

Kennedy wound still unexplained, ex-prober says

United Press International

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — An unexplained wound in President John F. Kennedy's upper back could prove his assassination resulted from a conspiracy, a former chief counsel to the House Assassinations Committee said Tuesday.

Gainesville attorney Kenneth Brooten, who served as the committee's chief counsel for one month in 1977, said an autopsy performed on Kennedy's body showed a hematoma, or blood clot, below the late president's shoulder blade.

Despite a 1977 memorandum in which Brooten suggested an effort be made to determine if a bullet fragment could have caused the wound, the subcommittee in charge of the Kennedy aspect of the investigation never has mentioned it, much less explained its cause, he said.

IN WASHINGTON, the Justice Department said Tuesday it will review the full report of the House Assassinations Committee before deciding whether to reopen investigations into the assassination.

The hematoma was discovered during a post-mortem examination of Kennedy's body at Bethesda Naval Medical Center in Maryland, Brooten said, adding that Navy enlisted men present at the time were directed to leave the room.

If a fragment was located, Brooten added, it would constitute "physical evidence that there was a conspiracy" because the wound could not have been caused by the bullet which entered the back of Kennedy's neck and exited his throat, wounding then Texas Gov. John Connally.

BOTH THE Warren Commission and House subcommittee agreed a non-fragmented bullet found on a stretcher used to transport Connally to Parkland Hospital in Dallas caused Kennedy's neck wound and Connally's injuries.

It is "imperative" that information on the hematoma be released by the subcommittee, Brooten said. If it was caused by a bullet, he said, the evidence would be "not theoretical, but physical evidence of a conspiracy."

We're still growing

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WASHINGTON — The population of the United States is expected to swell to over 220 million late this month.

As of Jan. 1, the Census Bureau said there were 219,874,966 people living in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The average monthly population gain is around 140,000 per month, census officials say, so the U.S. population will exceed 220 million by late January.

The U.S. population grew by 1.7 million people during 1978, an 0.8 percent increase.

The bureau estimated the net 1978 gain was the result of about 3.3 million births, 1.9 million deaths, and net immigration of about 347,000.