

Compared w/
Chpt. 7 in
BOI

Postmortem on the JFK Autopsy: A Medical
Or Political Autopsy?

Gerald D. McKnight

“The powerful tell lies believing that they have greater than the ordinary understanding of what is at stake; very often, they regard their dupes as having inadequate judgment, or as likely to respond in the wrong way to truthful information.”

-----Sissela Bok, Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life, 1978

One author has aptly characterized the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy as “The Autopsy of the Century”¹ In making this sweeping claim Hurt was simply acknowledging the fact that JFK’s autopsy has generated over the past 35 years an intense and protracted controversy. One view is that while the autopsy suffered from startling deficiencies it still arrived at correct and valid conclusions. A corollary of this view, as those who associate with this conviction are quick to point out, is that the official findings of the Warren Commission are the true reality and not mythology. Another view makes claim that the Kennedy autopsy was not a medical but a political autopsy whose conclusions were deliberately falsified to suppress the fact that the President was the victim of a conspiracy.

However, neither belief contests the fact that the President’s autopsy was incompetently conducted, full of gross errors, and would have been enormously embarrassing to the government if the autopsy protocol had been subject to cross-examination in a court of law. For example, JFK’s fatal head wound was incorrectly described; the official autopsy had the wound four inches (100 mm) lower than the true

point of entry. The lacerated brain was not properly examined and sectioned to determine beyond a forensic doubt that only one bullet was responsible for the massive trauma. The prosecutors did not X-ray JFK's extremities to be sure there was not a bullet in the body. The controversial neck wound was not dissected to determine beyond question whether all the shots came from the President's rear.² It is a joyless irony that the autopsy of Kennedy's alleged assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, performed by the Dallas county medical examiner, Dr. Earl F. Rose, was worthy of a president. While JFK received an autopsy unworthy of even the most unfortunate and unlamented among us. There were never any questions about Oswald's autopsy. There are nothing but questions and dark suspicions about the one the President received.³

Questions and confusions about JFK's autopsy still make good copy for the national media. Most recently, documents released by the Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB), an agency established by Congress to compile all available evidence on the assassination, have raised anew material questions about the autopsy and the assassination. There was the disclosure that Warren Commissioner and House Republican leader, Gerald R. Ford, in editing an early draft of the Warren Report, moved the wound in JFK's back to the back of his neck to make it consistent with what came to be called the single-bullet theory, a presumption essential to the Report's conclusion that all of the shots came from the rear of the President and were fired by a lone assassin. There have been revelations about missing autopsy notes made by one of the prosecutors. An ARRB staff analyst contends that the autopsy photos of JFK's brain held by the Archives appear to be fakes and that he suspected a possible medical cover-up.⁴

The Board made available the transcripts of the depositions of the three military

use this

physicians who performed the JFK autopsy. Navy pathologists James J. Humes, J. Thornton Boswell, and Army wounds ballistic expert Lt. Colonel Pierre A. Finck were all deposited in 1996. Because of their advanced ages this was probably the last time they will ever testify under oath about the postmortem conducted at the Bethesda Naval Hospital in the nation's capital. Despite the fact that not one of this trio of medical doctors were qualified to do a medicolegal autopsy, and that the facilities at Bethesda were substandard, all of the prosecutors still basically defended their work and rejected any allegations that the official autopsy was anything other than a honest effort to report on the medical evidence in the death of the President. An objective and documented examination of the published record of JFK's autopsy must perforce take issue with this assertion. The facts point to a different reality. The autopsy was not flawed because of incompetency; rather, the autopsy results were deliberately and knowingly corrupted for political reasons.

This was
their
last
time
→

On March 16, 1964, the Warren commission heard the testimony of the three prosecutors who conducted the Kennedy autopsy. Arlen Specter, an assistant counsel for the Commission, who was responsible for assembling the medicolegal evidence that would ultimately appear in the Commission's Report to the nation, opened his questioning with Dr. Humes. Humes was the logical choice to begin this round of questioning because he was the one who wrote the Kennedy autopsy protocol. At the time of the autopsy Humes was the Director of the Naval Medical School at the Naval Medical Center at Bethesda.⁵ Humes also insisted, although the record refutes this,

that he was in charge of the autopsy; that, for better or worse, he had a take-charge personality and would brook no over-the-shoulder interference or restrictions from anyone, especially since he was conducting the autopsy of the century.⁶

During the course of his under-oath testimony Humes made a startling admission. In accounting for the notes and working papers that made up the documentary record of the autopsy protocol, the senior prosector reported that he burned the first autopsy draft “in the fireplace of my recreation room.” After a short innocuous exchange with Specter, Humes further revealed that he destroyed by burning “certain preliminary draft notes.”⁷ As the record makes indisputably clear, Humes never destroyed any notes taken contemporaneously while the autopsy was in progress.

With Specter’s connivance, Humes, for reasons of deception rather than innocence, was using the lawyer-like construction “certain preliminary draft notes” to refer again to the destruction of the first autopsy draft. Dr. Humes might as well have confessed to changing the ribbon in his typewriter halfway through completing the final autopsy report for all the response it elicited from Specter and those Commissioners in attendance. Not a single member of that august body was moved to ask the Navy doctor what right he had to destroy these papers or even why he felt compelled to consign them on his own initiative to archival oblivion by incineration.

The Commission, of course, knew beforehand what Humes was going to attest under Specter’s questioning. All of the prosectors met frequently with the assistant counsel before they testified. Even years later when they were deposed by the ARRB both Humes and Boswell recalled that they had “an awful lot” of sessions with Specter before they testified. Humes’s best guess was at least eight to ten meetings.⁸

*Jack
Specter v.
Specter*

*Wanted
no text
of what*

The painstaking and intense handling of these key material witnesses assured that there would be no surprises when they went on record before the Warren Commission. It had to be a great comfort to Humes to know exactly how Specter was going to choreograph his testimony and know that the Commissioners were not going to bat an eye or eat him blood raw when he admitted to the destruction of autopsy records of the President of the United States.

When the President's body was wheeled into the Bethesda morgue the military assumed de facto total responsibility for the autopsy, the autopsy records, and the final autopsy report. Marine guards were posted at the door to the autopsy room to keep out all civilians except for two Secret Service agents who were with the Kennedy party in Dallas and two Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents dispatched ^{BA} from the Bureau to observe the autopsy and report back to FBI headquarters. The two FBI agents, Francis X. O'Neill and James W. Sibert, kept a record of all those attending the autopsy. Aside from the five government civilians, the other 21 were uniformed members of the U.S. Armed Forces. The ranking senior officers were all medical admirals: Edward C. Kinney, Surgeon General of the Navy (1961-5), Calvin B. Galloway, the ^{BA} commanding officer of the Bethesda Medical Center, and George G. Burkley, JFK's personal White House physician.⁹

note

Those responsible for the JFK autopsy went about the proceedings as though the Bethesda Naval Medical Center was a law unto itself. Even if Humes, as he claimed, was in charge of the autopsy and not under instructions that still would not give him license to destroy autopsy records. These records were not Humes's property, he had no claim of ownership, they belonged to the hospital and it was the responsibility of the Bethesda

authorities to see that they were preserved. A hospital that fails to protect its records is derelict in its duties. In the civilian medical world there are severe penalties for altering, tampering, or destroying medical records---suspension of licence, possible perjury or other criminal charges for obstruction of justice and fraudulent mis² representation.¹⁰ Moreover, the U.S. armed forces' own manual that set standards for military autopsies is very clear about the importance of keeping complete records. Humes had to have a working, hands-on knowledge of this set of governing directives published by the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) because it was a standard text used in teaching military hospitals like the Bethesda Naval School.¹¹

It is impossible to believe that a senior pathologist would have disregarded established medical procedures even with a routine hospital autopsy. That it was the autopsy of the President and his commander-in-chief dictated that it be conducted without error and unprofessional lapses generating a legacy of confusing doubts and dark suspicions. In addition, since this was a homicide and the suspected assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was in custody awaiting criminal prosecution, the autopsy report--- the "best evidence,"---would have been crucial to the prosecution's case, and would have been subject to cross-examination by defense counsel had Oswald lived to go to trial.

Bethesda was not equipped to do a flawless medicolegal autopsy on the murdered President. Boswell was very frank about this when he observed that the medical complex was largely a "training school for technologists" and not a true medical school. He thought it was "foolish" to have the postmortem at Bethesda because it lacked the necessary facilities. Probably these shortcomings could have been overcome had the prosecutors been trained forensic pathologists. Highly qualified and experienced

NOTE
↓

pathologists in medicolegal autopsies were only a phone call away when the public learned of the assassination. For example, forensic pathologists like Cyril H. Wecht, coroner for Allegheny County in Pennsylvania, Milton Helpem, the chief medical examiner of New York City, and Russell S. Fisher, the medical examiner of Maryland, between them they had done thousands of medicolegal autopsies and gave expert interpretation in deaths by violence in the courtroom or at some point in the administration of justice system. In addition to their enviable professional reputations the other thing they all shared in common was the fact that they were not in the military.¹²

None of the JFK autopsy prosecutors qualified as forensic pathologists.

Humes's experience was limited to a one-week course in 1953 in forensic pathology at the AFIP. As for Boswell, Specter never attempted to establish his expertise when he appeared briefly before the Warren Commission. Finck "reviewed" hundreds of cases of wounds while he was Chief of the Wound Ballistics Pathology branch of the AFIP. However, his work was largely administrative and supervisory. It did not include performance of autopsies. During his Warren Commission testimony he was only able to come up two bullet wound cases where he actually testified in a legal proceeding.¹³

While all three prosecutors were competent pathologists they were out of their depth when it came to the science of forensic pathology. There was one other controlling factor they had in common: as career military officers they were subject to superior orders.

Shortly before the ARRB ended its official tenure it released a staff report on the Kennedy medical and autopsy records. The report noted that one of the many tragedies of the JFK assassination is the incompleteness of the autopsy report and

Did I
have
this fully
spelled

the “shroud of secrecy that has surrounded the records that do exist.” The report went on to itemize some of the gaps in the autopsy record. Remarkably, after placing Dr. Humes under oath and questioning him at some length the ARRB lamented that it was still not certain whether Humes destroyed just the original autopsy draft or the draft and the autopsy notes.¹⁴ Had the ARRB been willing not just to ration the truth but reveal the full suppression of the autopsy facts it would have reported that more than 70% of the facts in the final autopsy protocol cannot be found in any published government records. Either they have been memory-holed in some obscure government archive or they befell the same fate as Humes’s original autopsy draft.

When Humes testified before the Warren Commission he established for the record that Commission Exhibit 397 contained “copies . . . of various notes in longhand” made by himself that made up what Specter represented as part of “a group of documents” used to draft the final autopsy report. Exhibit 397 consists of two sheets of paper and the 15-page holographic “revision,” according to Humes, of the first autopsy draft he admitted burning in the fireplace of his recreation room on Sunday, the day Oswald was assassinated in the basement of the Dallas police department. One of these sheets of paper is a regulation U.S. Armed Forces autopsy descriptive sheet or face-sheet with front and back body diagrams locating the wounds on the President’s body with accompanying abbreviated notes and measurements. The other sheet contains a few notes from a phone conversation between Humes and Dr. Malcolm O. Perry, the Dallas emergency room surgeon who performed a tracheostomy on the clinically dead President minutes before he received the last rites.¹⁵

Even allowing for understandable memory lapses on the part of the prosecutors

Walt

Note
 cuts here
 Jeff man
 Sunday

Humes's representations to the Warren Commission are not consistent with the published record. Later before the ARRB Humes recalled making two or three pages of notes in shorthand recording certain measurements. Boswell's recall on note-taking at the time of the autopsy varied with the telling. When interviewed by the HSCA Boswell claimed that he was the only one taking notes. In his testimony before the ARRB Boswell remembered that he and Humes both took notes. Boswell is clear and probably correct in his assertion that it is his notes that appear on the autopsy descriptive sheet. A handwriting analysis makes it clear that none of the notes on the descriptive were made by Humes.¹⁶ The other prosecutor, Dr. Finck, testified that he took notes on small pieces of paper and turned them over to Humes. Shortly after Dallas, Finck was heard by a colleague at the AFIP complaining loudly during lunch that his autopsy notes had disappeared before he left the morgue the night of the Kennedy autopsy. The army pathologist later testified before the ARRB that he rewrote his notes from memory and turned them over to Humes.¹⁷

Clearly Commission Exhibit 397 does not contain all of the medicolegal ^{✓ Note} documentation of the Kennedy autopsy that Humes and Specter represented before the Warren ^C Commission. Despite Humes's tricky Commission testimony, there is no accounting for Finck's missing autopsy notes. Years later when a groundswell of criticism of the Warren Commission Report forced the government to reexamine the events of Dallas, Humes and the other prosecutors found themselves testifying before Congress. Under questioning by the HSCA staff counsel in 1978, Humes testified that in addition to burning the first autopsy draft he also burned all the autopsy notes in his possession because they were stained with JFK's blood and body fluids. However, he

howt

assured the staff counsel that before he destroyed the original autopsy notes he “sat down and word for word copied what I had on fresh paper.”¹⁸

Humes’s “blood stain” story as he related to the HSCA and later to the ARRB is as implausible as the act of destruction of the original autopsy notes itself. Some time before 1963 he was assigned to escort a delegation of visiting foreign naval physicians to various military installations to see how U.S. Navy doctors functioned in military settings. He took them on a side trip to Henry Ford’s Greenfield Village in suburban Detroit where America’s most internationally celebrated industrialist had spent some of his fortune to create his vision of America’s idyllic past. One of the feature attractions in Ford’s museum village was the chair from Ford’s Theatre where President Lincoln sat the night he was assassinated. The back of the chair was stained with a dark substance that might have been the blood of the martyred President. Humes recalled that his foreign guests were appalled by this public display. Years later when some of Kennedy’s blood stained ~~the~~ autopsy notes Humes was determined they would never fall into the hands of some sensation seeker and be placed on ghoulish display.¹⁹

Humes’s “blood stain” story aside, the official contention that Commission Exhibit 397 represents the documentary basis for the final autopsy report raises more serious and troubling questions. The autopsy notes in Commission Exhibit 397 consist of four brief notations and five measurements on the autopsy descriptive sheet and a single sheet of paper with a few brief notes Humes made from his phone call to Dallas. The final official autopsy report is a six-page, single-spaced typewritten document containing a total of 88 statements of autopsy facts. About 70% of these facts cannot be found in that

Revised

group of documents designated as Commission Exhibit 397 or in any other published government documents.²⁰

It would stretch credulity to the breaking point to imagine that Humes, even with the help of the other pathologists, drew from memory those minute measurements referring to the bullet wounds, their dimensions and distance from one another, and other medicolegal details with unerring exactitude expected in the medical investigation of a murdered president. Relying on fetes of memory would have been made more complicated by the fact that Humes and the other autopsy doctors did not have access to the autopsy photographs and X-rays when drafting the JFK autopsy report. All the photos and X-rays were delivered the night of the autopsy to the Secret Service . Remarkably, Humes and Boswell only first saw the autopsy photos in November 1966 when the Justice Department requested that they identify and inventory them for the National Archives.²¹

The real mystery of the autopsy notes begins, however, with the chain of possession. In a November 24, 1963 letter of transfer to Humes's commanding officer, Captain J. H. Stover, Humes certified that "all the working papers" associated with the JFK autopsy "have remained in my personal custody" and that he turned over to Capt. Stover the "autopsy notes and the holograph draft of the final report." Stover signed Humes's certificate noting that "above working papers" were received.²² The following day Stover's boss, Admiral C. B. Galloway, in turn, transmitted the autopsy protocol along with all "the work papers used by the Prosector and his assistant" to Admiral Burkley.²³ On November 26 Dr. Burkley sent the Kennedy autopsy records to Robert Bouck, chief of the President Protective Service of the Secret Service. Bouck's receipt

*Rotman's
work
cite him
if we
this
draft*

is a ten-item tally of everything Burkely transferred to his office including “one copy of the autopsy report and notes of the examining doctor . . . “ as described in Admiral Galloway’s letter of transmittal. Bouck’s receipt was designated Commission Document 371 and should have been one of the documents in Commission Exhibit 397 but it was suppressed. It was excluded especially because one of the items on the list, in addition to the receipt for autopsy notes, read “An original and six pink copies of Certificate of Death [Nav. Med. N].” The Commission deliberately suppressed JFK’s death certificate because it was destructive to the official solution of the crime.²⁴

These suppressed receipts and the unsourced and unaccounted for number of autopsy facts and statements in the final autopsy report make a convincing case that the original autopsy notes, not just those published in Commission Exhibit 397, were preserved and existed after the final report was completed. Commission Exhibit 397 should have been a historical document uncompromising in its accuracy and completeness instead of the gutted remnant of the best evidence in an assassination of politically far-reaching and wrenching consequences. After 35 years the reigning question that still begs an answer is: What was in those suppressed notes and the first autopsy draft that Humes committed to the flames?

Pointedly vague in his Commission testimony about the autopsy note-taking, Humes remembered the time and circumstances when he burned the first handwritten autopsy draft. Under Specter’s questioning and later before the HSCA, the senior prosecutor pinpointed the time as coinciding with the news of Oswald’s assassination by Jack Ruby in the basement of the Dallas police department. Before the HSCA’s panel of forensic pathologists Humes volunteered that “we interrupted our work to try and figure

*Suppression
of
Burkely
Death
Certificate*

*add to
draft in
B&T*

*Question
begged*

*wow!
need to
change*

out what that meant to us.”²⁵ One thing that was clearly apparent to the prosecutors and their superiors who controlled the Bethesda autopsy was that Oswald’s death changed everything. Now there would be no need to produce the autopsy records (the missing autopsy notes) at a trial and defend the official autopsy report if it came under cross-examination by any forceful and determined defense attorney. The destruction of the first autopsy draft, which Humes disingenuously described as “certain preliminary draft notes,” presumably under Specter’s coaching, and substituting the original with the revised version took place the Sunday afternoon while the nation was rocked by the TV coverage of Oswald’s murder.

When Humes testified under oath before the ARRB in 1996 and was asked why he burned the first autopsy draft he had no real answer. The “blood stain” story was not an option because the draft in question was written in the privacy of his own home. When mildly pressed by the Board’s Executive Director, T. Jeremy Gunn, Humes became testy and defiant. He offered that it “might have been errors in spelling or I don’t know what was the matter with it, or whether I even ever did that.” Like a man caught in the thicket of an elaborate fabrication, Humes’s defense was failed memory. “I absolutely can’t recall, and I apologize for that,” he floundered along, “but that’s the way the cookie crumbles.” Gunn reminded Humes of his 1979 HSCA testimony about rewriting the autopsy notes on fresh paper before burning the blood-stained originals. His efforts to get Humes to explain for the record why he destroyed unsoiled draft notes met with no more success that he had with the first autopsy draft. Deeply agitated and verging on incoherence, Humes’s last desperate fallback defense was “It was my own materials” to destroy and he did not want “anything to remain that some squirrel would grab and make

Is this
w/ POT?
= check

use in
Special
Specter

Note

use

whatever use that they might.” His only thought, he told Gunn, was to turn over to Admiral Burkley “my complete version. So I burned everything else.”²⁶

The ARRB’s mandate was to see that hitherto unreleased documentary records material to the Kennedy assassination be made public and not allow itself to become an advocate for the Warren Commission Report. Gunn had ample opportunity to catch Humes up in his blatant misrepresentations about the destruction of irreplaceable evidence in the most heinous of crimes in our form of government. He allowed Humes to revert to formula and repeat the implausible “blood stain” story without serious objection. He had Humes’s own self-subverting words to refute the Navy pathologist’s assertion that he burned all the autopsy notes in his possession but never used them in what passed for his inquiry into the facts. In two documents executed by Humes on November 24, 1963, and signed and approved by Admiral Burkely, Humes attested that he had “destroyed by burning certain preliminary draft notes” [first autopsy draft, author’s words] “and have officially transmitted all other papers related to this report to higher authority.” On that same day in a second certification, Humes notified Capt. Stover that “all the working papers” associated with the JFK autopsy “have remained in my personal custody at all times. Autopsy notes,” his certification continued, “and the holograph draft of the final report were handed to Commanding officer, U.S. Naval Medical School. . . No papers relating to this case remain in my possession.”²⁷

In addition to these documents, the ARRB also had in its possession all the receipts for the autopsy records mentioned above. Humes, enjoying what was almost *caret blanche* in the record he was making under the auspices of the ARRB, then told Gunn that the final autopsy report “was the product” of those two pages of notes that

appear in Commission Exhibit 397. Having elicited this response Gunn, with his keen devotion to orderly procedure, moved onto another area of questioning, thereby conceding what ARRB's executive director knew was an impossible claim.²⁸

NOTE
all the missing
NOTE

Notes

According to Boswell, it was initially understood that the autopsy was to be "limited." The news in the morgue was "they had caught the assailant" and all that was expected of the prosecutors was to recover the bullet or bullets in the President's body as essential evidence in a criminal prosecution. While JFK's autopsy was far from complete, the grim work of the prosecutors went well beyond the search for bullets before that night was over.²⁹ As for the "assailant," the scope of the official investigation stopped with Lee Harvey Oswald. Oswald was not just the principle suspect in the assassination, he was the only suspect.

3 Line Spacing

Although it was not a federal crime in 1963 to kill a president, the FBI moved quickly to take over the investigation.³⁰ Before that shattering day was over the Bureau's legendary director, J. Edgar Hoover, had reported to Robert Kennedy, the head of the Secret Service, high officials in the Justice Department, and the newly-sworn President Lyndon B. Johnson, that he was certain beyond a doubt that Oswald was the assassin.



The FBI's records of these phone conversations reveal that Hoover was virtually wrong about every fact about the assassination he reported that day. He had shots coming from the wrong floor of the book depository building and a Winchester rifle as the murder weapon rather than the now familiar Mannichler-Carcano ^{*allegedly*} owned by Oswald. Hoover had Oswald shuffling back and forth to Castro's Cuba when his one effort presumably to get to Cuba from Mexico proved futile. Hoover told the head of the Secret Service that one of his agents was gunned down by the assassin when this never happened. Nevertheless,

Case
W/ HHO
as sole
suspect

America's number one G-Man envisioned that same day the solution to the crime---
Oswald, "a nut of the extreme pro-Castro crowd," was the lone assassin.³¹

good stuff

Its puzzling why Hoover felt compelled to rush to judgment when the situation called for cautious reticence until he could be positive about any information he reported to official Washington. The director's panicky performance smacked of low-grade police work and not what the nation had come to expect from the director of its premiere law enforcement agency. Nevertheless, Hoover's "solution" to the crime resonated immediately throughout the FBI field offices. For example, when a Richardson, Texas, police officer called the FBI Dallas office the afternoon of the assassination with the name of a possible suspect the office memo recording the call carried the handwritten notation: "Not necessary to cover as true suspect located."³²

Over the weekend of the assassination Hoover, President Johnson, and Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach settled on the official "facts" of Dallas that they deemed safe for the ordinary understanding of the American people.³³ Katzenbach's much-quoted November 25th memo to Bill Moyers expressed what the executive branch's public line---the "official truth"--- would be on the assassination.³⁴ The most salient point in the new administration's contest for the "hearts and minds" of a nation plunged into inconsolable grief and numbing despair was Katzenbach's point 1:

The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large, and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial.

*→ Note to myself
I wish we had
more memos
we
Katz
we
Chpt.*

The Katzenbach handwritten memo (Nov. 24th) as well as Humes's confessed destruction of the first autopsy draft had a common antecedent: they both took place the day Oswald was shot and killed in Dallas.

note

There is no ambiguity in the Commission's conclusion that JFK was struck by two bullets. One entering "at the back of his neck and exited through the lower portion of his neck. . . ." The mortal wound, the one captured with sickening clarity by Dallas businessman Abraham Zapruder at frame 313 of his historic film of the assassination, "entered the right rear portion of his head, causing a massive and fatal wound." The Report continues with language that is deliberately evasive when it states that "it is not necessary to any essential findings of the Commission to determine which shot hit Governor Connally," but that there "is very persuasive evidence from experts that the same bullet which pierced the President's throat also caused Governor Connally's wounds."³⁵ This non-fatal bullet that the Commission asserts went through the President and caused all Connally's wounds came to be known by critics of the Report as the "Magic Bullet" (Commission Exhibit #399).

It was absolutely essential to the Commission's findings that JFK was the victim of a lone gunman that both the President and the Governor be struck by the same non-fatal bullet. The time frame dictated by the Zapruder film allowed for only three shots from the bolt-action rifle Oswald allegedly used in the assassination. Keeping true to the Report, since one of the three presumed shots missed altogether,³⁶ and one blew out the right side of Kennedy's head, that left the Commission to explain the seven non-fatal wounds in Kennedy and Connally. The Commission had no recourse but to put forward the single-pointed, "single-bullet theory" to explain everything about Dallas. The single-pointed explanation of the JFK assassination was fabricated to avoid the politically unacceptable alternative of a conspiracy involving two or more gunman.

The immediate obstacle to the Katzenbach imperative that the public be satisfied that Dallas was the act of a lone assassin were the fast-breaking news stories. The one that captured the most national TV attention was the news conference with Drs. Malcolm Perry and Kemp Clark, Professor of Neurosurgery at Parkland Memorial Hospital which took place several hours after Kennedy was pronounced dead. Dr. Perry drew most of the reporters' questions because he was the first surgeon to see the President after he was brought into Emergency Room Number One. It was Perry who performed the tracheostomy on the moribund President. While fielding reporters' questions about JFK's wounds, Perry, on three occasions, matter-of-factly identified the wound in the anterior neck as an entrance wound. Dr. Clark concurred with Perry's description of the puncture wound in Kennedy's neck as a wound of entrance.³⁷ As an emergency room surgeon in gun-toting Dallas noted for its free-floating violence, the thirty-four-year-old Perry had seen hundreds of bullet wounds, but before this traumatic weekend was over the young surgeon, with a promising medical career still ahead of him, was pressured into backtracking on his initial description of the neck wound.³⁸

Despite the televised White House news conference and all the media attention to the assassination, the autopsy doctors have always insisted on the record that they knew nothing about the anterior bullet wound in Kennedy's throat until Saturday morning when Humes called Perry. It was only then that Humes learned that the tracheostomy performed by Perry was covering the puncture wound in JFK's neck. With this new information, Humes contends, he was able to write the first autopsy draft. The official story is that the call to Dallas instantly cleared up the perplexing mystery that had baffled the prosecutors the night before: they had an entrance wound in the President's back but

no known wound of exit. By Saturday morning the Bethesda autopsy team now had a track for the non-fatal bullet fired from behind and above the presidential limousine. According to the official account this non-fatal bullet, the first shot, entered Kennedy's neck at about a 45 degree downward angle and exited his throat just below the Adam's apple.³⁹

The Saturday morning Dallas phone call and the autopsy report's tracking of JFK's non-fatal posterior wound were, to put it mildly, a towering liberation from the objective and documented truth. Like Humes's "blood stain" story these representations by the Bethesda autopsy team were designed to satisfy political needs rather than answer the medicolegal questions surrounding the assassination of an American president.

What is beyond dispute in the prosecutors' account was their urgency to find the bullet that made the textbook-like wound located as described in the final autopsy report as "situated on the upper right posterior thorax just above the upper border of the scapula. . . ."⁴⁰ The autopsy photographer, John T. Stringer, Jr., recalled the scene in the morgue was "like a three ring circus" when the prosecutors' efforts to find the bullet or bullet fragments initially met with no success. Stringer remembered that "some of the military men" (he thought it might have been Admiral Galloway) were considering bringing in metal detectors. Dr. John H. Ebersole, who was Acting Chief of Radiology at Bethesda, recalled being summoned to the morgue to take X-rays when Humes's probing of the posterior wound failed to locate the bullet. When the first set of X-rays failed to locate a missile or bullet fragments, a Secret Service agent insisted that Ebersole take a second set.⁴¹ The mystery of the vanishing bullet was solved when FBI agent Sibert called the

Bureau's Laboratory and learned that a whole missile (Exhibit # 399) was found on a stretcher at Parkland Memorial Hospital.⁴²

Doubtlessly there was confusion and high stress in the autopsy room considering the grim business at hand. But unless Bethesda was bedlam, with doctors and flag officers running in circles screaming and shouting, the autopsy doctors, even allowing for their own considerable limitations, knew about the anterior neck wound before they posted their dead commander-in-chief.

The news of Dallas had been on TV and radio for more than six hours before the autopsy began. The Secret Service agents who were with the President's Dallas detail knew about the neck wound. Two of them, Roy H. Kellerman and Clint Hill, were in and out of the morgue. Kellerman was even in earshot of Dr. Finck as he probed Kennedy's back wound and heard the doctor comment, "There are no lanes for an outlet of this entry in this man's shoulder."⁴³ The most authoritative source with first-hand knowledge of the tracheostomy over the anterior neck wound was the White House physician, Dr. George G. Burkley.

There were calls to Dallas but not for the reasons that all the autopsy doctors reported or even the slightly different spin that Admiral Galloway improvised years later when he insisted that the prosecutors "actually suspected" that a tracheostomy had obliterated a neck wound and called Dr. Perry for confirmation of their suspicions.⁴⁴ The most direct refutation of the "Saturday morning call to Dallas" story came from one of the autopsy doctors. In an interview for the *Baltimore Sun*, timed with the third anniversary of the assassination, Dr. Boswell told reporter Richard H. Levine that the prosecutors knew the extent of JFK's injuries and what the Dallas doctors had done before

the President's remains arrived at Bethesda.⁴⁵ Boswell does not mention in the story where the information originated. The most likely and authoritative source had to be the President's personal physician.⁴⁶

Burkley was with the nation's fallen leader in Emergency Room No. One and observed the team of doctors' futile efforts to resuscitate the President. It was Burkley who formally pronounced Kennedy dead before they pulled the sheet over his head.⁴⁷ Since Burkley was just one of a trio of medical admirals in the autopsy room, his statement that he "supervised the autopsy . . . and had complete knowledge of everything that was done. . . ." is probably an exaggerated claim.⁴⁸ Nonetheless, whether or not Dr. Burkley was the medical officer in charge, he had first-hand knowledge about the tracheostomy covering JFK's neck wound. Unless the realm of reason was totally subverted by the events of Dallas, the President's personal physician certainly shared this information with the autopsy prosectors. Given the urgency to find a track for JFK's non-fatal posterior wound, the autopsy doctors would have immediately turned to the White House physician.

When appearing before the HSCA's Medical Panel, Dr. Ebersole was clear in his own mind that Humes made a phone call to Dallas the evening of the autopsy. During the course of his testimony he made reference to Humes's Dallas call on four separate occasions, but after fifteen years he could only approximate the time. Ebersole's best recollection was that the call was made between 10:00 and 11:00 P.M. The Dallas call made a lasting impression on Ebersole because the problem surrounding the search for an exit path of Kennedy's posterior wound was solved. Humes returned to the autopsy table, he recalled, announcing that Kennedy had an *exit* wound under the tracheostomy that

matched up with the posterior entrance wound. While his memory was not as definite as Ebersole's, autopsy photographer Stringer thought Humes made a call to Dallas Friday night.⁴⁹

Almost like everything touching on the JFK autopsy the question of the Dallas phone calls is rife with contradictory testimony. According to Perry and other Parkland Memorial doctors, Humes made two back-to-back phone calls on Saturday morning before the hospital's scheduled press conference.⁵⁰ When Humes was before the Warren Commission, Specter pointedly asked him if he had discussed the autopsy findings with Perry during his Saturday phone call. Humes's response was unambiguous: "No, Sir, I did not." Perry basically agreed with Humes's representation as far as the first phone conversation was concerned. But the Dallas surgeon's account of the second phone call suggested that Humes had discussed in confidence what would appear in the Bethesda autopsy report.⁵¹ Perry's colleague, Dr. Kemp Clark, told the Warren Commission that Perry related to him and two others that he learned from Humes what the autopsy findings would report and at that point he asked Clark to take over for him at the press conference.⁵²

The Monday following the assassination Perry packed up his family and left Dallas for "a little bit of rest" and to avoid further questioning by the media. When he returned to Dallas he was repeatedly visited by Secret Service and FBI agents who questioned him about his views "as to the origin of the missiles and trajectories."⁵³ If the government's intention was to instruct Perry about the "facts" of Dallas, Perry proved an apt pupil. In March 1964, when he appeared before the Warren Commission, he assured assistant counsel Specter that there were "no discrepancies at all" between his

observations and the conclusions of the official autopsy report. Perry confessed that he mispoke at the November 22 press conference because he “did not have that information initially”---an interesting and perhaps tangential reference to an official cover-up---and “as a result was somewhat confused about the nature of the wounds. . . .” In his March 1964 Warren Commission testimony, Dr. Clark reported what he characterized as routine questioning by the FBI a few days after the assassination and later by the Secret Service.⁵⁴ Dr. Charles A. Crenshaw, one of the trauma team doctors who worked on the stricken President, would later write that Parkland Memorial Hospital became a zone of silence about the events of November 22, 1963. With certain actions the hospital administration sent out an unwritten message that any further media publicity from doctors and staff would be hazardous to future careers in medicine.⁵⁵

It was absolutely essential to the Warren Commission’s Report that the gunshot trauma in JFK’s neck below the Adam’s apple be forensically established as the exit wound of the non-fatal bullet that struck the President from the back and above. Humes provided a clear verbal description of the trajectory of this non-fatal missile during his Warren Commission testimony. The senior prosecutor testified that the bullet impacted Kennedy’s neck at a 45 degree angle, striking no bone, and exited his throat. At one point in Humes’s testimony Commissioner John J. McCloy, speaking for the record, asked for a more graphic description of the missile’s trajectory. McCloy wanted Humes to attest that Commission Exhibit 385, a medical illustrator’s rendition of the flight of the non-fatal bullet, was consistent with the doctor’s testimony. Humes obliged, responding that as depicted in Exhibit 385, “The wound in the anterior portion of the lower neck is physically lower than the point of entrance posteriorly, sir.”⁵⁶ Throughout his testimony

Humes proved creative in his anatomical descriptions of JFK's posterior wound, variously describing it as "low neck," "lower neck," "base of neck," and "lower posterior neck."⁵⁷

It was four months after the assassination when Humes and the other doctors testified before the Warren Commission and the best evidence, the autopsy photographs and X-rays, were not available for informing the official record of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Their unavailability did not catch Humes short. Specter had told the prosecutors in their pre-testimony interviews to bring with them schematic drawings as stand-ins for the autopsy raw materials. The drawings were made by H. A. Ryberg, the medical illustrator of the Naval Medical School. Ryberg's illustrations were not made from first-hand observation since he did not witness the autopsy nor did he have access to the autopsy photos and X-rays. The drawings that Specter had Humes introduce into evidence to substantiate the official version of a missile striking JFK's neck and exiting his throat were actually dictated to Ryberg by Humes. In his ARRB deposition, Humes agreed with the Commission's decision because some of the autopsy pictures were terribly graphic and upsetting. As with the "blood stain" story, Humes said he was concerned that if the photos were introduced they might find their way into the hands of people who would exploit them for money or some sick purpose. Humes also left the ARRB with the impression that Specter had said it was the wishes of the Kennedys that the autopsy photographs not be used in the hearings.⁵⁸ Dr. Finck was more emphatic, claiming that Specter told the doctors that it was Robert Kennedy who opposed the autopsy raw materials from being introduced into the Commission hearings.⁵⁹

Specter knew that the story about the President's brother and the autopsy pictures was bogus through and through. In an April 1964 memo to Warren Commission chief counsel, J. Lee Rankin, Specter urged that the Commission obtain the autopsy photos and X-rays in order to "determine with certainty whether two shots came from the rear." A month after the prosecutors appear before the Commission Specter, then an assistant district attorney in Philadelphia, knew that the Ryberg drawings were no substitute for the best forensic evidence. Specter noted that he learned from Secret Service Inspector Thomas J. Kelley that "the Attorney General did not categorically decline to make them available," that all the President's brother wanted was "to be satisfied that they were really necessary." When he did not hear back from Rankin, the harried assistant counsel wrote again for staff access to the X-rays and autopsy photos. Specter had good reason to importune the chief counsel since Rankin had made it know he expected to wrap up the Commission's work in June.⁶⁰

What Specter was not privy to was that Rankin had the best evidence but suppressed this from the assistant counsels and the staff. These materials were available, however, to the Commissioners. The Warren Commission members, the kind of people for whom the word "eminent" was coined, many who enjoyed prominent legal careers and knew the rules of evidence, were content to sit through testimony where key material witnesses were denied the best medicolegal evidence just as they failed to raise a collective eyebrow when Humes admitted to burning autopsy records.⁶¹

Several years after the Commission submitted its Report on the Kennedy assassination, former Commissioner John J. McCloy appeared on CBS's "Face the Nation" discussing that fateful day in Dallas. McCloy waxed contrite, expressing his

regrets that the Commission, “fore the sake of completion,” should have looked at the late President’s autopsy X-rays and photographs. He told the program’s millions of Sunday viewers that “We were perhaps a little oversensitive” to the wishes of the Kennedy family who “were against the production of colored photographs of the body and so forth.” After striking the right tone of repentance, McCloy went on to assure the TV audience that even without reviewing the autopsy pictures the Commission had “‘the Best Evidence’ on the autopsy in the sworn testimony of the doctors”⁶²

McCloy’s subtle exercise in blaming the Kennedys for withholding crucial evidence was part of a campaign that started much earlier with the FBI. When Rankin requested a copy of the autopsy report from the Bureau he must have been stunned to learn that the FBI, the investigative arm of the Warren Commission, did not have a copy. The Bureau referred him to the Secret Service. This had to confound and worry Rankin because the Commission received the FBI’s report on the assassination, Commission Document No. One (CD 1), a week before Rankin made his request. This meant that the FBI report charging that Oswald was the lone assassin was drafted without even a cursory study of the official autopsy protocol. This omission by the FBI may have prompted Commissioner Allen Dulles’s confidential comments to a highly placed FBI agent that Rankin was toying with the idea of creating an independent investigative staff. This news must have gone down like battery acid with FBI Director Hoover.⁶³

Remarkably, the reason the Bureau did not have a copy of the autopsy report was because the head of the General Investigative Division, August Belmont, recommended against acquiring a copy since “it did not appear we shall have need for this material.”⁶⁴ The ready explanation the FBI concocted to cover its embarrassment was the claim that

the President's family "had indicated a desire that the report with the photographs be kept confidential." This confection of lies, misinformation, and blaming the victim was so unpalatable even to Hoover that he scrawled on a 1966 FBI memo belatedly attempting to rationalize this gaffe: "The confusion . . . would never have occurred if we had obtained the autopsy report originally. The Kennedys never asked us to withhold it and if they had we should have disregarded it."⁶⁵

Nothing in the official autopsy report is more suspect than the described trajectory of the non-fatal through---and---through neck wound. If the autopsy statement about this wound was a fabrication then the Warren Report is nothing more than official mythology. Is it possible that the autopsy pictures if entered into evidence would have generated embarrassing questions about this wound that persuaded Rankin to make certain they were suppressed? The documentary record goes a long way to provide an obvious answer to this obvious rhetorical question.

The first non-military personnel at Bethesda Naval Hospital to see JFK's back wound were FBI agents Sibert and O'Neill. One or the other was always in the morgue observing the prosecutors and taking notes when his partner stepped out to get a sandwich or make a phone call to FBI headquarters (FBIHQ). In their jointly submitted report to FBIHQ they described Kennedy's non-fatal posterior wound as "One bullet hole located just below shoulders to the right of the spinal column." The report went on to note ". . . hand probing indicated trajectory of 45 to 60 degrees downward with no point of exit."⁶⁶ In 1978 when O'Neill was interviewed by HSCA staff his recollection had not changed. He still referred to the wound as a back wound and even executed a body chart drawing with the wound located at the level of the shoulder girdle, well below the lower

→ note from the FBI's Baltimore office.

neck or the base of the neck. The HSCA recorder of the interview noted that O'Neill mentioned being questioned at length by Specter, and "felt it was odd that he was not called to give testimony." An explanation might be that O'Neill was so adamant about the location of JFK's non-fatal rear wound that Specter knew he would be trouble as a witness. In an affidavit O'Neill executed along with his HSCA interview he remarked "I do not see how the bullet entered below the shoulder in the back could have come out the front of the throat."⁶⁷

Clint Hill, the Secret Service agent who narrowly missed being run down when he leaped onto the back of the presidential limousine to assist Mrs. Kennedy, was called into the morgue to view the body. Hill observed "a wound six inches down from the neck line down the back, just to the right of the spinal column."⁶⁸ Kellerman, who was in charge of the Secret Service detail in Dallas, watched Dr. Finck's futile efforts to "probe the back wound." Chester H. Boyers, Chief Petty Officer in charge of Bethesda's Pathology Department, observed "an entrance wound in the right shoulder blade, . . . just under the scapula and next to it." Bethesda lab technician, James C. Jenkins, with five years into his navy hitch, helped place JFK's body on the autopsy table. Jenkins described the rear non-fatal wound as "just below the collar to the midline." Another lab technician, Jan G. Rudnicki, who had observed about 20 Bethesda autopsies, noticed "a wound in the shoulder blade region" of the President's back.⁶⁹

Even Specter's memos to Rankin referred to JFK's back and not his neck wound. Specter limned for Rankin how Admiral Galloway illustrated the missile's trajectory "by placing one finger on my back and the second finger on the front part of my chest which indicated that the bullet traveled in a downward path, on the assumption that it emerged

in the opening on the President's throat. . . .⁷⁰ Recalling that this missile according to the prosecutors' report struck no bone, it could only be hoped that the admiral's medical skills were superior to his grasp of physics and trajectories. In his own summary report to his commanding officer at AFIP, Finck described the wound as located "in the upper back . . . to the right of the midline."⁷¹

In any homicide where the trained forensic pathologist was confronted with questions about traumas like JFK's non-fatal wounds there are two obvious textbook procedures to determine whether one or more missiles were involved. What was medicolegally called for was an examination of the victim's clothes and the dissection of the wound to uncover the track of the bullet. The Bethesda pathologists finished their autopsy investigation without undertaking either of these procedures.

Humes and Boswell claimed that they never saw the President's clothes and were so intensely involved searching for a missile in the corpse that it never occurred to them to bring the clothes to examination. Finck had a different version. He reported that when he tried to examine Kennedy's clothes an "officer who outranked me told be that my request was only of academic interest."⁷² The prosecutors did not see Kennedy's clothes until months later when Specter made them available at their pre-testimony sessions with the assistant counsel. The alignment of the bullet holes in JFK's coat and shirt were almost a perfect match, indicating that they were made by the same missile. The holes in the President's shirt and suit coat were about six inches below the top of the collar line and almost two inches to the right of the midline.⁷³ This alignment was consistent with an entrance wound in the shoulder, the "upper right posterior thorax," as Humes described it in his official autopsy protocol, and not a neck wound. Humes and Boswell had a ready

response to carry the day for the “neck wound” when confronted with this inconsistency. Both insisted that the President’s custom-made clothes rode up on his back as he waved to the cheering Dallas crowd just when the first shot struck him.⁷⁴

To lay to rest any question about Kennedy’s non-fatal wounds the neck should have been dissected. The medicolegal technique required that the organs of the neck be taken out and laid open to reveal the track of the bullet from point of entrance to the point of exit. When pressed by the HSCA’s panel of forensic pathologists Humes and Boswell admitted this was not done. Humes took responsibility for not carrying out this procedure. He explained that there was so much going on, and since the team had exposed some of the missile track they were satisfied that they had “the two points of the wound and then subsequently the wound of exit.”⁷⁵ Finck, on the other hand, sought refuge in blaming the Kennedys. He told the HSCA’s medical panel that Admiral Galloway, acting under the direction of the Kennedy family, instructed the autopsy team not to dissect the organs of the neck.⁷⁶ On the bare face of it, Finck’s claim simply does not ring true. Since the prosecutors had removed JFK’s brain, and executed a modified Y-cut exposing all the internal organs, what could possibly have been so sacrosanct about the organs of the neck? For the Kennedy family the neck organs had no special or exemptive significance as revealed in the authorization form for postmortem examination signed by the President’s brother, Robert Kennedy, acting for JFK’s widow. Under the section of the form stipulating any limitations on the autopsy the space is blank. Clearly, the Kennedys cannot be blamed for the prosecutors’ failure to dissect the President’s neck wound. Even more self-subverting of the official mythology is the fact that the authorization form was suppressed from the official record.⁷⁷

The fundamental failure to dissect the neck wound was a political and not a family decision. Testimony from Finck's own mouth and a pivotal document from the Kennedy White House physician pushes the argument to the point of cold conviction that the Warren Report is a deliberate falsification of our history. Finck's remarkable testimony, largely unnoticed by the press, in the 1969 Clay Shaw trial in New Orleans established to a certainty that the prosecutors were under military orders not to dissect the neck wound. President Kennedy's death certificate signed by Admiral Burkley refutes the bogus claim that the wound in JFK's throat was a wound of exit. What other explanation can explain why the death certificate was suppressed from the official record.

For two stressful days Dr. Finck was subjected to intense and forceful questioning by the prosecution in New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison's showcase JFK conspiracy trial involving a prominent local patron of the arts, Clay L. Shaw.⁷⁸ Assuming airs of shocking arrogance and self-importance Finck began his testimony by spelling out words he used in response to questions like "abrasion," "entry," and "entrance," as though he were in an elementary school classroom and not in a courtroom.⁷⁹ Before the first day of his testimony was over Finck became contentious, sour-tempered, and harried under the prosecution's probing cross-examination, especially about the failure to dissect the neck wound. Finck began to argue with the judge, ignore the advice of his own counsel, and flirted with contempt charges rather than answer questions directed to him by the prosecution. He reverted to formula and tried to blame the Kennedys for placing restrictions on the autopsy, but to no avail.⁸⁰

Under the judge's threat of citing him for contempt, Finck made some startling disclosures. He reluctantly acknowledged that there were uniformed admirals in the

morgue followed by the chilling admission that “. . . when you are a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army you just follow orders. . . .” Finck was no longer a cocky witness. He knew he was building a gigantic snowball that could envelop him and the official autopsy report, but he did not want to be slapped with a contempt citation by a judge whose patience he had come close to exhausting.⁸¹

Finally, during the second day of testifying Finck came forward and named names. He disclosed that Admirals Galloway and Kinney, and not Humes, were in charge of the autopsy. Then questioner Alvin Oser, the assistant district attorney who was conducting the cross-examination, pressed Finck about whether the neck wound was not dissected because of “direct orders.” Trying to salvage what he could Finck resorted to semantics, taking exception to Oser’s “direct orders,” the distressed Army pathologist preferred instead to characterize them as “suggestions and directions” offered by the two medical flag officers Galloway and Kinney.⁸² At that point, Finck’s two-day ordeal came to an end. Once Oser had Finck on record admitting to military interference with the President’s autopsy the prosecution was satisfied that the national press would run with the story.⁸³

While Finck’s revelations went virtually unnoticed by the media, his New Orleans testimony set off bells and whistles at the Justice Department. Justice official Carl Eardley called Boswell and pleaded with him to go to New Orleans quick, according to Boswell, Eardley was upset because “Pierre is testifying and lousing everything up.” Boswell spent several days in New Orleans at government expense consulting with Justice attorneys, reviewing the transcript of Finck’s testimony, and apparently assisting with a government damage control exercise.⁸⁴

The most obvious, authoritative, and accessible source on Kennedy's wounds and the surrounding events of that dark day in Dallas was the President's personal physician, Dr. George G. Burkley. He was with the moribund President in Emergency Room One, observed Dr. Perry and the team of doctors perform the tracheostomy, and pronounced Kennedy dead. He was with the body throughout the sad journey from Texas back to the nation's capital, then to the Bethesda morgue, and he accompanied JFK's remains in the ambulance from the morgue back to the White House.⁸⁵ It is generally agreed that it was Burkley who convinced Jackie Kennedy on the flight back from Dallas in Air Force One that the autopsy should be conducted at a military hospital for "security" reasons. Bethesda, he helped her to see, would be most appropriate because her husband was a former naval officer.⁸⁶

The Warren Commission should have had Burkley's name near or at the top of the list of witnesses it was preparing to interview. Incredibly, JFK's personal physician was never called to testify. Commission assistant counsel Specter never interviewed Burkley or asked him to prepare a statement about his observations about the President's wounds or any information he might have relating to the assassination. The FBI and the Secret Service never interviewed him before or after they submitted their reports on the assassination to the Warren Commission. Dr. Burkley's fate was not unlike those old Bolsheviks who were air-brushed out of Soviet history books and the national narrative after they fell victim to one of Stalin's party purges. Except for a modest initiative on his part, Burkley would have slipped unnoticed and unremarked down the official memory hole. In June 1964 Burkley approached the FBI liaison with the White House, Orrin H. Bartlett, with a request. Obviously puzzled and miffed,

according to agent Bartlett, over the fact that he had not been contacted by the Warren Commission, he asked Bartlett to use his good offices to get the Warren Commission to accept for the record his statement on the assassination. Burkley's request was sent up the Bureau's ladder of command, reviewed by all the need-to-know assistant directors, before a recommendation was made to contact the Commission's chief counsel. Rankin, in turn, somewhat reluctantly, accepted Burkley's statement.⁸⁷

The Warren Commission's systematic campaign to deny Burkley's access to the record establishes that early in the Commission's life a decision was made not to conduct a good faith investigation into the facts of Dallas. The document that was anathema to the Commission and its predetermined conclusions---one it treated like a poisonous snake---was the JFK death certificate, signed by Dr. Burkley. The death certificate sheet with the heading "summary of the facts related to death" places the President's non-fatal rear wound ". . . in the posterior back at about the level of the third *thoracic* vertebrae."⁸⁸ The death certificate description of this wound is consistent with three holes in JFK's clothes and the recorded observations of FBI and Secret Service agents who were in the morgue, and many of the medical orderlies and lab technicians who assisted at the autopsy. A wound at the level of the third thoracic vertebrae destroys the Commission's assertion that the non-fatal bullet entered Kennedy's lower neck and exited his throat before slamming into Governor Connally. How was it possible for a bullet travelling at a 45 to 60 degree downward angle, entering the body at the level of the third thoracic vertebrae, striking no bone, and then exit the throat below the Adam's apple? The Kennedy death certificate makes a cruel mockery of the Warren Report

and its politically dictated preordained conclusion that all the shots came from the rear and were fired by a lone assassin. Unless the science of ballistics was suspended that dreadful day in Dallas the death certificate adds greater weight to Drs. Perry and Clark's original and first-hand medical opinion that the President's anterior neck wound was a wound of entry.

Since the death certificate strikes at the vitals of the Warren Report it was essential that the Commission ignore Burkley and suppress his report on the President's wounds. The Kennedy death certificate does not appear in the Report or the 26 volumes of hearings and exhibits. That the two-page death certificate of the nation's murdered leader whose assassination generated the 900-page investigative report, dressed out with almost 7000 footnotes and a bodyguard of 26 stout volumes of more than 10,000,000 words, could topple this impressive edifice of officially sanctioned truths and conclusions is a scenario worthy of the talents of a George Orwell.

Early Saturday morning immediately after he felt himself relieved from the White House Death Watch, Dr. Burkley notified presidential aide, Walter Jenkins, that he wished to resign. President Johnson wanted Burkley to stay on as White House physician and what LBJ wanted usually happened. The new President's persuasive skills were legendary. Johnson called Burkley into the Oval Office one afternoon for a chat and before the day was over Rear Admiral Burkley was Vice Admiral Burkley, the highest ranking medical officer in the U.S. Navy. George G. Burkley was only the second White House physician in history to carry the rank of Vice Admiral.⁸⁹

Burkley was neither called to testify before the HSCA nor was he interviewed by any of its staff. He did go on record in 1967 with Harvard University's JFK oral history

project but refused to comment on the Warren Report. When asked if he agreed with the Report's conclusions, Burkley's terse response was "I would not care to be quoted on that." After he retired in 1968 and until his death in 1991, Burkley broke his silence on at least one occasion when he confided to writer Henry Hurt that he believed Kennedy was a victim of a conspiracy. When Hurt tried to follow up their phone conversation with an in-depth interview, Burkley abruptly refused.⁹⁰

This postmortem of JFK's autopsy falls far short of raising all the material questions and unsettling suspicions that surround the autopsy report and, by extension, the official account of the assassination. One question that any fair-minded reading of the objective evidence evokes is: Was the cover-up more damaging than what was covered up? The first part of the question has been resoundly answered by a majority of the American people who reject the Warren Commission Report as a counterfeit of our history. The dispiriting corollary of this deligitimitizing of the Report by public rejection is a warrant for political cynicism of the deepest die. It echoes of the old Roman question: "Who will guard the guardians?"⁹¹

Only the government can answer the second part of the question. All the lies have been government lies; all the deception official deception. The Warren Commission proclaimed that truth was its only client. If the Commission's client was really truth where was the devotion to the interests of its professed client and the warm zeal in the search for the true reality of Dallas? The Commission sanctioned perjury, connived in the destruction of the "best evidence," boycotted key witnesses, and deliberately and knowingly suppressed material medical records and legal documents. In terms of the JFK

autopsy, the Commission's real role was to play zealous advocate for the government's predetermined conclusions and not to uncover the facts of the Kennedy assassination.

The independent researcher cannot pretend to know with cold certainty what was in the original autopsy draft or the missing autopsy notes. Only the government knows what is recorded on the bottom line; but researchers can and must continue to record their entries in the public ledger when the facts of the assassination collide with the official accounting. After more than three decades there is still the moral certainty that the JFK assassination---this great wound in the body politic---remains unhealed.

1
2
3
4
5
6
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20

Endnotes

1. Henry Hurt, Reasonable Doubt: An Investigation into the Assassination of John F. Kennedy (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1985). This is the title of Hurt's Chapter Three.

2. *Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Select Committee on Assassinations*, U.S. House of Representatives, 59th Congress, 2nd Session, Volume V II (March 1979), pp. 193-194 (hereafter cited as HSCA). For the complete critique of the Kennedy autopsy by the HSCA's forensic pathology panel see pages 193-194. Despite its unflattering review the panel charitably concluded that the deficiencies did not vitiate the autopsy's final conclusions.

3. The Oswald autopsy is filed as Warren Commission Exhibit 1981. A copy of the protocol is available at the National Archives, College Park, MD.

W 4. All of these stories were filed by the *Washington Post*'s George Lardner, Jr., who is the best informed national reporter on the Kennedy assassination. See "Ford's Editing Backed 'Single-Bullet' Theory," *Washington Post* August 3, 1997; "Gaps in Kennedy Autopsy File Detailed," *Washington Post*, August 2, 1998, A4; "Archive Photos Not of JFK's Brain Says Assassination's Board Report," *Washington Post*, November 10, 1998, A3. Ford's editing of the Warren Report can be found in the J. Lee Rankin Papers, National Archives, College Park, MD, Box 26, Folder 385, p. 5 of draft dated 6/26/'64.

5. *Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy*, Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, Volume II, p. 348 (hereafter cited in this manner WC 2H348).

6. *Transcript of Proceedings, Assassination Records Review Board, Deposition of James Joseph Humes*, February 13, 1996, National Archives, College Park, MD., pp. 23-25, 34-35, and 61 (hereafter cited as ARRB).

7. WC 2H372-373

8. *Transcript of Proceedings, Assassination Records Review Board, Deposition of Dr. J. Thornton Boswell*, February 26, 1996, National Archives, College Park, MD., p. 207 (hereafter cited as ARRB); Humes, ARRB deposition, pp. 227-228.

9. Francis X. O'Neill & James W. Sibert, FBI Report, 11/26/'63 "Autopsy of Body of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, JFK 4-1 autopsy file, National Archives, Washington D.C., pp. 2-3. See also Appendix to HSCA, Volume VII, pp. 7-9. For Admiral Kinney's presence in the morgue see Admiral Burkley's statement "report on my participation into the activities surrounding the assassination of President John

Fitzgerald Kennedy,” November 27, 1963, Warren Commission Exhibit 1126, National Archives, Washington, D.C., p.7.

10. Harold Hirsh, “Tampering With Medical Records,” Medical Quarterly (1978, Annual), p. 454; Emmanuel Hayt, Medicolegal Aspects of Hospital Records (Illinois: Physicians’ Record Company. 2nd ed., 1977), p. 166; Mary D. Helmelt & Mary Ellen Mackert, “Factual Medical Records Protect Hospitals, Practitioners, Patients,” Hospitals (July 1, 1977), p. 52. The writer wants to thank medical records expert Betsy Neichter for her guidance on these sources.

11. Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, “The Autopsy,” Washington, D.C., 1951 ed., pp. 8, 64. When questioned by the ARRB Humes admitted that he “trained young doctors to do autopsies all my life. . . .” but he was less than responsive when asked about what training manuals he used. He gave his questioner to believe that his approach was free-wheeling, that he taught mostly from his own experience of many years. It is hard to accept that a military training hospital like the Bethesda Naval Medical School did not insist on the standard AFIP manual for autopsy procedures done around the world. This could only invite numerous legal actions and expensive litigation. See Humes, ARRB deposition, pp. 40-44.

12. Boswell, ARRB deposition, pp. 15-16; Marshall Houts, Where Death Delights: The Story of Dr. Milton Helpern and Forensic Medicine (New York: Coward & McCann, 1969), pp. 13, 27-30.

13. Boswell, ARRB deposition, pp. 15-16; Houts, Where Death Delights, pp. 28-29. For more on the qualifications of the JFK prosecutors see HSCA, Volume VII, p. 182. In 1957 the American Board of Pathologists established that the candidate for certification had to have participated in at least 25 homicide autopsies. Using these standards none of the prosecutors would have qualified in the world of civilian medicine. See James A. French, “Issuance of Certificates in Forensic Pathology,” Legal Medicine Annual 1969 (New York: Appleton-Crofts, 1969), p.160.

14. See “Assassinations Records Review Board Staff Report to Accompany July Release of Medical and Autopsy Records,” ARRB, July 31, 1998, p. 1.

15. WC 2H372. For Warren Commission Exhibit 397 see WC Hearings, Volume XVII, Exhibits 392-884.

16. Humes, ARRB deposition, pp. 129-131; Boswell interview with HSCA, 8/17/77, JFK Collection, (RG [record group] 233), p. 9; Boswell, ARRB deposition, pp. 108-112

17. Criminal District Court, Parish of New Orleans, State of Louisiana, State of Louisiana vs. Clay L. Shaw, February 24, 1969, Testimony of Pierre Finck, p. 96 (hereafter cited as State of Louisiana vs. Clay L. Shaw; Washington Post, August 2, 1998, A 4.

Now 18. Humes’s testimony, September 6, 1978, HSCA, Volume I, p. 330.

that published document.

28. Humes, ARRB deposition, pp. 128-131

29. Boswell, ARRB deposition, pp. 23-24.

30. SAC [special-agent-in-charge] Shanklin to File, 11/22/'63, Dallas JFK Assassination File, 89-43-1; See C. D. DeLoach to Mohr, June 1964, FBI Liaison with Warren Commission File, 62-109090-NR [not recorded] where Director Hoover in an interview with author William Manchester boasted that the FBI "immediately entered the case despite jurisdiction . . ." The new president, however, quickly authorized the Bureau to take over the investigation.

31. For this remarkable testament to error and ignorance see the FBI's 62-109060 file (Main JFK Assassination File), for serials 56, 57, 58, and 59.

32. I. C. Robert C. Renfro to SAC, Dallas, 11/22/'63, Dallas JFK Assassination File, 89-43-84.

33. C. A. Evans to Belmont, 11/25/'63, FBI Main JFK Assassination File, 62-109060-1399; Inspector James R. Malley to File, Dallas JFK Assassination File, 89-43-440. See also the Secret Service phone logs for November 24, 1963 recording calls made between LBJ, Hoover, Katzenbach, and Moyers, White House Telephone Office, Container #1, Telephone Memoranda, November 24, 1963, Lyndon B. Johnson Library, Austin, Texas (hereafter cited as LBJ Library).

34. Katzenbach wrote this memo in longhand on Sunday, November 24th, when he had no secretarial help. A copy of the Katzenbach memo can be found in the FBI Main JFK Assassination File, 62-109060-NR, as part of serial 1399. The Justice Department copy of the memo was withheld from the file for 18 months. It did not reach the Records Branch until May 21, 1965. See Memorandum to Moyers, November 25, 1963, Justice Department, 129-11, Records Branch. For the holographic copy Katzenbach wrote on Sunday night (after Oswald was assassinated) see Justice Department, Criminal Division, File 129-11, section 1A.

35. WCR, p. 19.

36. WCR, pp. 111-117. This is the bullet that hit a curbstone and wounded bystander James T. Tague. Sometime in July 1964 the Warren Commission had to develop the single-bullet theory to account for this missed shot. While the Warren Commission was forced to conclude that one of the presumed three shots missed altogether, the FBI and the Secret Service never changed their original assertion that there was no missed shot. Despite inter-agency tensions and rivalry both agencies agreed that two shots hit JFK and a separate missile struck Governor Connally. Neither agency subscribed to the single-bullet theory that was the essential underpinning

19. Humes, testimony, March 1979, HSCA, Volume VII, pp. 257-258; Humes, ARRB deposition, pp. 125-128. Humes's "blood stains" story verges, if it does not cross the line, on silliness when we recall that JFK's violent death was a bloody affair. There were blood stains on Boswell's descriptive sheet that Humes did not dare destroy. The presidential limousine was covered with blood and there was even brain tissue behind the visors. The lining of JFK's casket was saturated with blood. The two motorcycle cops flanking the limo were splattered with blood and brain tissue. There was blood on the gurney, mattress, and sheets, and God knows where else in Emergency Room One at Parkland Memorial Hospital where JFK was taken after the shooting. Humes had no way of controlling the disposition of any of this assassination gore that could (but never did) end up in some sideshow or hanging on the side of a barn somewhere in Kansas. The latter apparently, at least according to Boswell, was one of Humes's persistent nightmares. See Boswell, ARRB deposition, p. 14.

20. Harold Weisberg, Post Mortem: JFK Assassination Cover-Up Smashed (Frederick, Maryland, Harold Weisberg, 1975), pp. 255-256. Although it has not received the attention it deserves, this is still the authoritative work on the Kennedy autopsy. A copy of the official autopsy report can be found in *The Warren Commission Report: Report on the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963), pp. 538-543 (hereafter cited as WCR).

21. Justice Department, Criminal Division, 129-213-3, section 7, p. 1.

22. See MD 10 of the Master Set of Medical Exhibits Public Distribution Copy List of Exhibits Assassination Records Review Board, July 20, 1998, National Archives, College Park, MD (hereafter cited as MD Master Set of Medical Exhibits).

23. (Admiral) C. B. Galloway to the White House Physician, November 25, 1963, Commission Document 371 or see MD 52 Master Set of Medical Exhibits, National Archives, College Park, MD. Galloway's receipt should have been filed with CE 397 but it does not appear in the exhibits of the Commission's published Report.

24. The JFK death certificate signed by Dr. Burkley is not in the Warren Commission Report or in any of the 26 volumes of hearings and exhibits. Researcher Harold Weisberg discovered the original copy in documents the Commission sent to the U.S. Government Printing Office that were not to be copied. See Weisberg, Post Mortem, pp. 302-306.

25. WC 2H374; Humes's testimony, HSCA, Volume VII, March 1979, p. 258

26. Humes, ARRB deposition, pp. 136-138.

27. See items MD 9 and MD 10 Master Set of Medical Exhibits, National Archives, College Park, MD. Both of these documents were originally filed as Commission Document 371 and copies should have been filed in CE 397 but were excluded from

*
Star
Twin

7
wow!

of the Commission's case. Three years after the assassination Director Hoover was still unyielding on this point when he noted that the FBI rejected the Commission's "missed shot", insisting "we contend all 3 shots hit." Connally was just as adamant that a separate shot struck him. The FBI's crucial and fundamental disagreement with the Commission over the shooting sequence explains, in part, why the FBI Report on the assassination (Commission Document 1) never appeared in the Warren Commission Report or in the hearings and exhibits. For the FBI's Report on the shooting see CD 1, p. 1. For the Bureau and the Secret Service's agreement on three shots and three hits see L.J. Gauthier to Callahan, 1/28/'64, Main JFK Assassination File, 62-109060-2366 and FBI memo, 11/29/'63, Dallas JFK Assassination File, 89-44-NR. For Hoover's 1966 remarks see A. Rosen to DeLoach, 11/22/'66, Main JFK Assassination File, 62-109060-4267. Connally's comments appear in the *Washington Post*, 11/22/'66.

37. News Conference No. #1, November 22, 1963, 3:16 P.M. (CST). This was the first news conference of the Johnson presidency. See LBJ Library, pp. 5-6.

38. WC 6H18.

39. Humes, WC 2H361-362, 364, and 370; Boswell, ARRB deposition, pp. 27, 31-32; Finck, HSCA, testimony, 3/11/'78, JFK Collection, pp. 116117; Admiral Galloway, HSCA interview, 5/17/'78, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p. 2.

40. The typed version of the JFK autopsy report can be found in WCR, pp. 538-543 see p. 540.

41. John Thomas Stringer, Jr., HSCA interview, August 12, 1977, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p. 10; Dr. John H. Ebersole, HSCA interview, March 11, 1978, JFK Document 013617, Box 239, pp. 47, 52.

42. James W. Sibert, HSCA interview, August 25, 1977, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p. 3; James W. Sibert affidavit, 10/24/1976, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

43. Roy H. Kellerman, WC 2H93; see also Clint Hill's statement in WC Hearings, 18H740ff, p. 6 of statement.

44. Admiral Calvin B. Galloway, HSCA interview, May 17, 1978, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p.2.

45. *Baltimore Sun*, November 25, 1966; Weisberg, Post Mortem, pp. 35-37. The author is grateful to Harold Weisberg for bringing this story to his attention.

46. Boswell claims that Dr. Burkley was "too upset" and said nothing to the autopsy doctors about what happened in the Dallas hospital emergency room. But then Boswell supported the "Saturday morning call" and swore that none of the prosecutors made a call to Dallas the night of the autopsy. None of which was true. See Boswell, ARRB deposition, pp. 27, 31-32, and 34-35.

47. Admiral George G. Burkley oral history interview, October 17, 1967, Kennedy Library, Harvard University, pp. 16, 21.

48. *ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

49. Ebersole, HSCA interview, March 11, 1978, JFK Documents, Box 29, pp. 4-5, 20, 47, and 51-52. Ebersole's testimony was not released to the public until after the passage of the 1992 so-called JFK Act. Stringer, Jr., HSCA testimony, August 17, 1977, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p. 5. Author William Manchester noted that Humes called Dr. Perry shortly after midnight. See William Manchester, The Death of a President: November 20-November 25, 1963(New York: Harper & Row), p. 433.

50. Perry, WC, March 25, 1964, 6H16-17. Humes had certain knowledge by Saturday morning, if not Friday night, that Perry had described the President's anterior neck wound as a gunshot wound of entry. This was reported in the November 23, 1963, edition of the *Washington Post* which Humes cited in his official autopsy report. See WCR, p. 539, paragraph 2.

51. Humes, WC, March 16, 1964, 2H371; Perry, WC, March 25, 1964, 6H16.

*wc report
check three
papers*

52. Kemp Clark, WC, March 25, 1964, 6H16.

53. Perry, WC, March 25, 1964, 6H14, 17.

54. Perry, WC, March 25, 1964, 6H14; Clark, WC, March 25, 1964, 6H27.

55. Charles A. Crenshaw with Jens Hansen and J. Gary Shaw, JFK Conspiracy of Silence(New York: Signet, 1992), pp. 155-156.

56. Humes, WC, March 16, 1964, 2H364-365, and 368.

57. Humes, WC, March 16, 1964, 2H351,357,361, 363, 367, and 375.

58. For the Sibert & O'Neill list of persons in the morgue see HSCA, March 1979, Volume VII, pp. 8-9. T.H. Ryberg's name was not on the list. Finck testified that Humes "supervised" the Ryberg illustrations. See State of Louisiana vs. Clay L. Shaw, February 24, 1969, p. 18.

59. Finck, HSCA, interview, March 11, 1978, pp. 105-106.

60. Arlen Specter to J. Lee Rankin, April 30, 1964, Warren Commission Document 10079, National Archives, Washington, D.C., pp. 1-2; Specter to Rankin, May 12, 1964, J. Lee Rankin Papers, National Archives, College Park, MD., Box 37, Folder 473.

61. Warren Commission Executive Session, January 21, 1964, National Archives, College Park, MD., p. 35. When John J. McCloy asked about the "raw material of the

autopsy . . . the colored photographs of the President's body---do we have these?" Rankin acknowledged that they had the "raw materials," the photos and the X-rays.

Two years after the Commission submitted its final Report former assistant counsels W. David Slawson and Norman Redlich reported to Burke Marshall that the Commission had not seen the X-rays and the autopsy photos. See W. David Slawson to Files, 10/7/1966, Department of Justice, Criminal Division, 129-11 file, pp. 1-2.

62. McCloy's "Face the Nation" comments found in FBI clipping of Washington Capitol News Service, FBI Liaison with Warren Commission, 62-109090-601, July 6, 1967.

63. A. Rosen to Belmont, 12/17/'63, FBI Main JFK Assassination File, 62-109060-NR, p. 2.

64. Ibid.; Rosen to Belmont, 11/26/'63, FBI Main JFK Assassination File, 62-109060-426.

65. A. Rosen to DeLoach, October 7, 1966, FBI Main JFK Assassination File, 62-109060-4235.

66. SAC, Baltimore to Director and SAC, Dallas, 11/23/'63, FBI Main JFK Assassination File, 62-109060-459.

67. Francis X. O'Neill, HSCA interview, 1/10/1978, JFK Collection, (RG 233), pp. 4, 8; O'Neill affidavit, 11/8/1978, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p. 5.

68. Clint Hill statement, WC Hearings, 18H740ff, p. 6 of statement.

69. Roy H. Kellerman, HSCA interviews, 8/24/1977 and 8/25/1977, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p. 4; Chester H. Boyer, HSCA interview, 11/25/1978, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p. 2; James Jenkins, HSCA, 8/24/1977, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p. 4; Jan G. Rudnicki, HSCA interview, 5/18/1978, JFK Collection, (RG 233), p.3.

70. Arlen Specter to J. Lee Rankin, May 12, 1964, Rankin Papers, Box 37, Folder 473, National Archives, College Park, MD.; Specter to Rankin, March 12, 1964, Rankin Papers, Box 37, Folder 473, National Archives, College Park, MD.; Francis W. H. Adams and Arlen Specter to J. Lee Rankin, January 23, 1964, Investigation & Evidence File, Box 4, Folder 3, National Archives, College Park, MD., p. 1 of their "Memorandum of Things to Be Done and Some of the Problems Involved."

71. Pierre A. Finck to Brig. General J.M. Blumberg, "The Autopsy of President Kennedy. Summary," 25 January 1965, Otis Historical Archives, National Museum of Health and Medicine, AFIP, p. 1.

72. Humes, WC 2H349, March 16, 1964; Boswell, ARRB deposition, p. 26; Finck's revised "Summary" of his report to General Blumberg, Otis Historical Archives, National

Museum of Health and Medicine, AFIP, p. 3. The HSCA identified the officer in question as Lt. Commander Humes. Guileless or not, the HSCA was wrong. Humes did not outrank Lt. Colonel Finck. The only officers in the morgue who did were two Navy captains and three admirals. See endnote #9 for source of the list of people present in the morgue.

73. WCR, p. 92. This was one autopsy measurement over which there is no dispute. See HSCA, Volume VII, p. 85 for medical illustrator Ida Dox's drawing of JFK's back wound.

74. Humes, WC 2H366, march 16, 1964, p. 366; Boswell, ARRB deposition, p. 74.

75. Humes, HSCA interview, March 1979, Volume VII, p. 262.

76. Finck, HSCA interview with Medical Panel, March 11, 1978, National Archives, Washington, D.C., pp. 73-75.

77. The postmortem authorization signed by Robert F. Kennedy was part of the permanent Navy record of the President's autopsy. As seen above it was one of the 11 items Dr. Burkley received from Admiral Galloway and transmitted on November 26, 1963, to Robert Bouck, head of the White House Protective Research section of the Secret Service. The original form should have been part of the published Warren Commission records. The autopsy authorization form should have been one of the documents found in CD 397 file but was suppressed by the Commission. The original form can be found in RG 87 Secret Service Records at the National Archives, College Park, MD, in the Archives' Valuable Documents collection.

78. Garrison's case against Shaw was baseless and he was ultimately acquitted.

79. State of Louisiana vs. Clay L. Shaw, February 24, 1969, p. 13. Finck persisted in his in-court spelling bee for much of this session.

80. Ibid., pp. 115-116.

81. Ibid., pp. 51-52.

82. State of Louisiana vs. Clay L. Shaw, February 25, 1969, pp. 4-6, 36-37. Galloway was later interviewed by HSCA but he was never questioned about what Finck testified to in the Clay Shaw trial. See Calvin B. Galloway, HSCA interview, 5/17/1978, JFK Collection, (RG 233).

83. Finck's revelations in the Shaw trial went largely unnoticed by the press.

84. Boswell, ARRB deposition, pp. 208-213. Exactly what business the federal government had in a local prosecution remains an intriguing mystery because the ARRB failed to pry from Boswell the story behind this story when it had Boswell under oath.

Neither did the ARRB make any ostensible effort to subpoena the Boswell-Eardley correspondence cited in the transcript of the doctor's testimony.

85. See Burkley's nine-page statement "report on my participation in the activities surrounding the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy," November 27, 1963, WC Exhibit 1126, National Archives, Washington, D.C.. See also ASAIC Kellerman to Chief, 11/30/'63, Commission Document No. 3, National Archives, Washington, D.C., pp. 3-4; and the statement of special agent Clinton J. Hill, November 30, 1963, Commission Document No. 3, National Archives, Washington, D.C., pp. 4-5.

86. Admiral George G. Burkley oral history interview, October 17, 1967, Washington, D.C., John F. Kennedy Library, Harvard University, p. 16; Manchester, Death of a President, pp., 349-350.

87. D. J. Brennan to W.C. Sullivan, June 4, 1964, FBI Liaison with Warren Commission, 62-109090-NR; A. Rosen to Belmont, June 8, 1964, FBI Liaison with Warren Commission, 62-109090-NR. Burkley's statement can be found in the J. Lee Rankin Papers, Box 11, Folder 172, National Archives, College Park, MD.

88. Death Certificate of president John Fitzgerald Kennedy, November 23, 1963, signed by George Gregory Burkley, Physician to the President, RADM (Read Admiral Medical), p. 2. For the JFK death certificate see MD 6, Master Set of Medical Exhibits, National Archives, College Park, MD.

89. Manchester, Death of a President, pp. 445-446; George G. Burkley interview with T. H. Baker, December 3, 1965, LBJ Library, pp. 12-13.

90. Burkley oral history interview, October 17, 1967, John F. Kennedy Library, Harvard University, p. 18; George G. Burkley obituary, *Washington Post*, 1/21/'91; Hurt, Reasonable Doubt, p. 49.

91. A CBS/*New York Times* poll taken in 1992 found that 77% said that they believed that Dallas was a conspiracy and 75% believed there was an official cover-up in the case. See *The New York Times*, February 4, 1992, C, pp. 11 & 16.