

Mr. Jeremy Gunn, ex. dir. *Or Masson*  
ARRB  
600 E St, NW, 2d floor  
Washington, DC 20530

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Dear Jeremy,

I begin my 56th wedding anniversary as before reading Lardner's story in yesterday's Post I would not have expected to, full of questions and pronounced uneasiness about your autopsy report, which you said I'd get and I do not have - and which is at least four months later in appearing.

The board was confronted with the earlier perjury of one of the autopsy prosecutors and it seems to have done nothing about it when it deposed him. Or it altered the deposition testimony it is releasing because Lardner is a first-rate reporter and would not have missed that while being distracted by the reference to Finck's notes. (He also does not mention what as you know I reported in Post Mortem, Finck's New Orleans testimony that Admiral Galloway ordered them not to do a complete autopsy. (Or was it the admiral over Galloway? *Kenny? or Bonney?*)

As you also know, I brought to light in Post Mortem that ~~Humes~~ Humes swore during his Warren Commission testimony that he held in his hands his autopsy notes, as Specter asked him. Specter then stated that they would be part of Exhibit 397 and of CD 371. My search at the Archives disclosed that those notes were not in either permanent, official file and they are not published in Exhibit 397. The House assassinations committee also knew this, having learned it from Post Mortem, and it <sup>accepted</sup> ~~accited~~ Humes false swearing that he had destroyed his notes <sup>because</sup> ~~because~~ ~~cause~~ there was blood on them. (There in fact was blood and other body fluid on what it was not dared to be destroyed, the official autopsy body chart.) In addition, in Post Mortem I published, in facsimile, the Navy's covering record when it gave those notes to Admiral Burkley and the receipt for those notes and other materials. Or, those notes, which do not now exist according to all official records that are known, did exist at the time Humes was questioned before the Commission by Specter.

It likewise ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> not true that Humes or as Lardner says, any of the ~~autopsy~~ autopsy pathologists did not phone Dallas before completing the autopsy. I published this as early as in the first book on the subject, my Whitewash, which was completed in February, 1966, with the confirmatory testimony the Commission also published, and in NEVER AGAIN! I published the House assassinations committee's attempted assassination of the truth in publishing excerpts of what it had not published, its testimony by the autopsy radiologist. He persisted when asked repeatedly in stating that he was present in the autopsy room when from that room Humes phoned

Dr. Malcolm Perry, in Dallas. Dr. Charles Crenshaw, who had been in the Parkland emergency room and assisted in what was done there, wrote in his book about Perry's haggard appearance the next morning and that Perry attributed it to his inability <sup>to</sup> get enough sleep because of calls from Washington.

Because under the law this is required to be part of your permanent records and to be permanently available, I add that Dr. Perry is the cardiovascular surgeon who performed the tracheostomy at Parkland and then was called in to consult on Governor Connally's thigh wound, the other doctors fearing it might endanger his femoral artery. Perry told me that the wound was much too small to have been caused by even a small bullet, was caused by a slim fragment, was not a danger to the artery, <sup>and</sup> as went for about three inches just under the skin, an absolute impossibility in the official account and, with this also in Post mortem, known to the board staff at the least.

And, as the staff also knew, at the first LBJ press conference at the hospital as ~~soon~~ soon as the doctors ~~could~~ <sup>could</sup> clean up, when three reporters asked if the wound in the President's neck was from the front, three times he replied that it was and all three times he was confirmed by the chief of neurosurgery, Dr. Kemp Clark. (This was known to Humes before he wrote his report not only from Perry, which I <sup>believe</sup> cannot prove, but because it was in the Washington Post that Humes did read and was familiar with and cited other content of in his autopsy protocol.

Even if there had been blood on Finck's Notes, and there is no known indication that there was, he gave them to Humes and they also do not exist.

In short, you are confronted by perjury in the autopsy of the President when the assassination of any President is a de facto coup d'etat. Or, the board establishes that we are a banana republic, history's largest. *And accepted more perjury.*

From this Lardner story, and I repeat he is a first-rate reporter and is probably the best-informed reporter in the country on this matter, the board has not even attempted to reconcile contradictions in the official records of which it knew. <sup>Such</sup> ~~such~~ as the radical difference between the Commission's conclusions and the official certificate of death, which it had, did not include in the 10 million words of its 26 volumes of Report ~~and~~ then hid where it would never be sought, with the records it sent to be printed, from which I rescued it and other records from their official memory hole. These include the verification and approval of the President's own Navy physician for all that Humes certified he did that was wrong and for his turning in his notes. ~~Not~~ Admiral Burkley certified receipt of them and <sup>I</sup> now notice in this morning's local paper that Humes lied to your board in again swearing that he had burned them because of the blood on them. Yet the

board accepted his lie that he burned them despite the abundance of proofs, including receipts for them from the Bethesda commander to the President's physician to the head of the Secret Service White House detail and Humes' and Specter's statements at Humes' Commission testimony that he at that testimony held those notes in his hand.

Besides which, as the board staff, if not the board, knew from my NEVER AGAIN!, <sup>the pathologists knew</sup> as they should have in their training, the destruction of any autopsy records is strictly forbidden.

It is a gross lie that the board retails, and I now read from the AP's state-line story in our local paper, that Humes' claimed destruction of those notes was "to protect the privacy and the sensibilities of the president's family." Aside from the illegality of this and the multiple proofs that it is false, there is the fact that not only did Robert Kennedy ~~as~~ sign a no-restrictions autopsy authorization form but, as again your staff knew, if from no other source, from my Post Mortem the chapter, "Hades, Not Camelot," that he told Specter the Commission was free to use anything it felt it had to use.

There was no reason for Humes to believe that any of that autopsy material would ever be made public, would ever be publicly accessible. He burned his autopsy report not over Kennedy sensibilities but as soon as he knew that Oswald was dead and there would be no trial. It was then that he knew those notes could not be subpoenaed for trial and that they would remain in government possession, not in the tabloids. He lied to protect a knowingly false and fraudulent autopsy report and he and all others were completely silent when I published this years ago, after their propaganda super-spectacular in JAMA. Which also was silent when I exposed what it did as dishonest and incompetent propaganda.

When I heard that the board was deposing Humes and Boswell I sought a copy of the transcripts you are now releasing and your predecessor denied me copies under what it is not clear was a deliberately false invocation of an exemption to the Act which permits withholdings for law-enforcement purposes. When the board accepted and gave credence to Humes' perjury it quite obviously had no law-enforcement purpose in refusing copies to me. It feared what I could do with them, as is only in part indicated above.

It was the board's decision to be a part-time board and to see to it that it could not inform itself fully and properly. That did not prevent one member from making a prestigious speech in Maryland then enlarging that into an article in which he made his prejudices and his ignorance as well as partisanship a matter of lengthier record in The Maryland Law Review. I wrote a book-length commentary

on it and I sent the board a copy for its permanent records. I received <sup>a</sup> no denial of any kind, no refutation, and as I told the board, friends will be asking to see a copy in the board's permanent and public records and will be prepared to draw attention to it if that is suppressed to protect the reputation of the subject-matter ignoramus (who I suspect may have had something to do with the delay in the disclosure of this report).

I will also be sending copies of this to friends who are historians and sociologists, among others, of whom four are writing books right now, that I am helping. They will have this and they will have what is additionally scandalous if the commentary I filed on one of your members' disqualifying prejudices and his subject-matter <sup>ignorance</sup> is withheld.

There is also the board's <sup>out</sup> obligation to search and disclose all existing records. I offered the board access to a file cabinet full of <sup>documented</sup> appeals of the withholding of records the existence of which is established by other records or of improper withholdings from what had been disclosed. (I got about a third of a million pages in my FOIA lawsuits and I was asked to file those appeals for the record, I took a great amount of time to do that, and I want to what for me was considerable time and cost, but it was all wasted, <sup>I</sup> and I wasted all over again when the board had no interest in it.

Especially with this report so long delayed there should be records of conferences and on changes in it. I presume they are preserved and I will undertake to have access to them requested as soon as the board closes down.

This report is another national disgrace, another governmental cause for disillusionment and disenchantment with government, particularly of the young, and it is an additional indecency in blaming the ordered official failures in and with regard to the autopsy on the victims, on the Kennedy family. That is an outrage beyond belief. It disgraces the board, too.

(I have sought to distinguish between the board and its staff. Regardless, the ultimate responsibility is the board's anyway.)

What the board has done is collect all the assassination mythologies and trivias and done that with maximum publicity while largely ignoring the essence. It has taken time and spent money giving all the assassination nuts a field day and international attention while not following up on the leads in official records that it had in such sources as my books. Factual work without any theorizing was of no reported interest to any member but there was praise for a trashy book that was by a historian and was ridiculed in the Journal of American History, which most professional historians do get. With that vast collection of assassi-

nation trash and trivia, from published accounts now of millions of pages, what little there is that does relate to the assassination itself is now even more hopelessly lost, buried and beyond reasonable hope of retrieval.

One of the board members boasted on a Columbus, Ohio TV station shortly after his appointment that his ignorance was his greatest asset. It appears that in his service on the board he lost none of his beginning asset and <sup>he</sup> then shared it.

Because in the future others may be reading this and may not understand some of it, I add a few explanations.

CD was the Warren Commission's designation of its files, as Commission Documents. They are not identical with exhibits except where designated as exhibits.

There is a relationship that may be unknown to researchers of the future between the hiding of the death certificate by the Commission as well as its suppression from its consideration and records of the Parkland doctors' press conference and what Dr. Kerry said and repeated in it, with confirmation, and the disappearance of the autopsy notes, so I explain that.

Basic to the Commission's conclusions is the impossibility, that a single bullet caused all seven nonfatal wounds of both men because when nobody in the world was able to duplicate the shooting attributed to Oswald with three bullets it would have been more obviously impossible if more than three bullets were admitted. Three members of the Commission did not believe this, two <sup>absolutely</sup> and of them, Senator Richard Russell forced an executive session for September 18, 1965, just before the Report was to be issued. Although the Commission had agreed to make and keep a permanent record of its executive sessions it saw to it that there was no court reporter at that session and it then faked, and I mean this literally (and I published it in facsimile in Whitewash IV) a stenographic transcript. Senator Russell and Senator John Sherman Cooper never changed on this, never agreed to it, and both left records proving this. The five pages of talking paper Senator Russell prepared I could never find at the Archives. He was firm in his refusal to accept that and Senator Cooper left an eloquent oral history of this for the Russell archive at the University of Georgia. They were deceived into believing that what was not in any sense a compromise was a compromise and believing that, signed the Report.

In the made-up history of this imagined single shot the Commission had it entering the President's lower neck where it joined the shoulder on his <sup>right</sup> left, going through him without striking bone, exiting through his shirt collar and the knot of his tie, then entering Governor Connally's chest under his right armpit, demolishing five inches of his fourth rib, exiting under his right nipple, then smashing his ~~right wrist and hand into his chest, shot having it go three inches into his right thigh,~~

right wrist and from there somehow making it to and into his right thigh and going three or more inches into it but just under the skin. While losing virtually no metal despite the amount left in the Governor's chest, his wrist and his thigh.

<sup>But</sup> ~~Not~~ the death certificate does not locate that wound in the President's back where the ~~neck~~ <sup>neck</sup> joins the back. It states that wound was at the level of the third thoracic vertebra, which is much lower and is entirely on the back. An upward trajectory from there to exit the President's neck and then turn sharply downward and enter the governor's back is impossible.

Moreover, as published in Post Mortem, the only doctor who saw the President before his clothes were removed for the emergency procedures, Dr. Charles Carrico, testified to the Commission that the bullet hole in the front of the President's neck was above his shirt collar. I obtained from the FBI what the Commission did not publish, a Laboratory picture of the front of the President's shirt collar. There was no bullet hole in it. There were two slits that did not coincide, as would have been the case if caused by a bullet. There is no bullet hole on the necktie for that imagined bullet to have gone through its knot.

And Drs. Perry and Clark stated, the hole in the front of the President's neck was of entrance.

I now offer an opinion. When Dr. Humes had every reason to expect he would be subpoenaed to testify when Oswald was tried he did not dare say in his autopsy protocol what he should not hope to have believed on cross examination.

But once Oswald was killed <sup>by him</sup> and he knew there would be no trial, no cross-examination, he did not have that to worry about and he testified to the Commission that it was after Oswald was killed that he destroyed the original of his autopsy report, Not the notes, the holograph of the report.

I have published all of the foregoing, with official documentation, and in all the years since then I have had no denial, no attempt at refutation, no letter or call complaining that I was unfair or inaccurate, and with Drs. Humes and Boswell, when I published my first book for general distribution I sent a copy to each, asked each to agree to an interview, and neither ever responded.

The people, encouraged by the Act and by the board's publicity campaign, expected much of the board, more than it could deliver, but what the board has done is add to the disillusion and disenchantment. If the board did not know it was being lied to it was incompetent and ignorant. <sup>is over</sup> If it did know, it disgraced itself and the nation. And if I am wrong in any of this I solicit refutation or rebuttal. *To which I will respond.*

This again tells those who do not trust the government not to trust it.

And with this ~~it~~ they should not.

Sincerely, Harold Weisberg

*Harold*