

B Hayes

10-12-75 1.

CONFIDENTIAL

COMMENTS RE BRADFORD REPORT.

SECTION D. Page 4.

In line 32, Bradford points out that IF a deep gouge groove in the ~~EXAMINER~~ comparison of 52 and 54 can be determined to be from an individual characteristic, then there is an identification between 47 and 54 as well as between 52 and 54. It would be interesting to enquire into just how Bradford proposes to make such a determination. A true individual characteristic of a type used for firearms identification MUST be a mark engraved on a bullet as a result of the bullet having traveled through the bore of a weapon. A defect in the rifling of the bore may engrave itself on to the surface of the bullet as it slides along the rifling. A mark on the surface of a bullet, even though it may be in the right position on the bullet (ie. not, for example on the base, ogive or nose.) cannot properly be designated as an individual characteristic until it has been shown that it relates directly to one particular defect in the rifling. If one or more test bullets pass through the bore of a weapon and they all show this same mark in the same position on the test(s) bullets, then, other factors being also favorable, the mark in question can be designated an individual characteristic of that particular weapon.

Thus, just any mark on the surface of a bullet, even though in a position suggestive of a bore engraving, may actually not be a true individual identifying characteristic of a particular weapon. It may be nothing more than a "potential individual characteristic". It is likely that Bradford is in fact thinking of this gouge in 52/54 as only a potential individual characteristic and that is what he has in mind when he uses the qualifying word "IF" in this portion of his report.

From the bullet alone I take a dim view of making a determination of an individual characteristic. By comparing such a mark with some similar mark on one or more test bullets from a KNOWN weapon, then a judgement can very probably be reached as to the identifying potential of such a mark. SINCE THE MARK DOES NOT RELATE TO THE SIRHAN X GUN, then what are we going to use as the KNOWN WEAPON. What about HL8602 - no, that weapon has been destroyed and no one will ever be able to check any of its characteristics.

I have not had the chance to study the photomicrographs of this potential matching between 47/54 and 52/54 so I can give no final opinion as to the quality of these matches. I will point out that although the examiners seem to hold out the possibility that my measurements of rifling angle may be seriously in error due to the fact that both 47 and 54 have suffered some discernible impact damage, at least Bradford seems to ignore the fact that the same bullet deformation from impact may have had some adverse effects on his matching of the deep groove gouge on the 52/54 comparison.

I should point out that I am somewhat confused by the sentence starting at the bottom of Page 4. Does the deep gouge relating 52 and 54 also extend into 47, or is it just between 52 and 54. This will be cleared-up, I assume when I see the photomicrographs.

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SECTION K. Page 6.

This section raises many interesting questions which should be directed to Wolfer. In regard to Special Exhibit 10, why was this photomicrograph made? (apparently to establish an identification between two bullets - what other reason could justify the taking of such a photo?) Wolfer must have seen what he thought was an ID, otherwise why would the negative been made in the first place? What other negatives were made at this time? Were any of them used for prints in the Sirhan trial? Is it possible that in a major case of this magnitude that only ONE comparison photomicrograph was made? (I understand that a Jim ~~Wolfer~~ ^{Watson} from the Photo Section of LAPD made this one photo. He knows nothing about Firearms Identification, so Wolfer would have set-up the bullets on the comparison microscope and Watson would simply take the picture and process the film and make any prints. Other than the contact prints, were any enlargements prepared? Did Wolfer abort the photographic work because he or some else decided that the pictures failed to show any matching?

It will be recalled that in the Wolfer deposition (by Blehr) on Page 102, Wolfer testified that he had made NO photomicrographs of the Sirhan bullets. (CORRECTION: the name is Jim Watson - not Jim Weston.)

Also why did Wolfer select 47 and 52 for this one picture? Did he halt further photography when he found that he could not get a "make" between these two bullets????? Does this photo ~~x~~ show any portion of what might be "deep groove gouge" previously mentioned ~~xx~~ on either 47 or 52????? (The correct land impression areas might not have ~~xx~~ been chosen for this photo which would show the deep groove.)

SECTION L. Page 6.

It is interesting to note that in this section at line 18, the possibility of a second gun is unlikely "unless it were of identical class characteristics as the Sirhan gun and using ammunition of class characteristics identical with the Sirhan ammunition." - In a conspiracy to murder it is probable that very careful planning would be involved. It would seem elementary that if two guns were to be used the plans would call for these guns to be identical as possible, as well as the ammunition. It is very unlikely that two entirely different guns would be used. Bradford's requirement would therefore seem to be something very ~~xxxxxxx~~ easy to achieve - two IJ revolvers could be expected, after proper checking of course to satisfy the above UNLESS remark. Without too much effort some other make of weapon might be located to use in place of one of the IJ revolvers. It is not entirely clear just how witness observations (line 16) is involved in these remarks.

W.W.H
Oct. 12, 1975

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