

Firm says fee 'hammered down'

A consulting firm says it was "hammered down" into accepting a \$47,000 fee instead of the \$59,000 billed because regional chairman Lou Parsons wasn't willing to spend "a cent more."

P.S. Ross and Partners Ltd. was first hired for \$29,000 on May 23, 1974, to conduct a job evaluation of salaried non-bargaining staff.

Later \$33,000 fee was agreed upon to cover an enlarged assignment to include non-union employees at the board of health as well.

But, according to the region's chief administrative officer, Cyril Henderson, the billing from the firm passed the \$33,000 mark last October. By the end of the year, contract expenditures amounted to \$59,315.

Company partner Joe Martin told regional council's administration and finance committee he had received permission

to spend more on the study from Henderson and was assured the final fee would be settled later.

Henderson said they had conversations about cost overruns. "My concern was to get the job done," Henderson said. "We had a severe morale problem with our staff." He did not bring these extra costs to the attention of councillors because, "I'm kind of hard nosed about this kind of thing and I support contractors, if overruns are legitimate. I thought I had some authority in this area."

Initial drafts of the job-evaluation report came under strong criticism from Henderson in a letter to the firm last October. He said the job descriptions were of poor quality and failed to define qualitative differences between different job categories.

"The grammar used sets a very poor example for those who will have to develop such forms in the future," Henderson stated in the letter. "I don't know what has gone wrong within your system, but this certainly doesn't measure up to the high quality of workmanship that I have been used to expect from P. S. Ross and Partners."

Parsons told the committee he "wasn't totally satisfied with the job" and felt it was overpriced. After reviewing the bill, Parsons and Martin agreed on \$47,000. "I wasn't prepared to recommend a cent more," Parsons said.

Martin told the committee he was personally unhappy with the final price and described the compromise with Parsons as being "hammered down."

Mississauga councillor Hazel McCallion, chairman of the administration and finance committee, saw the almost near-doubling of the initial tendered price a major problem. She was

angered by what she viewed as poor financial control on the part of the finance department's staff.

Dirk Pepper, regional finance chief, told the committee his department was having difficulty in exercising control over cheque payments. "We're working on a day-to-day basis and we simply don't have the staff to duly approve all payments."

An appeal to council for the finance department to hire 11 new employees before the 1975 regional budget is approved has been rejected, despite warnings from Henderson and Pepper that without the extra staffers the budget would be late this year.

The finance department staffers have worked 10-and 12-hour days during the winter, according to Pepper.

Mrs. McCallion led the opposition to any staff increases. She argues that council must retain flexibility at budget time and not lose it to pre-budget commitments.

Brampton councillor Terry Miller, who had backed Mrs. McCallion on her stand against staff increases, said that in light of the finance department's critical situation, he will reconsider his position.

"This is simply basic control here," Miller said in response to Pepper's explanation. "Here we are, a gigantic regional government, and we just have to have control over our expenditures."

Mrs. McCallion said that in the last year there had been three major incidents of payments being made without council authorization.

The committee approved a recommendation to pay P.S. Ross and Partners up to a maximum of \$47,164, or about \$12,000 less than the firm's bill.

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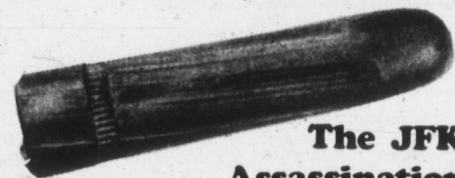
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The JFK Assassination

The following is the tenth in a series of articles on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy by Times staffer Dave O'Brien. O'Brien's nine-year study has involved countless hours of collecting data, dozens of interviews, frequent appearances and public appearances. As one of Canada's top authorities on the topic O'Brien suggests JFK was the victim of a crossfire on Nov. 22, 1963.

By DAVE O'BRIEN
If we are to believe the essential findings of the Warren Commission, President John F. Kennedy was not the only person murdered by Lee Harvey Oswald on November 22, 1963.

Approximately 45 minutes after the assassination, Dallas police officer J.D. Tippit was killed instantly when someone pumped four bullets into his abdomen. The commission concluded that the someone was Oswald.

Police murders, in particular, most often result in an intensive investigation. Even though only two eyewitnesses from more than a dozen onlookers identified Oswald as the assailant, the commission found it necessary to include the testimony of the two key persons in its findings while omitting any contradictory statements provided by others.



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Even its star witness, Mrs. Helen Markham, gave differing descriptions of the killer to investigators.

In fact, it is puzzling to learn that the commission considered Mrs. Markham's testimony as concrete. She picked Oswald because "something about this man sent cold chills all over me," not because of his appearance.

Despite five attempts by counsel to get a positive identification from Mrs. Markham, she could not provide one.

Question: Did you recognize anyone in the lineup?

Markham: No sir.

Question: You did not? Did you see anybody — I have asked you that question before — did you recognize anybody from their face?

Markham: From their face, no.

Question: Did you identify anybody in these four people?

Markham: I didn't know anybody.

Question: I know you didn't know anybody, but did anybody in the lineup look like anybody you had seen before?

Markham: No, I had never seen none of them, none of these men.

Question: No one of the four?

Markham: Not one of them.

Question: No one of all four?

Markham: No, sir.

Yet, in the report, the commission says that Mrs. Markham was able to positively identify Oswald as the murderer.

In reconstructing the event, the commission determined that after Tippit had a brief verbal exchange with this man, he got out of his patrol car and reached the left front bumper when the man drew a gun and fired several shots.

Mrs. Markham again posed a problem in relation to time of the shooting. The commission ascertained that the killing occurred at 1:16 p.m., but Mrs. Markham insists that it

was at 1:06 p.m. Noting that it would have been impossible for Oswald to have reached the murder scene from the Texas Book Depository Building by 1:06 p.m., the commission decided that Mrs. Markham was mistaken.

Again, based on cloudy testimony, the commission concluded that Oswald walked, took a bus and took a taxi before arriving at the Tippit scene at 10th Street and Patton Ave.

This is inconsistent with the reliable testimony of Roger Craig, deputy sheriff of Dallas County, who said he saw a man, whom he later identified as Oswald, come from the depository building about 15 minutes after the assassination and enter a light colored Rambler station wagon. His version is supported by at least one other police official and two bystanders.

While eyewitness testimony always discloses discrepancies, the commission looked next at the physical evidence.

At the scene of the shooting, police found four empty cartridges neatly stacked in a bush. Their presence there is a mystery. Not one witness said the assailant took the time to remove the shells from the revolver or to place them in the bushes.

Of the four shells found, two were manufactured by the Winchester-Western Co. and two from the Remington-Peters Co. However, of the four bullets removed from Tippit's body, three were made by the Winchester-Western Co. and only one was from the Remington-Peters Co. The commission couldn't offer an explanation for that one, nor did it allow the flaw to affect their conclusion that Oswald acted alone.

Although FBI ballistic tests could not determine that the bullets removed from Tippit's body were fired from Oswald's revolver, the commission said the shots were fired by Oswald's gun to the exclusion of all other weapons.

Next week: In comes Jack Ruby, out goes Oswald.

8 percent boost in COPS grant

A budget of \$6,030 has been approved by council for an organization councillor Ron Searle says "is probably the

most constructive program this community has ever seen."

Arbitration for pay dispute

A dispute over salaries and service pay for civilian employees of Peel regional police commission has gone to arbitration.

The Cadet Organization Police School (COPS) program was granted an eight percent budget increase over last year. This was the increase COPS requested.

The move came this week after a meeting between the commission, the police association, which represents the civilian workers, and a provincial conciliation officer.

"I'm surprised this figure is so low," said Searle, who added it was a pittance amount to pay for the group. "If we had to pay for all the volunteer services that go into this program we'd be faced with an overwhelming bill."

"Hopefully it will be resolved by the end of July," said Mississauga councillor Ron Searle, a member of the commission.

The COPS program receives donations of equipment and uniforms from various groups as well as a grant from the ministry of education. The city funds are used mainly for vehicles.

Searle said there has been substantial agreement on all aspects of the proposed contract, except salary and service pay.

Staff Sergeant John Kelly of Peel regional police, who runs the program, reported that negotiations for use of the Canadian Arsenal building in Lakeview were still underway. COPS has been told it might have to vacate the building, which may be sold.

When the issues go to arbitration, however, all matters may be dealt with in detail.

"A high degree of mutual respect and co-operation has been apparent in all the discussions between the commission and the police association," Searle said.

"The issue will be discussed by mayor Martin Dobkin and councillor Ron Searle when they go to Ottawa soon."

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