

JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM

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TO : HESS, JACQUELINE

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BOSWELL, J. THORNTON
KENNEDY, JOHN, AUTOPSY
EVIDENCE, MEDICAL
HUMES, JAMES
BETHESDA NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER

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P. 2
BOS THINKS HUMES
DID NOT DO ANY
WRITING - SO BOS
WROTE HEAD MEASURE-
MENTS

? HIS STORY ALTERED?
↳ HUMES ALBOS? P 2

RELEASED UNDER E.O. 13526 (JFK ACT)
NARA [Signature] 10 23 93

MEMORANDUM

002061

TO: Jacqueline Hess
FROM: Colleen Boland
DATE: August 16, 1977
RE: Interview with Dr. J. Thornton Boswell at 10:30 a.m.,
National Orthopedic Hospital. Also present were Jim
Kelly and Andy Purdy.

Dr. J. Thornton Boswell was formerly a Commander in the Medical Corps of the U.S. Navy and was on November 22, 1963, Chief of Pathology at the National Naval Medical School - he assisted with the autopsy of President Kennedy.

Please refer to more detailed memo for complete account of our meeting. The following are some of Boswell's more interesting comments:

- concluded in his testimony that the cause of JFK's death was brain injury
- did not think the post-mortem should have been done at Navy Medical - wanted to go to Armed Forces Institute of Pathology (AFIP) - Walter Reed
- stated that Burkely supervised autopsy acting as liaison for family - autopsy began without written formal permission.
- Burkely was not interested in a full autopsy - they were only looking for the bullet - Boswell and others present agreed that they should do a complete autopsy - they did in the end, but did not make a Y incision
- not aware tracheostomy was performed on wound before they spoke with Dallas.
- Boswell himself tried to get adrenals from area above the diaphragm - they were artified
- FBI or Secret Service agent was on wall phone at the head of the autopsy table during the entire autopsy

Reference copy, JFK Collection: NSCA (RG 233)

- 1 --they were worried about security, however, JFK's brain was kept in a chrome bucket in Stover's closet, unguarded, for days after the autopsy
- disagrees with Dr. Baden in that he said there wasn't much trauma to JFK's neck
- doesn't think they took quality photos and X-rays
- Boswell wanted and is sorry they didn't remove trachea
- Boswell believes that the brain was so torn up it would not have shown a tract
- question arises as to who wrote up the description of the head measurements - Boswell worked on the chest while Humes did the head - Boswell doesn't think Humes did any writing
- Boswell doesn't remember exactly how many photos were taken and of what areas
- body remained prone during autopsy - was not moved to determine angle of entry
- not sure what happened when they examined brain - if any pieces were cut away, etc.
- Boswell would rather not view the X-rays and photo again
- Boswell and Humes have remained friends - apparently Humes had visited with Boswell after A. Purdy's telephone call - his story was altered