oswald and two men who claimed to be reporters from Philadelphia sought to interview her on June 27, 1964. Mrs. Markham did not wish to be interviewed and put them off. Afterward, Mrs. Markham's son, William Edward Markham, talked with Mrs. Oswald and the men about the Oswald matter and the shooting of Patrolman Tippit. William Edward Markham had been in Norfolk, Va., at the time of the assassination and had not returned to Dallas until May 7, 1964. He had no personal knowledge of the shooting of Patrolman Tippit. On June 30, 1964, another of Mrs. Markham's sons, James Alfred Markham, was arrested at Mrs. Markham's apartment by Dallas Police on a charge of burglary. While trying to escape, he fell from the bathroom of the apartment to a concrete driveway about 20 feet below. He was taken to Parkland Memorial Hospital, treated for injuries, and after 6½ hours was taken to jail. As of July 31, 1964, he was in Dallas County Jail awaiting trial. There was also a warrant outstanding against him for parole violation.¹²⁹

Speculation.—The headquarters detachment of the U.S. Army, under orders from [Secretary of Defense Robert S.] McNamara's office, began to rehearse for the funeral more than a week before the assassination.

Commission finding.—This assertion is based on an interview with U.S. Army Capt. Richard C. Cloy that appeared in the Jackson, Miss., Clarion-Ledger of February 21, 1964. The newspaper quotes Captain Cloy, who was a member of the Army unit charged with conducting funeral ceremonials in honor of deceased Chiefs of State, as having said that, "we were in a state of readiness and had just finished a funeral rehearsal because there was grave concern for President Hoover's health. But we never expected that our practice was preparing us for President Kennedy."¹³⁰

Speculation.—The ship in which Oswald went to Europe in 1959 stopped in Havana on the way.

Commission finding.—Oswald boarded the SS *Marion Lykes* in New Orleans and it sailed on September 20, 1959. It docked in Le Havre, France, on October 8 with only one previous stop—at another French port, La Pallice.¹³¹