

23 January 1969

Mr. Bud Fensterwald
927 15th St. N.W. Suite 1108
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Fensterwald,

Thank you very much for your note of the 21st and for the special delivery copy of the panel's report on the autopsy photographs and X-rays. At first glance, it appears to be a skillfully constructed, carefully worded document. It is noteworthy, however, that the panel does not address itself to the specific points of "continuing controversy and speculation" which moved Dr. Boswell to suggest the exercise.

Although the panel examined CE 399, the stretcher bullet, it made no comment on the well-known objections against this intact, undeformed projectile as the agent of all the non-fatal wounds sustained by two men. The panel viewed the Zapruder film but made no comment on the force and momentum with which the body was thrust back and to the left upon impact of the fatal head shot.

The panel claims to identify the upper half of a circular wound whose appearance is said to be "characteristic of that of the exit wound of a bullet." That this conclusion was drawn on the basis of a photograph or photographs is all the more remarkable when one recalls that the Parkland Hospital doctors--who were unusually familiar with gunshot wounds--saw no "exit" characteristics when they viewed the same wound on the actual body but, on the contrary, explicitly identified it as an entrance wound in contemporaneous statements and reports. I should certainly like to have Dr. Cyril Wecht's opinion on the photograph(s) in question.

The panel claims that the entrance wound in the back is $3\frac{1}{2}$ centimeters higher than the so-called exit wound at the site of the tracheotomy incision. This would produce a downward trajectory of no more than 15° . Yet the angle from the sixth floor window at the time that the President was already reacting to a gunshot wound was at least 25° , according to the official calculations made by the FBI and accepted by the Warren Commission. Even more important is the demonstration, in Robert Forman's paper, that a bullet transiting between the two wounds in question, if it did not strike bone, could only have traveled on a horizontal track and therefore had to be fired at street level or very slightly higher.

Still more important is the panel's verification of the location of the entrance wound as 14 cm. or $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches below the right mastoid process. It is clear from Forman's monograph that this very measurement proves that the bullet actually struck the President $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches below the right mastoid process and, therefore, in the same position as indicated by the holes in the coat and shirt and on the autopsy face-sheet--considerably below the tracheotomy incision.

The panel proceeds to state that the bullet holes in the clothing are situated 12 cm. below the top of the coat collar and 14 cm. below the top of the shirt collar. I trust that they did not mean to suggest that the upper edge of the shirt collar lay at the right mastoid process when the shot struck. In the absence of any comment by the panel, I can only conclude that the members found it impossible to account for the discrepancy, and that the conflict remains no less unresolved than when it was first brought to public attention in September 1964.

Yours sincerely,


Sylvia Meagher

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cc Dr. Wecht et al