

from us, of course. The minutes of the Commission meetings are locked up in the National Archives and no one can see them. A vast amount of the evidence, F.B.I. reports, C.I.A. reports, which may be directly related to the information we should have, are also locked up in the Archives. No one can see that.

The photographs and X-rays of the President's body, taken at the autopsy in Bethesda, Maryland, taken just before the autopsy was begun, taken by Naval technicians, which in and of themselves might resolve the whole question as to whether or not there was a conspiracy, cannot be seen by anyone today and, in fact, not one member of the Warren Commission ever saw the most important documents in the case, the photographs and the X-rays. And not one lawyer for the Commission ever saw—was curious enough to examine the most important evidence.

I think the villain was the desire of government officials to be nice, to see to it that nothing would upset the American people, that the apathy which has seized us for all of these years be permitted to remain uninterrupted by a factual presentation of what happened. The American people would have been upset surely if they were told there was a conspiracy which took the life of your President.

CRONKITE: But Mr. Lane, who accuses the Commission of playing fast and loose with the evidence, does not always allow facts to get in the way of his own theories. In "Rush To Judgment," for example, he writes: "The statements of eyewitnesses close to the President tended to confirm the likelihood that the shot came from the right and not from the rear." Lane then quotes Associated Press photographer James Altgens, and another eyewitness, Charles Brehm, as giving testimony that would support the idea of a killer on the grassy knoll. Yet Mr. Altgens, as we saw Monday night, is entirely certain that all of the shots came from behind, a fact that Mr. Lane does not mention.

As for Mr. Brehm, Eddie Barker discovered that he holds no brief either for the grassy knoll theory or for the use of his words by Mark Lane.

EDDIE BARKER: Well now, some critics of the Warren Report have taken your testimony, or interviews with you, to indicate that you thought the shots came from behind the fence over there. What about that?

CHARLES BREHM: Well, as I say, it was not a number of critics. It was one critic, Mark Lane, who takes very great liberties with adding to my quotation. I never said that the—any shot came from here like I was quoted by Mr. Lane. Mr. Lane would like me to have positively identified the—what I saw fly over here—his skull—although I told him I could not—I did not—I thought it was but I could not. So, he has added his interpretations to what I said, and consequently that's where the story comes from that—that I said that the shots come from up there. No shot came from up there at any time during the whole fiasco that afternoon.

CRONKITE: Nor are these the only examples of Mr. Lane lifting remarks out of context to support his theories. Perhaps the most charitable explanation is that Mark Lane still considers himself a defense attorney for Lee Harvey Oswald—and a defense attorney's primary duty is not to abstract truth, but to his client.

There exists, however, a less partisan, and therefore perhaps more disturbing critique of the Warren Commission Report.

RATHER: One of the most influential attacks on the work of the Commission is the book, "Inquest," by a young scholar named Edward J. Epstein. It began as a thesis in political science, Mr. Epstein deciding to find out just how the Warren Commission had gone about solving this crime of the century.

He studied the 26 volumes of hearings, then interviewed five of the seven Commission members, General Counsel J. Lee Rankin and some of the Commission's top investigators. And the pattern that began to emerge disturbed him.

EPSTEIN: Well, there were three, I think, levels of complaint. The first one was the institutional, you might say: the general problem that a government has when it searches for truth. The problem of trying to have an autonomous investigation, free from political interference and at the same time, it's dealing by its very nature with a political problem.

The second level might be called the organizational level of—was the Warren Commission organized in a way that prevented it from finding facts. And here my findings were that by using a part time staff and by the Commission's detaching themselves from the investigation—in other words, not actively partaking in the investigation—it raised some problems as to whether the Warren Commission's investigation went deep enough, so that if there was evidence of a conspiracy, they would have in fact found it.

The third level of my criticism concerned the evidence itself, and this concerned the problem of when the Warren Commission was come—confronted with a very complex problem. For example, the contradiction between the F.B.I. summary report on the autopsy and the autopsy report they had in mind—how they solved this problem, whether they simply glossed over it or whether they called witnesses and—and this—this, of course, brought up the questions of—of a second assassin.

RATHER: One of the men Mr. Epstein interviewed for his "Inquest" is Arlen Specter, now District Attorney of Philadelphia, but in 1964, one of the principal investigators for the Warren Commission, charged with establishing the basic facts of the assassination. Mr. Specter thinks the Commission did its job well and came up with the right answers.

SPECTER: I would say after having prosecuted a great many cases that seldom would you ever find a case which was as persuasive that Oswald was the assassin and, in fact, the lone assassin, and we convict people in the criminal courts every day right here in City Hall, Philadelphia. And the times the death penalties are imposed or life imprisonment—so that—so that the case does fit together.

RATHER: In separate interviews we asked critic Epstein and investigator Specter to discuss some of the central issues that must determine how well or how badly the Warren Commission did its work.

EPSTEIN: Part of the job of the Warren Commission was restoring confidence in the American government. And for this he had to pick seven very respectable men, men who would lend their name and lend probity to the report. And so that the problem was, in any seven men he picked of this sort, they would have very little time for the investigation.

They would also have two purposes. One purpose would be to find the truth, all the facts. The other purpose would be to allay rumors, to dispel conspiracy theories and material of that sort.

SPECTER: My view is that there is absolutely no foundation for that type of a charge. When the President selected the Commissioners, he chose men of unblemished reputation and very high standing. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States would have no reason whatsoever to be expedient or to search for political truths. Nor would Allen W. Dulles, the former head of the C.I.A., nor would John McCloy, with his distinguished service in government, nor would the Congressional or Senatorial representatives.

Now, the same thing was true of the staff members. When it came time to select the individuals to serve as assistant counsel and general counsel, men were chosen from various parts of the United States who had no connection with government.

EPSTEIN: For example, there were rumors concerning the F.B.I. or various intelligence agencies. I noticed that there were a number of memorandums where the—where—from Warren to the Secretary of the Treasury, who was in charge of the Secret Service, assuring that their findings wouldn't impair the efficiency or the morale of the Secret Service. And the same thing again with the F.B.I., a question of whether there was ever any possible connection between Oswald—and by connection I don't mean anything sinister, I simply meant that he was furnishing information and there were some rumors to this effect—and they, rather than investigating these rumors, they preferred to give it to the F.B.I. to investigate the rumors themselves. As J. Lee Rankin, their General Counsel, said, they would rather that agency clear its own skirts. Well, what this meant, of course, is that if the F.B.I. would have discretion if it did find a connection between Oswald and itself, the discretion of either reporting it or not reporting it.

SPECTER: In the main, the F.B.I. conducted the basic line of investigation. But the Commission used its independent judgment wherever, say, the F.B.I. or the Secret Service was involved itself so that they would not investigate themselves on the subjects where they were directly involved, and I think the Commission showed its independence in that regard by criticizing the Federal Bureau of Investigation and by criticizing the Secret Service where the facts warranted such criticism.

On every subject where the Federal Bureau of Investigation had contact with the area of investigation with which I was intimately connected, I was fully satisfied with their thoroughness and with their competence and with their integrity.

CRONKITE: Despite Mr. Specter's defense, it is the opinion of CBS News that the role of the F.B.I. as well as the Secret Service, both in the assassination and its aftermath, has been less than glorious. And, to some extent, the performance of these agencies weakens the credibility of the Warren Report. As to what the F.B.I. and the Secret Service did wrong before the assassination, we need look no further than the Report itself.

It notes the Secret Service agents assigned to protect the President had been drinking beer and liquor into the early hours of the morning, that no search was made of buildings along the route, and that, quote: "The procedures of the Secret Service, designed to identify and protect against persons considered serious threats to the President, were not adequate prior to the assassination," end of quote. That is, the Secret Service should have known about Lee Harvey Oswald.

But the Report goes on to point out that if the Secret Service did not know about him, the F.B.I. did, and did not see fit to mention his existence to the Secret Service. The report issues a mildly phrased yet devastating rebuke to the F.B.I., charging that it took an unduly restrictive view of its responsibilities. Knowing what the F.B.I. knew about Oswald, the Report says, an alert agency should have listed him as a potential menace to the President. Yet, after the assassination, the Commission itself relied heavily on these two agencies as its investigative arms.

Did their performance improve? We know that some of the tests conducted by them for the Warren Commission were unsatisfactory. In the first of these broadcasts we pointed out that to stimulate Oswald's problem of hitting a moving target from a sixty foot high perch, the F.B.I. conducted its firing tests on a fixed target, from a 30-foot height. Certainly, if CBS News could duplicate the conditions of