

## JFK Death Linked To Back Brace

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)— Dr. James Weston, president-elect of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, says a rigid back brace prevented President Kennedy from slumping forward after being wounded in the neck, allowing a second bullet to hit him in the head.

Weston, who said he was certain Kennedy was hit by two bullets fired over his right shoulder, said in an interview Wednesday that the head wound was fatal but Kennedy could have survived the neck wound.

HE SAID the brace Kennedy was wearing held his trunk rigid after he was hit in the neck. He said the brace prevented Kennedy from slumping forward or sideways, and the second bullet hit him in the head.

Weston, the New Mexico state medical examiner, said he reached his conclusions after studying previously classified data dealing with the Kennedy assassination.

He said he spent a week in the National Archives in Washington,

D.C., studying photographs, X-rays and medical reports at the request of CBS News for a documentary on presidential assassinations.

WESTON SAID Kennedy's injuries were more extensive than he had thought.

"It was much more grotesque than I expected it to be," he said. "It made me feel almost ill, and I can understand why the Warren Commission didn't want the details released unless they had to be."

He said the autopsy was performed by military doctors, who were not forensic pathologists and did not follow normal criminal investigation procedures. "But I don't think it makes a whole lot of difference," Weston added.

HE NOTED that a better autopsy could have shown the angle of the fatal bullet, and a picture of the President at the moment when he was hit by the bullets would have allowed experts to determine the bullets point of origin.

He added, however, that the President's car is hidden by a roadside sign in the only films of the crucial seconds when Kennedy was hit.

Weston said he is satisfied with the medical aspect of the inquiry.

"I DON'T believe anybody could find any more," he said.