PATHOLOGIST FINALLY SEES JOHN KENNEDY AUTOPSY REPORT: WOUNDS SHOW THERE HAD TO BE MORE THAN ONE AUSASSIN.

JOHN COVERT

(AFS) - You'd think people would listen to a mar like Cyril Wecht.

He's a forecsic patholipist - a person with degrees in both law and medicine He's Research Professor of Law and Director, institute of Forensic Sciences at Duquesne University in Pilisburgh; and a Clinical Assistant Professor of Pathology at the University of Pittsburgh Medical School, He's also a recent past president of both the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and of the American College of Legal Medicine Besides that, he's the Coroner of Allegheny County (Pittsburgh)

But when the discussion turns to the charges of Wecht of discrepancies in the Warren Commission Report on the assassination of

President John Kennedy, persisten allence is the official response

This August, Wecht became the second non-governmental medical expert allowed to view the items from the autopsy of President Kenpedy stored at the National Archives in Washington.

"The a recent interview. Wecht said -he questioned the Warren Commission's findings even before his two days of research at the Ar chives. But when he came out his conclusion was that "the Warren Commission Report is totally untenable, unacceptable and absolutely incorrect as far as its fin- for the flight to Washington. dings on Lee Harvey Oswald and the alogie assassin theory."

material be released to the public situation got worse."

is a urologist - a kidney and blad-acted as military subordinates der specialist -- whose only

that he has been a consistent defender of the Commission's findings. Lattimer spent just three hours in the Archives last January and inmediately afterwards released his conclusion that the autopey lights supported the Warren Commission's findings.

Wecht, then, was the first critic of the Warren Commission Report to be allowed entrance, and this only after he spent nearly a year attempting to get permission from Burke Marshall, a law professor at Yele Law School who acts as an official epresentative for the Kennedy amily. Wecht says he probably vouldn't have gotten permission at ill if Marshall hadn't been prodded by others interested in the autopey 20775

When West finally did make it to

the Archives, on August 23 and 24 he said he discovered a number of autopsy items were inexplicably missing - most notably the preserved brain of the President and a number of microscopic slides of tissues removed from the bullet wounds. So far no one has explained the disappearances But what remained at the Archives was enough for Wech! to confirm his

In our interview. Wecht recreated the scene at Dealey Plaza and Parkland Hospital in Dallas and at the Bethesda Navai Hospital, where the autopsy was performed the * evening of the assassination.

in Dealey Plaza, the President's car "had just made a right hand turn and was proceeding to an underpass when shots rang out. President Kennedy clutched his throat Gover nor John Connally was struck, then Kennedy was struck in the head " By the time the President was brought to Parkland Hospital nearly 30 minutes later he was already dead with the basics of "life" preserved only by machine

"Under Texas law the autopsy would have been performed in Dallas," said Wecht, "But there was much confusion a lot of shouting and ordering going on, and even-

tually through ruse and other tactics the body was taken out a private door and put aboard Air Force One

"Now, the autopsy at Bethesda Naval Hospital should not have been The Kennedy family turned over any cause for confusion Uniornumerous flams from the autopsy to tunately, instead of the time lapse the Archives in October, 1966, with being used to get the most qualified the stipulation that none of the pathologists for the autopsy, the

during the lifetime of Kennedy family Wecht said three staff doctors mambers, and that after five years were given the task, only one of I rescognized experts in pathology or whom had experience with forensic related sciences" be allowed to view pathology "It was essentially a em. 'military undertaking Admirals.
The first "expert" granted per-generals. FBI and Secret Service mission to view the tiems was Dr. personnel were present in the room John Lattimer of New York, Lattimer to oversee the autopsy. The doctors

According to records made at qualification seems to have been Parkland Hospital Wecht said doctors there noted two wounds one a huge gaping hole, on the right side of Kennedy's head, and the other a found circular hole in the middle front of his throat

Doctors performing the autopsy in Washington, however, noted these wounds: the huge gaping hole in his head, a smaller hole in the upper back of his head, and a hole in his six inches below shoulder level. This latter wound was puzzling because no exit wound was found for it, yet the bullet was not in the body.

"They concluded," said Wecht. "that the bullet which had entered his back fell out of the same hole onto a stretcher when doctors at Parkland administered pressure to the President's chest to revive his heart." And, indeed, a bullet had been found on a stretcher by a ianitor at Parkland during the early evening of the twenty-second

The wound in the throat was not even examined at Parkland because doctors had, in their hasts, used the bullet hole to insert a breathing device into the President's throat Thus, the Bethesda physicians noted only "an incision" in their report. No one there had enough forensic experience to realize the incision was actually a bullet wound," said

tors at Bernesda released the body for burial and gave their results Kennedy had been hit twice, once in the back (the bullet of which fell out later from the same hole), and once in the head (the bullet of which fragmented). Nothing was said about the smaller wound on the head, and of course, nothing was said about the throat wound

Wecht said the embarrassing part of the autopsy came the next day after the body was already gone when the doctors learned for the first time that there had also been a wound in the throat Bather than anmit their mistake and re-examine the body. Wechi said the doctors made a "despicable" choice and "chose to be quiet about it.

The easiest way out was to match up the wound six inches below the shoulders in his back and the wound in his throat (Editor's Note this would have meant that President Kennedy was shot from the front, from the grassy knott, while Oswald was in the book depository at Kennedy's rear) "But you couldn't very well have a bullet entering his back six inches below the neck, then make a sudden U-turn and exit out the throat" said Wecht "So they simply altered the sketches that had pinpointed the wounds. I've seen the first sketches made of the wounds and they showed a wound six inches below the shoulders I've also seen the holes in Kennedy's shirt and jacket and everything matches up But in their testimony for the Warren Commission the doctors simply moved the hole up several inches to make everything plausible 'Nobody challenged them. They said they hadril drawn the first sketches to scale but now they could remember where the wound was. Every other hold, scar, incision and mark was drawn in exactly. Only this hole was several inches off."

Wecht said that in December 1966, he was allowed to view the Zapruder film of the assassination,

which he did over 100 times in addition to examining blow-ups of each frame. He said that using this film, the FBI was able to gauge the length of time between the first and last times the President was struck, which turned out to be about six seconds. They also test-fired Les Harvey Oswald's rifle (a single-shot, bottaction Manlicher Carcano) and found that the quickest it could be loaded

and fired - never mind timed - was 2.3 seconds. This presented a prill of a problem in that four pullets apparent ly were fired, and the length of time between them purportedly was so seconds. Yet it would take nearly seven seconds just to get off that many shots.

The results indicated it was "an impossibility that one person could have done all the shooting "Wech! said it was this contradiction that led to the Commission's "single" or "magic" bullet theory - which affirmed that one bullet "entered John Kennedy's back and exited through his neck, went Into Governor Connally's right back (breaking a rib). exited from the right chest into his right wrist where it shattered a large bone, then went into his right thigh, only to be found fater on the stretcher at Perisland Mospital."

"Whatever needed to be done to correct their Inconsistencies was done," Weeht charged, "because ad one alse knew what was going on and it was not until years later that private investigators had a chance to see the evidence."

Warren Commission exhibit number 399 is the bullet that was found on the stretcher at Parkland Hospital. Wecht says his examination of the Archive x-rays shows particles of metal in Kennedy's cheet and also in Connally's chest - traces of the bullet that passed through them. This same, bullet, according to the Warren Commission was also supposed to have broken one of Connally's ribs and shattered a bone in his wrist. The bullet is a 6.5 mm, shell with an original weight of 161 grams. Two more inconsistencies presented themselves, said Wecht, because the bullet found at Parkland has n weight of 159 grams:

1) According to the Commission's report, the bullet lost only two grams of weight in passing through both Kennedy and Connelly and leaving traces behind in both:

2) and after doing all this damage to both men, the buller has "no

deformities in its upper two-thirds at all and the bottom one-third shows only very minimal flattening with no ioss of substance."

in addition, one small section of the base of the bullet was semoved by the FBI for examination, which brings up the question of how the bullet could have lost any substance in passing through the two men and still weigh 159 grams after the FBI sample was removed.

Still another impossible consequence of the Commission's findings was that the bullet was moving from right to left as it passed through Kennedy, then had to turn abruptly in mid-air and go into Connalty's right back (Connelly was seated directly in front of Kennedy at the time). "Bullets only do that in comic books," said Wacht.

There is not one forensic.

Wecht claimed no special information about who the other assassin(s) might be but implicated Dallas Patrolman J.D. Tippet as part of the conspiracy. According to Wecht, 45 minutes after the assassination Tippet, 'who was in a place he had no business being' (since all police had been ordered to Dealey. Plaza) spotted Oswald walking down a street 'decided that he was the assassin," and went after him — only to be himself killed.

"J.D. Tippet was there to do a job that because of his failure. Jack Ruby had to complete two days later," Wecht said.

"By legal definition we're dealing

with a conspiracy." he said And who is behind if all? Wecht points to members of the CIA. He said if is a well-known fact in Washington that Oswald had been on the payroll of the CIA up to the time of the assassination. "The CIA has pulled bloody, cut-throat operations all around the world," he said, "yet no one wants to believe that it could happen here."

Wecht's conclusions as limited as they are, parallel former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison's conclusions. Gerrison (with whom Wecht has conferred on the assassination investigation) claims that a group of right-wing CIA members along with members of the Cuban sale community and others plotted and carried out the assassination, believing that President Kennedy was beginning a leftward driff that threatened national security, and was also considering an easing of relations with Fidel Costro.

Lee Harvey Oswald lived for 38 hours after the assassination. All that time he was being interrogated by federal, state, and local authorities. Yet, said Wecht, we are lold that not one note, tape recording, or transcript was made in all that 36 hours of interrogation.

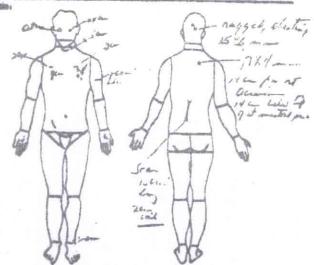
Yet the Daties police force was reputed at the time to be one of the most experienced in handling homocide cases.

"Yet who listens to all this? complained Cyril Wecht. His visit to the National Archives and his important findings resulted in a brief fluory of headlines around the country and little else. No one has come forth to challenge anything he has said, even his most damning indictments of the Warren Commission findings. Government policy seems to be to ignore the critics and hope they eventually go away.

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Proliminary Special Dallas Esport pl. Assassination of the Provident (Assassination Scone)

At approximately 12:30 R: on November 92, 1963, a car bearing the President, her. Economy, Governor John Connelly of Texas and her. Occupally, was proceeding west caroute to the Trace hart Emiliain, 2100 Stemmons Pressay, to a binches spendered by the fables Citizana Council scheduled for 12:30 Ph. The car coned ast operator by the fables Streets was decepted by Special Agent william R. Grade. The wight front seat was occupied by ASAIC Roy H. Kelleman. At the fact of the Street, at a point approximately 200 feet east of the Houston Street Tripis Enterpara, on the approach to the Stammons Pressay, Fresident Monnody, who was seated on the right rear seat, was shot. Irrodiately thermalica Covernor Connelly, seated in the right jury seat, was shot ener. The Pressident was then shot he second time. The car corrying the wounted President and the Covernor preceded insediately to the Parkland Enterial Ecopital at 5201 Harry Hines Boulevard where the President was pronounced dead by Dr. Kemp Clark, Chief of Hoursburgery at 1 pm. Governor Connelly, critically wounded, survived.

Withdrase identified the source of the shots as the sixth floor of the Texas School tory Building at 411 flm Street. I search for the building of con min

This Secret Service reconstruction of the essessination, one of a series all reporting the Governor was struck by a separate bullet, was prepared after the Secret Service had the autopsy report. It is consistent with the PBI forms! report.

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