



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

Commission Exhibit No. 2974

August 20, 1964

By Courier Service

Honorable J. Lee Rankin
 General Counsel
 The President's Commission
 200 Maryland Avenue, Northeast
 Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Rankin:

On August 13, 1964, Mr. Norman Redlich of your staff, orally requested of Special Agent Robert A. Frazier, FBI Laboratory, certain information concerning the assassination rifle, Commission Number 139. Mr. Redlich requested information with regard to the following questions:

- 1 - What is the meaning of the term "plunger"?
- 2 - Was the firing pin of the rifle replaced?
- 3 - Does the FBI have information concerning the availability of spare parts for rifles such as Commission Number 139?

You are advised that the term "plunger" is a colloquial term applied to the firing pin or striker of a firearm.

The assassination rifle has been examined and nothing was found to indicate that the firing pin had been changed.

In this connection it should be noted that the firing pin of this rifle has been used extensively as shown by wear on the nose or striking portion of the firing pin and, further, the presence of rust on the firing pin and its spring may be an indication that the firing pin had not been recently changed prior to November 22, 1963. This rust would have been disturbed had the firing pin been changed subsequent to the formation of the rust. In this regard, the firing pin and spring of this weapon are well oiled and the rust present necessarily must have formed prior to the oiling of these parts.

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No oil has been applied to the weapon by the FBI; however, it is not known whether it was oiled by any other person having this rifle in his possession. It was noted during the examination of the firing pin that numerous shots have been fired with the weapon in its present well-oiled condition as shown by the presence of residues on the interior surfaces of the bolt and on the firing pin.

The Laboratory has no record of any outlet where spare parts, including firing pins, can be obtained for rifles such as Commission Number 139. In accordance with Mr. Redlich's telephonic request and in the absence of any indication that the firing pin of the rifle was changed, no investigative survey was conducted to ascertain whether any such outlets exist in the United States.

Sincerely yours,