

FROM THE MEMOIRS OF
EARL WARREN.

DOUBLEDAY AND CO. 1977.

On APRIL 11, 1963, I was
Director of the Federal Bureau
of Investigation, Office of
Identification.

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subdued, but I had the feeling that I had not changed a single mind among them.

In the last few years, although conspiratorial theories have borne no fruit, an attack has been made on the fact that pictures of the badly mutilated head of the President taken for the doctors at the inquest do not appear in the records of the Commission now on file in the National Archives. It has been contended that the reason these pictures were not filed was because they would show that the shots which struck the President did not come from behind and above him.

While I have never before entered into that discussion, I feel that it is appropriate to do so here because I am solely responsible for the action taken, and still am certain it was the proper thing to do.

The President was hardly buried before people with ghoulish minds began putting together artifacts of the assassination for the purpose of establishing a museum on the subject. They offered as much as ten thousand dollars for the rifle alone. They also wanted to buy from the family the clothes of Oswald, his revolver with which Officer Tippitt was murdered, various things at the Depository, and they were even making inquiries about the availability of the clothes of President Kennedy. They also, of course, wanted the pictures of his head. I could see in my mind's eye such a "museum," preying on the morbid sentiments of people and perhaps planting seeds of assassination in the minds of some damaged persons who might see opportunity for personal notoriety or expression in assailing yet another President. I saw the pictures when they came from Bethesda Naval Hospital, and they were so horrible that I could not sleep well for nights. Accordingly, in order to prevent them from getting into the hands of these sensationmongers, I suggested that they not be used by the Commission, but that we rule on the convincing testimony of the Naval doctors who performed the autopsy to establish the cause of death, entry, exit, and course of the bullets. I also suggested that, in order to avoid any charge of destroying evidence, we send the pictures to the Department of Justice with the suggestion that they be shown to nobody except with the consent of the Kennedy family. This was done, and they are preserved there for any useful purpose to which they might be put.

Something in the latter part of President Johnson's administration, when the aforementioned change was made, he set up a Board of outstanding pathologists from various parts of the country and submitted the pictures to them for comparison with the findings of the doctors at the National Naval Medical Center on which the Commission had relied. That Board confirmed the findings of the Commission.

While this has not entirely stilled talk of the possibility of other shots having caused the death of President Kennedy, it should be