

September, 1977

Dear Dr Lattimer,

Please excuse this belated acknowledgement of your 12 page monograph, "President Kennedy's Spine Hit By First Bullet," co-authors E. B. Scheisinger and H. Houston M.D.s, reprinted from Bulletin of the N.Y. Academy of Medicine, April 1977 - all four copies which arrived on four different dates in identical manilla envelopes containing only monograph reprints. The first envelope is postmarked July 11, '77, N.Y.; the second and third are postmarked July 22, '77, N.Y.; the fourth Aug. 2, '77, N.Y. The first, second, and third were addressed to me at my home address in the Bronx on typewritten labels and were forwarded to me in Provincetown, Mass. The fourth was addressed to me in Provincetown on a different and handwritten label. How did the writer know I could be reached on Cape Cod and obtain the street and house number? If you can solve this puzzle please send the solution to the Bronx to which I will return after Labor Day. And accept my apology for my handwritten letter; I have no typewriter here.

As for the monograph, I read it with dismay. The world moves, truth rises like the sun, but Lattimer, alas, labors like Sisyphus ~~truth~~ to give scientific validity, in the face of fact, reason, and history, to the arbitrary and dishonest finding of the government accomplices after the fact to murder, the late, discredited, and unlamented Warren Commission: that all Kennedy's wounds originated from a point behind him. A shameful waste of talent in an ignoble cause!

Essentially the monograph is a weak attempt to explain away the incontrovertible evidence of the Zapruder film, not to speak of other corroboratory evidence, of a right frontal head shot, by humbo jumbo about "opisthonus-like stiffening" of Kennedy's body "following the brain wound" which, in your "opinion," was "aided by the retrograde recoil caused by the jet of heavy brain substance which flew out the front of the head," and which "snapped the head backward, similar to the recoil effect produced by a jet engine, and also drove the president's head to the left." And in support of this juvenile pseudoscience you duplicated the ridiculous melon experiments of Nobel physicist Alvarez and his foolish colleague Hoch.

It was all for nothing. Didn't you know that before you wrote your monograph, Dan Rather, a worthy example of prostitute video journalism, had explained the violent backward and left thrust of Kennedy's body as the wifely endeavor of Ms Kennedy to shield her husband from further harm by pulling him to her?

But it is much ado about little, is it not? Your purpose in this latest reconstruction of evidence is to disabuse your learned medical colleagues of "A widely held misconception ... that the first bullet to strike the president, which traversed his neck, did not cause a lethal wound." That bullet "which entered the back of his lower neck on the right side and preceded the second bullet which destroyed his brain." And you fluffed out your account with diagrams, drawings, and reference to medical literature.

Piffle! Because none of it is related in your monograph, in anyway, to a large body of evidence which, taken in sum, indicates manipulation and suppression of medicoballistic evidence. In your monograph no reference is made, for example, to a sequence of events beginning immediately after Kennedy was pronounced dead in Parkland Hospital in Dallas with the writing of a death certificate by Dr. Clark, in the presence of presidential physician, Dr. Burkley, which described the cause of death as a gunshot wound of the head and omitted reference to other wounds; and continuing through a then developments to instruction to the autopsy surgeons in Bethesda not to dissect the neck wound as testified to by autopsy surgeon, Col. Finck, in the trial of Clay Shaw for conspiracy to assassinate president Kennedy; the writing of a second death certificate on the day following the autopsy, by Dr. Burkley, locating the back wound at the level of the seventh cervical vertebra, which is not the location given for that wound in the autopsy report included in the Warren Report, and by you; the omission of both death certificates from the Warren Report; your deliberate refusal to look at a copy of the Burkley certificate obtained from the National Archives where it was deposited by the Warren Commission, when I offered it to you in the presence of others following your talk on the Lincoln and Kennedy assassinations at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York some years ago; and so on.

Of all this and more your monograph is innocent. Worse. Before you wrote, there came to light in the Johnson Library in Austin, Texas, the missing transcript of a broadcast news confer-

ence held at Parkland Hospital two hours after Kennedy died, under official White House auspices according to the transcript. Drs. Clark and Perry answered questions about their efforts to prolong Kennedy's life. Dr. Clark who had already given Dr. Burkley to take with him to Washington the death certificate which made no reference to a neck wound, declined to discuss that wound; he said he had concentrated on the head wound. Dr. Perry answered reporters' insistent questions about the anterior neck wound, describing it several times as a wound of entry, thus corroborating the evidence of the Zapruder film of a frontal gunshot of which Dr. Perry had no knowledge when he answered reporters' questions.

I suggest that instead of pursuing your misconceived and misleading experiments you address your mind and talents to the solution of the mysteries enveloping the medical evidence in the assassination of President Kennedy. You might, for instance, develop the indication in the declassified transcripts of Warren Commission executive sessions of an autopsy report different from the "official" one in the Warren Report. Or you might ponder the significance of the instructions to FBI agents Liebert and O'Neill to await the arrival of Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base, accompany Kennedy's body, and look for bullets; and the connection of those instructions, the receipt they executed, now reposing in the National Archives, for a "missile" removed from Kennedy's body by Dr. Humes, and the autopsy report which states no missile was found in the president's body; and the dilemmas.

That way lies truth. Your way does violence to the first rule of medical practice: do no harm.

Eagerly,
Thomas Stamm