

Forgery Claim On JFK Photos Called 'False'

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The House Assassinations Committee's chief counsel yesterday termed "false" a claim that four autopsy photographs of John F. Kennedy are forgeries.

Robert F. Groden, a photo-optics technician hired by the committee, says he uncovered evidence of forgery through "visual inspection" and X-rays of the photographs of the slain president, according to the Baltimore Sun.

But Robert F. Blakey, who was the disbanded committee's chief counsel, said in a telephone interview that "our panel [of photographic experts] considered everything he had to say and rejected it."

"Bob is a nice guy," Blakey said. "But he is not competent to make a judgment on whether a photograph has been altered."

"It's simply not true. The suggestion that the committee would participate in a cover-up is absurd."

Groden could not be reached for comment.

Blakey said the committee concluded that Kennedy's assassination in 1963 in Dallas probably was a conspiracy involving two gunmen. But, Blakey said, "there is just too much evidence coming together to prove that the president was not hit by the third bullet [from a second gunman]."

Blakey said the autopsy photographs were authenticated by the committee's panel of photograph analysts.

The Baltimore newspaper quoted Groden as saying that his evidence "raises grave doubts about the authenticity" of the materials on which the House committee relied.

The photographs he referred to are two black-and-white snapshots of the



ROBERT F. GRODEN

... says autopsy pictures were altered

back of Kennedy's head and the same photos in color.

Groden's statement, which is to be included as a dissenting appendix in the final version of the House committee's report to be released later this month, suggests the possibility of an exit wound in the back of Kennedy's head.

The Warren Commission and other investigations concluded that the only shots that hit Kennedy came from the rear.

But Groden contends a photo showing part of the back of Kennedy's head, containing a small entry wound, was inserted over that of a massive exit wound in the back of his head in an apparent attempt to conceal evidence of a shot from the front.

Blakey scoffed at the claim. "He [Groden] says [the forgery] was made by some sort of matting technique," Blakey pointed out. "But how does he know what was hidden under the mat? That's just one example of Bob's willingness to jump beyond the evidence . . . We had the experts on our photographic panel look at those photos using a variety of techniques. They're not fake."