

1/11/72

Mr. Fred Graham
The New York Times
1920 L St., NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Fred,

When I phoned you Sunday it was not because you had not kept your word, to call me back as soon as you had written your story. It was, rather, a concern for your integrity, for I have not considered you personally some kind of literary whore but an underinformed reporter rather such the captive of sources he trusted, overwhelmed by the offer of an important scoop to the point where he did not ask himself whether he was being used in a way he might later come to regard as not to his credit, and because before you were of the age of awareness I learned the pressures management and ownership can apply to reporters from living with them.

This is the third day and you have not yet called. I have been home almost constantly. There are certain quite serious errors in your piece that you do not attribute. I assume they represent precisely the ignorance against which I tried to caution you and because of which I made you the errors I would think you would consider generous. I do not pretend my interest was in your personally. It was no more than a desire to in some way bring an end to the nonstop lying about the political assassinations and what is so little understood if, indeed, even thought of, their consequences. And it was also in the hope that the major papers, particularly your institution, might for once on this subject rise above the level of Max Sturmer. But if the lessons of The Pentagon Papers has not been learned, perhaps it is a futility.

Aside from being an experienced reporter, you are also a lawyer. I therefore ask you to reread your third graph and ask if one need have acquired more wisdom than can be expected of a high-school freshman to know that it just can't be true regardless of what Lattimer may have seen. How can any pictures, X-rays, clothes, braces, bandages, shoes, socks, comb or leather belt (and does this not tell you that I have pictures you have not seen, as I offered to show you?) in an way establish one way or the other "that Lee Harvey Oswald fired all the shots that struck the President"? Or what is worse, your selection of the direct quote, "that they 'eliminate any doubt completely'."

This is propaganda, not reporting. I would have hoped it below you.

I will not now take the time for a full analysis of your piece. I don't think you would welcome it, my purpose is not to embarrass you, and I almost cut a thumb off Saturday, so typing is uncomfortable. There are a few things I am taking this means of asking you face. Unless you are what I do not want to believe and I am making no such accusation, I think you would want to be aware of the potential of the situation you have created, and at the same time, I am withdrawing my offer to give you access to what which I have obtained that was not in the Warren Commission files.

You say that the Ken Edys (whose partisan I do not pretend to be) denied the Commission and its staff access to the autopsy film. And you say, not for the first time (I remind you despite my warning about the first time) that the Ken Edys are responsible for the suppressions of evidence. In all aspects each of these things is false. You give no source.

In a signed piece, unless the standards have changed, you therefore say this on your own authority. As you know, I have written a book on this subject, including this material. I now have no choice but to add a chapter on your scoop. I am asking your authority for these statements, with the intent of quoting you.

With all those to whom you have access, I am distressed that you did not do what most reporters would have done, asked why an expert on piss, not in any way an issue in the assassination or its investigation, was given exclusive access to evidence he could not have understood had he the disposition to - what amounts to an exclusive copyright on what the law defines as public information - when others and those qualified were denied this access. I expect in due time to read the answer in another scoop. I expect it not to be explicit.

Now that you have, extensively and repetitiously, fixed in the public mind the utterly false notion that the Kennedys were responsible for the ~~assassination~~ ^{and assassinations}, what would you expect to be the result if one who can understand the pictures and X-rays were to see them and come out and say Lattimer is wrong, that they do not support the official story? Why, those terrible Kennedys were even more terrible, they lie the truth about their most famous. And Hoover? He becomes even more saintly.

Having had the benefit of hearing Lattimer before a friendly questioner and at some length, I cannot avoid the belief that one of the reasons you planned me was your knowledge that by his excesses he might blow the whole bit. You made clear he intended to focus more than you did on that rubbish about the brace. When he was not subject to your restraining influence, he did exactly what you told me he intended to do, went crazy with it, for no better reason than to support his crazy, early lies and fictions of lesser disrepute.

For your future reporting, you should know that a bruise is not typical of a wound of entry. Exit wounds also can show bruising. The distinction seems to be in scorching. Or have I helped you with your next effort at propaganda?

In any event, when it is less uncomfortable I plan to write you a series of questions for my own writing. You have given me no choice. I anticipate the reasons you may give, if you respond at all, for declining to answer some. So you can give this some thought, I will be asking you about at least two of your stories (to date) and you should understand that the number of possible sources is in each case limited.

Meanwhile, if you are off on a "get Kennedy" kick, or are unconcerned about being part of one, congratulations on your success. It may not have occurred to you, but if someone were contriving a famous-last-words situation, you have done his job for him. The last living male Kennedy in political life has just validated the Warren Report he has never read, with evidence he has never seen. Coincidence or not, these were Bobby's last words on the subject (San Fernando State College). And, of course, should a critic say the opposite of what Lattimer did, which is inevitable, whose political life is ruined?

What you intended, you alone can know. What you did is ask questioning. I can only hope for your sake you did not intend it. You can't now catch up with the harm you have done, even if you have the disposition, and in this case you can't have the traditional fig-leaf, that you were only following normal journalistic procedures. You followed none.

Sincerely,

Harold Weinberg

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FRAUD!

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Doctor Inspects Kennedy X-Rays

By FRED P. GRAHAM

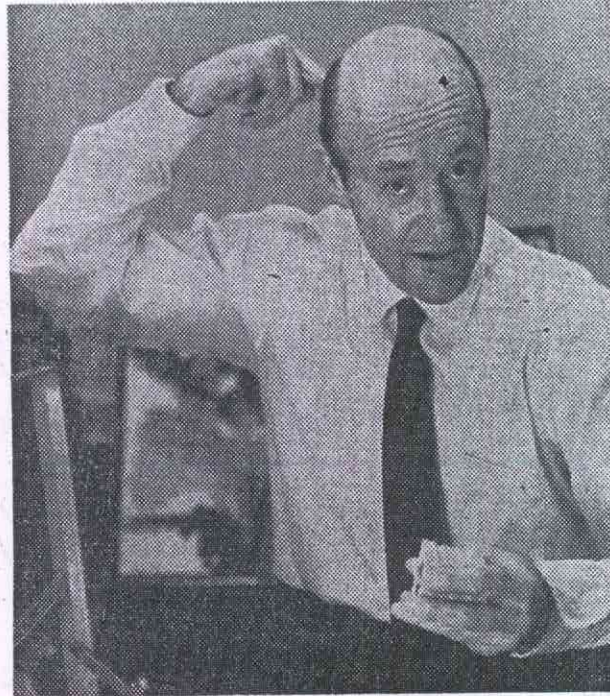
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8—The family of President Kennedy, which previously allowed only representatives of the Government to inspect pictures and X-rays of the assassinated leader's body, has now begun to let interested medical specialists see the items.

Dr. John K. Lattimer, a New York physician who has written and lectured extensively about the assassination, became the first person not under Government auspices to see the items when he examined them yesterday at the National Archives here.

In an interview last night, he said that they "eliminate any doubt completely" about the validity of the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald fired all the shots that struck the President.

The commission, headed by Earl Warren, then the Chief Justice of the United States, found that when Kennedy was killed on Nov. 22, 1963, while riding in a motorcade in Dallas, Oswald did all the shooting,



The New York Times/George Tames

Dr. John K. Lattimer with photo slides used in research

firing from a building behind and above the President.

The 65 X-rays, color transparencies and black-and-white negatives taken in the autopsy have been a focus of controversy because the Kennedy

family previously guarded them so closely that they were not allowed to be seen even by members and staff officials of the Warren Commission, which was appointed by President

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Doctor Says Kennedy Items Uphold the Warren Report



The autopsy sketch shows path of the bullet. According to Dr. Lattimer, the point of entry was slightly higher.

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Johnson to investigate the assassination.

Critics of the Warren Commission have asserted that the items could disprove its conclusion that the President was struck by only two bullets, both from the rear.

Unofficial Explanation

It has been unofficially explained that the photographs were suppressed to avoid anguish to the family of the President, whose head was partly destroyed by the second fatal bullet.

Dr. Lattimer said that the wound that destroyed most of the right side of the brain was "horrible" and that the pictures should never be made public.

But he concluded that the Warren Commission might have made a stronger case, if the staff personnel who prepared its report had had access to the pictures and X-rays. He said the items make the following crucial points:

First, the initial bullet passed through the President's body at a distinctly downward angle, more than was shown in the schematic drawings released by the Warren report, he said. The artist who portrayed the path of the projectile into the back of President Kennedy's neck and out the base of his throat made it seem to be traveling almost parallel to the ground, while the pictures show that the front hole is considerably lower than the one in back.

Theory of Grassy Knoll

Some critics have asserted that this shot was fired from the front, by a second assassin hiding on a grassy knoll facing the Presidential car. Dr. Lattimer said that the front hole was so far below the back one that "if anyone were to have shot him from the front, they would have to be squatting on the floor of the car in front of him."

Second, photographs of the wound in the back of the neck show "what appears to be a circular bruise which is typical of wounds of entry," he said.

Third, the X-rays prove that the front and back holes were made by the same bullet, which passed through the President's body and left two tiny flakes of metal and air in the tissues along the path between the two

holes.

Some critics have suggested that the two holes were made by separate bullets—one fired from the front and one from the rear.

Views the Bullet

Dr. Lattimer was also allowed to see other items that have been shown to only a few persons but have not been absolutely hidden from nongovernment experts. These included the President's bloody and bullet-punctured colthing, the sole bullet found after the shooting, and the President's back brace.

One final item, which was mentioned only in passing in the hearings conducted by Chief Justice Warren and other members of the commission, appears to have little importance in the slaying, but gives a revealing sight into the discomfort that Kennedy suffered as a result of the back injury he suffered in World War II.

The item is a knitted elastic Ace bandage.

Dr. Lattimer said he had learned from physicians who gave emergency treatment to the President that he wore this bandage in a tightly wrapped figure 8, through his crotch and around back of his buttocks. Its purpose was to help immobilize his lower spine, but

Dr. Lattimer said that it could also have helped keep him upright after he was hit by the first bullet, so that he was exposed to the second.

Dr. Lattimer, 57 years old, is the chairman of the department of urology at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons. He became a student of assassinations by firearms after he observed numerous wounds as an Army doctor in World War II.

He has written a series of articles in medical journals, describing experiments he has conducted with rifles, scopes and ammunition similar to those used by Oswald.

His finding that a round from such a weapon would penetrate 47 inches of pine wood reinforces the Warren Commission's theory that the same bullet passed through President and seriously wounded John B. Connally, then Governor of Texas and now Secretary of the Treasury, who was riding in the car's jump seat, in front of the President.

Shortly after the assassination, the autopsy pictures and X-rays were given to the President's brother, the late Robert F. Kennedy, then the Attorney General. On Oct. 29, 1966, they were placed by the Kennedy family in the National Archives,

subject to a contract that denied access for the next five years to all but certain governmental bodies.

Finds Report Understated

The Archives' records show that only twice in that period did the Government ask to see the items. The first was when the physicians who performed the autopsy authenticated the pictures, and the second was in 1968, when a suit was brought to force disclosure of the materials. Ramsey Clark, who was Attorney General at that time, fended off the suit by appointing a panel of four private pathologists to examine the materials and describe them in a written report.

The panel's report was couched in technical language, which according to Dr. Lattimer, understated the extent to which the items corroborate the Warren report.

Under the contract between the Archives and the Kennedy family, only "recognized experts in the field of pathology or related areas of science or technology" may see the items, now that the initial five-year period has passed. These restrictions will continue so long as any of the President's immediate family live.

Others Under Study

Burke Marshall, deputy dean of the Yale Law School, is the family representative who decides which "recognized experts" will be admitted. So far he has granted only Dr. Lattimer's request, but he said last week that he was also considering requests from Dr. Cyril H. Wecht of Pittsburgh and Dr. John Nichols of the University of Kansas, pathologists who have written critically of the Warren Commission report, and from Dr. E. Forrest Chapman, the medical examiner of Wayne County, Mich.

Mr. Marshall said that, in granting or denying permission, he would not consider whether applicants were supporters or critics of the Warren report; but only if they had a serious historical purpose in seeing the material.

Some skeptics of the Warren Commission's findings were critical that Dr. Lattimer, a urologist, had been given first access to the material. Harold Weisberg, author of a series of critical works about the Warren report, termed Dr. Lattimer "an apologist for the Warren Commission" and asked, "What does a urologist know about bullet holes in human bodies?"