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Bay Area History of Medicine Club

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NEW INFORMATION FROM THE JFK REVIEW BOARD ON THE JFK AUTOPSY EVIDENCE

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Summary

Created by an act of congress during the groundswell reaction to Oliver Stone's popular film *JFK*, the Assassinations Records Review Board has directly and indirectly unearthed evidence of a cover up of JFK medical/autopsy evidence. Evidence has also emerged that suggests JFK's wounds are incompatible with a sole assassin firing from the alleged sniper's perch, which was above and behind JFK on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the Texas School Book Depository in Dallas.

Some things are known for certain:

\* In 1967 JFK's pathologists and the autopsy photographer signed an affidavit declaring that all the autopsy photographs they had taken were in the official inventory at the National Archives. All the signatories, as well as others, have testified under oath to subsequent investigators that autopsy photographs are missing. One of the signatories admitted to the JFK Review Board under oath that he informed a superior officer the affidavit was inaccurate, but signed it after being told by that superior officer: "Sign it."

\*HSCA testimony by several autopsy witnesses that autopsy photographs were missing was not followed up or further investigated by the HSCA. Most of the testimony in which witnesses described missing photographs was withheld from the public, and not mentioned by the HSCA in its report. This evidence only emerged through the efforts of the JFK Review Board.

\*In 1978 the House Select Committee staffers falsified the statements of the autopsy witnesses they interviewed in order to give false validation to disputed JFK autopsy photographs that showed the rear of JFK's skull at autopsy fully intact. The once secret statements (and diagrams), instead, contradicted the photographs - overwhelmingly, the witnesses stated that the rear of JFK's skull was severely damaged, and some witnesses themselves suggested photographic tampering.

Some things are very likely to be true:

It is likely that the very autopsy photographs that would settle long-standing controversies about the nature of JFK's wounds and the ballistics of his wounding have disappeared. According to credible witness accounts from experienced physicians both at Dallas and at the autopsy, the back of JFK's skull sustained severe damage in a manner that is probably incompatible with someone firing from Oswald's position.

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JFK's PATHOLOGISTS AND THE AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHER SIGNED A FALSE AFFIDAVIT IN 1967 PREPARED BY THE U.S. JUSTICE DEPARTMENT DECLARING THERE WERE NO MISSING PHOTOGRAPHS. THEY SWORE TO THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE IN 1977 AND THE JFK REVIEW BOARD IN 1997 THAT PHOTOGRAPHS THEY TOOK, INCLUDING IMAGES OF THE INTERIOR OF JFK'S CHEST AND IMAGES OF HIS SKULL, WERE MISSING FROM THE "COMPLETE" INVENTORY AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES.

Following their examination of JFK's autopsy X-rays and photographs, the President's autopsy pathologists, James H. Humes, MD and J. Thornton Boswell, MD, and the chief autopsy photographer, Mr. John Stringer, signed an affidavit on 11/10/66. Apparently prepared by the U.S. Justice Department, the affidavit declared, in part: "The X-rays and photographs described and listed above include all the X-rays and photographs taken by us during the autopsy, and we have no reason to believe that any other photographs and X-rays were made during the autopsy." Prior to that examination, they had never seen the autopsy photographs before, and they had only seen the X-rays once before - on 11/22/63, the night of JFK's autopsy.

In his Warren Commission testimony, Dr. Humes described the taking of images of the interior of JFK's chest as well images of JFK's skull wound that are not in the complete inventory now. Under oath to the House Select Committee in

1977, Drs. Humes and Boswell, and Mr. Stringer swore that photographs they took of the interior of JFK's chest were never seen in the official inventory.

Under oath to the HSCA, JFK's third pathologist, Pierre Finck, MD, claimed he had taken photographs of the entrance wound in JFK's skull, from the inside and outside to show the "beveling" features that are characteristic of an entrance wound. Dr. Finck produced a contemporaneous note he has written to a superior officer in which he specifically mentioned these photographs. Under oath to the HSCA, Dr. Finck bemoaned that the skull images he took are not in the official inventory.

The JFK Review Board asked Mr. Stringer why he signed the affidavit in 1966 knowing it was false. He responded that he told his commanding officer the affidavit was wrong, but was told, "Sign it." The JFK Review Board asked neither Drs. Humes nor Boswell why they signed the affidavit.

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE WITHHOLDS FROM PUBLIC RELEASE SEVERAL INTERVIEWS IN WHICH JFK'S PATHOLOGISTS AND JFK'S AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHER CLAIMED AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHS ARE MISSING.

Several of the HSCA interviews in which JFK's autopsy physicians declared they believed autopsy photographs were missing were classified, although they were non-sensitive. They were only released by the efforts of the JFK Review Board.

TWO NEW WITNESSES HAVE STATED THAT IN 1963 THEY SAW JFK AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHS THAT ARE NO LONGER IN WHAT IS DESCRIBED AS THE COMPLETE INVENTORY

The HSCA interviewed witness Robert Knudsen, who was Chief White House photographer in 1963. He testified that he developed seven sets of autopsy photographs which are not accounted for. He also said that he saw an autopsy image in which a probe had been passed between JFK's back wound and his throat wound, and that the probe entered the back wound at a lower point than it exited the throat wound. The HSCA made no mention of Mr. Knudsen's observations in its report, and it withheld the interview from the public by classifying it. The JFK Review Board declassified this interview.

Dr. Robert Karnei, a Bethesda pathologist who witnessed the autopsy, though not as a member of the surgical team, testified to the HSCA that he recalled photographs were taken with JFK's body laying on its side with probes being passed through it. This interview was withheld from the public, and declassified by the JFK Review Board.

Sandra Spencer was a Naval Photographic Center employee in 1963. She testified to the JFK Review Board that she saw JFK autopsy images that are different than those now in what is said to be the complete inventory at the National Archives. She claimed the film that she used to develop the autopsy photographs she saw in 1963 is different than the film on which JFK's current autopsy images appear.

THE HSCA FALSELY REPORTED THAT WITNESSES TO JFK'S AUTOPSY VALIDATED AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHS SHOWING THAT JFK SUFFERED NO REARWARD SKULL WOUND AND, THEREFORE, THAT THEY REFUTED DALLAS PHYSICIANS WHO HAD DESCRIBED A LARGE REARWARD SKULL WOUND. THE INTERVIEWS THE HSCA CONDUCTED PROVING THIS ASSERTION WERE CLASSIFIED, AND ONLY RELEASED BY THE JFK REVIEW BOARD. THE NOW DECLASSIFIED STATEMENTS, AS WELL AS THE DIAGRAMS THE INTERVIEWEES PREPARED, SUPPORT THE TESTIMONIES OF PARKLAND PHYSICIANS THAT JFK HAD A LARGE REARWARD SKULL DEFECT THAT DOES NOT APPEAR IN THE AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHS.

TWO FBI AGENTS WHO WITNESSED JFK'S AUTOPSY SWORE TO THE JFK REVIEW BOARD THAT THE AUTOPSY IMAGES SHOWING THE REAR OF JFK'S SCALP INTACT DO NOT SHOW THE WOUND THEY SAW ON THE NIGHT OF THE AUTOPSY. BOTH DESCRIBED FAR GREATER DAMAGE THAN IS APPARENT IN THE IMAGES, AND BOTH OFFERED AS A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION THAT THE PHOTOGRAPHS MIGHT HAVE BEEN 'DOCTORED.'

\*In 1992 the recently fired editor of *JAMA*, George D. Lundberg, MD, withheld information that he had that Charles Crenshaw, MD, a published Warren Commission critic, did indeed attend JFK during failed resuscitation efforts in Dallas. Lundberg let stand statements in *JAMA* that Crenshaw's accounts of JFK's wounds were not credible because Crenshaw was not present during JFK's resuscitation. Lundberg's failure to do so left *JAMA* readers misled, and caused the American Medical Association to pay Crenshaw over \$200,000.00 to quietly settle Crenshaw's libel suit out of court.