

CONFIDENTIAL

Fred t. Newcomb

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4640 Noble Avenue
Sherman Oaks, California
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June 5, 1972

Mr. Richard Kleindist
Acting Attorney General
United States
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C.

Dear General:

A continuing controversy has developed, as you may know, regarding the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy.

With the June publication of "Resident & Staff Physicians, May 1972" further public debate regarding the autopsy will ensue.

On January 7, 1972, Dr. John Lattimer, under terms of an agreement reached between the Kennedy family and the U.S. Government, was allowed to review the autopsy materials at the U. S. Archives in Washington, D.C.

In his article, Dr. Lattimer mentions seeing a note attached to a roll of film taken at this autopsy:

"There was also a roll of 120 film which had been spoiled by unrolling it in the light and a notation that this had been done deliberately by one of the agents present." (1)

Pages 45 and 47
"Resident & Staff Physicians, May 1972"
published by College of Physicians
and Surgeons, Columbia University

(1) See attached xerox

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It has already been noted in a previous 16 page report, issued January 16, 1969, by Doctors William H. Carnes, Russell S. Fisher, Russell H. Morgan and Alan R. Moritz (referred to as the Ramsey Clark Panel Review) that several other x-rays and photographs, taken at this autopsy, were either blank, over-exposed or damaged. (2)

This photographic record, made by the medical pathologists at Bethesda Naval Hospital on the evening of November 22, 1963, is of crucial importance to support the conclusions reached by the Warren Commission. Unfortunately the Commission did not choose to view these photographs and x-rays, and this, in the words of Commission Member John J. McCloy is "one thing I would do over again. I would insist on those photographs and x-rays having been produced before us." (C.B.S. News Inquiry, The Warren Report, broadcast Wednesday, June 28, 1967. Transcript, page 14.)

Since this note is not part of any investigative file but rather is a memorandum for the record attached to a photographic document, I think the complete text should be made public. The actual photographs and x-rays, I understand, will remain withheld from research under terms of the letter of agreement of October 29, 1966 between Lawson B. Knott, Jr., and Burke Marshall. Citation made to 44 U.S.C. 397.

Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552, I respectfully request release of the full text of the note referred to by Dr. Lattimer as attached to the roll of 120 film, and the name of the agent or agents responsible for this, reportedly, deliberate destruction of these historic public documents.

Thank you for your prompt attention to my request.

Sincerely,

Fred T. Newcomb

FTN:mkn
Enclosures

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CC: Mr. Thomas Rees
Congressman, State of California
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Mark G. Eckhoff
Legislative, Judicial and Diplomatic Records Division
National Archives and Records Service
General Services Administration
Washington, D.C. 20408

2. In it's report, the 1968 Panel said, "Due to lack of contrast...and lack of clarity of detail...photographs 1,2,44 and 45...the only conclusions (that could be reached)..." (Page 7). (X-rays) "film #1 had been damaged in two small regions by what appears to be the heat from a spot light." (Page 12)

...evidence visible on the
...to indicate which
...of entry" or "exit,"
...direction the bullet was
...case?

...downward angle of the alleged
...through the neck (which the Warren
...concluded was from "back-to-
...enough to be compatible with
...neck, or was it more "parallel-
...as shown in the official sche-
...gram" in the Warren Commission
... (Fig. 1)

...possible that the above neck
...could have been inflicted from in
...from either side?

...the positions of the bullet holes in
...of the body and in the back of the
...ad shirt) so far apart as to be irrecon-

...there any evidence, such as wounds,
...marks or tracks of metal fragments run-
...any direction other than "back to
...n President Kennedy's head or body,
...from either side, or from the front, to
...that a third bullet might have struck
...so, might it have come from the "gras-
...n" on his right, from the infield of
...Plaza on the left, or from the railroad
...s to his front?

...the extent and character of the
...ad skull "wounds-of-exit" severe enough
...compatible with those expected to be

The Restricted Materials

The restricted materials viewed at this examination consisted of large color prints, plus black and white prints, and color transparencies thereof, as follows:

- (a) The head viewed from above (10 prints).
- (b) The head viewed from the right and above to include part of the face, neck, shoulder and upper chest (9 prints).
- (c) The head and neck viewed from the left side (7 prints).
- (d) The head viewed from behind (4 prints).
- (e) The cranial cavity with brain removed (4 prints).
- (f) The back of the body including neck (4 prints).
- (g) The brain viewed from below after its removal (4 transparencies). The brain from above, three views. Black and white negatives of these same views of the brain were also present.

The quality of almost all of these photographs was good, and in the very few instances where one photograph was slightly out of focus, a similar view usually was in focus. The 4 x 5 color transparencies were the sharpest of all, and provided the clue as to the proper orientation of the photos of the empty brain case, which were otherwise confusing. There was also a roll of "120" film which had been spoiled by unrolling it in the light and a nota-

tion that this had been done deliberately by one of the agents present. There was no explanation of why the agent had done this, and one could only speculate that either the agent did not realize that photographs were being taken to assist in preparing an accurate autopsy report, or that he thought the photographer was not authorized to take such photographs.

There was also one 4 x 5 transparency which had been spoiled by overexposure, but with no clue as to what it was supposed to show. There was also one surplus film-pack of color film which appeared to be unexposed and unused.

In addition to the color and black and white

X-ray film No. 2 had two d lines on it which did not affect

The President's Clothing

The suit-coat, shirt, necktie with its associated paddings which he was wearing at the time were examined in detail, along with macro-photographs of the relevant parts of these.

The numbers of all of the material examined were checked against the list of items examined by the men who did the autopsy and the list signed by the members of the Panel and no omissions were noted though there were some differ-