

AS:mln

MEMORANDUM

March 12, 1964

TO: Mr. J. Lee Frankin *elf*

FROM: Arlan Specter

SUBJECT: Interview of Autopsy Surgeons

On the afternoon of March 11, 1964, Joseph A. Ball, Esq., and I went to Bethesda Naval Hospital and interviewed Admiral C. B. Holloway, Commander James J. Humes and Commander "J" Thornton Boswell. The interview took place in the office of Admiral Holloway, who is the commanding officer of the National Naval Medical Center, and lasted from approximately 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Commander Humes and Commander Boswell, along with Lt. Col. Pierre A. Finck, who is currently in Panama, conducted the autopsy and Admiral Holloway was present at all times. They described their activities and findings in accordance with the autopsy report which had been previously submitted as Commission Report #77.

All three described the bullet wound on President Kennedy's back as being a point of entrance. Admiral Holloway then illustrated the angle of the shot by placing one finger on my back and the second finger on the front part of my chest which indicated that the bullet traveled in a consistent downward path, on the assumption that it emerged in the opening on the President's throat which had been enlarged by the performance of the tracheotomy in Dallas.

Commander Humes explained that they had spent considerable time at the autopsy trying to determine what happened to the bullet because they found no missile in the President's body. According to Commander Humes, the autopsy surgeons hypothesized that the bullet might have been forced out of the back of the President on the application of external heart massage after they were advised that a bullet had been found on a stretcher at Parkland Hospital.

Dr. Humes and Dr. Boswell were shown the Parkland report which describes the wound of the trachea as being "ragged", which they said was characteristic of an exit rather than an entrance wound. Dr. Humes and Dr. Boswell further said that it was their current opinions that the bullet passed in between two major muscle strands in the President's back and continued on a downward flight and exited through his throat. They noted, at the time of the autopsy, some bruising of the internal parts

of the President's body in that area but tended to attribute that to the trajectory at that time. Dr. Emsac and Dr. Roswell stated that after the bullet passed between the two strands of muscle, those muscle strands would resist any probing effort and would not disclose the path of the bullet to probing fingers, as the effort was made to probe at the time of the autopsy.

We requested that Dr. Emsac and Dr. Roswell prepare or have prepared drawings of the consequences of the shots on the President's body and head, and they also elaborated upon the facts set forth in their autopsy report.

Dictated from 11:30 to 11:45 a.m.