

# 2D SHOT REPORTED FATAL TO KENNEDY

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First Hit No Vital Organs, Autopsy Said to Disclose

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17 (AP) — The first shot fired by President Kennedy's assassin struck Mr. Kennedy in the back and did not hit any vital organ, a reliable source familiar with the autopsy findings reported tonight.

The second bullet to hit Mr. Kennedy—after another had struck Gov. John B. Connally Jr. of Texas—hit the President in the back of the skull and proved fatal.

If this account of the two wounds suffered by Mr. Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22 is correct, it would suggest that the slain president did, very briefly, have a chance to survive after the first bullet struck him.

Motion picture films of the assassination indicate there was a lag of five or six seconds between the firing of the first shot and the firing of the third. Had the President fallen to the floor of his limousine or been pushed there before the third

shot was fired, he might have escaped death and serious injury.

## First Wound Small

The findings of pathologists who conducted an autopsy on Mr. Kennedy's body at the Bethesda, Md., Naval Hospital have not been made public. However, a source familiar with the results gave the following account:

The first bullet made what was described as a small, neat wound in the back and penetrated two or three inches.

The source said this bullet had struck no vital organs and was not likely to have inflicted a fatal wound.

He raised the possibility that it might have ricocheted off some part of the limousine before striking the President, because it did not penetrate deeply.

The second bullet to strike Mr. Kennedy, the source said, entered the back of the skull and tore open his forehead.

Doctors who tried to revive Mr. Kennedy at Parkland Hospital in Dallas initially reported two wounds—one in the back of the head and a second in the throat.

These physicians never saw the wound in the back, apparently because Mr. Kennedy was lying on his back on an emergency-room table during the entire time they were attending him.

Many observers were puzzled from the outset by the report

of a throat wound since it was well established that the assassin was firing from above and behind the President.

The pathologists at Bethesda, the source said, concluded that the throat wound was caused by the emergence of a metal fragment or piece of bone resulting from the fatal shot in the head.