

Ebersole

Mr. Tom Dasman, Counsel
Administrative Practices Subcommittee
U.S. Senate PERSONAL
Washington, D.C.

Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
4/3/78

Dear Tom,

In today's mail I received the enclosed stories of four weeks ago from the Dallas Times-Herald.

To one not a subject expert these might appear to be completely normal and accurate. They are neither.

When I say they are not accurate I mean that in terms of the official accounting of the crime and the official records they are almost totally inaccurate, as I'll explain if you desire.

What prompts this letter is a combination of my experience with and opinion of the current House assassinations committee and the words of the news story of 3/9/78. Ebersole said he marked some of the Kennedy X-rays to assist a sculptor at the request of the "White House." For a Kennedy bust.

I realize that there is no certainty of purpose reflected by this language.

However, I am impelled to repeat my earlier caution against any Kennedy family involvement in any of these things.

Particularly now, when so many self-serving records of the past are becoming available and are being taken as other than self-serving.

In amplification of what I have told you in the past and as an update on the old spectro suit that figured in the 1974 FOIA amendments, the second batch of FBI records, released 1/18/78 contain, among those not given to the Warren Commission and not provided to me under discovery in the current version of that suit an open admission about the shot that missed. It is that while at the time of the crime there was visible physical damage to the carbons where it struck by the time the Warren Commission got around to asking the FBI to conduct the investigation of this that it had avoided no physical damage was visible. You may recall that I also had "before" and "after" pictures showing this in Post Mortem. The difference is that now there is proof of official awareness of this destruction of evidence. Going along with this is the FBI's reported destruction of that one spectrographic plate only. We learned this on discovery. The FBI tried to attribute this disappearance to systematic destruction of old records to save space. Aside from what else makes this impossible to believe, given the nature of the crime and the preservation of all the other plates, any plate takes only about an eighth of an inch of file space.

The clippings were sent to me by the wife of the man injured slightly by that missed shot. He and she are friends of mine. He provided an affidavit I used in the new suit, C. 75-226.

Sorry about the typing. My regular machine is in the shop. This is an old one, from my college days.

Best Wishes,

Harold Weisberg

JFK probe witness not the silent type

1978 Knight-Ridder News Wire

LANCASTER, Pa. — The quiet, close-knit community of Lancaster awoke Thursday to the news that Dr. John H. Ebersole, chief of radiation therapy at Lancaster General Hospital, had broken a 15-year silence on his role in the John F. Kennedy autopsy.

"The papers got that wrong," Dr. Ebersole protested later.

"When my son Richard (a legislative aide to a Tennessee congressman) read it in the paper, he called from Washington and said, 'I've never known you to remain silent for 15 minutes.'"

In fact, says Dr. Ebersole, 53, he never maintained a silence on his findings as the radiologist who worked on the Bethesda Naval Hospital autopsy on the assassinated president — it's just that he was never asked.

He said he had received requests from what he termed "sensationalists" — authors and "even one pathologist" — but that he had not been involved in any official inquiries.

Now, he has been asked to appear before the House Select Committee on Assassinations and he will travel to Washington Saturday to meet with committee members.

So, he hasn't been keeping a secret, it's just that "this is the first time I've been asked by any official agency to make comment on my findings."

He says there is nothing startling in his findings — that they support the Warren Commission ruling that Kennedy was shot from behind.

"The X rays that were taken that night and interpreted by me were for one purpose and one purpose only," he said. "Prior to the start of the autopsy, because of the lack of finding of an exit wound (where the bullet or bullets left the body), it was felt that a bullet might be still in the body."

Later, we found a wound of exit in the neck that had been neatly sutured by a surgeon in Dallas. That caused some confusion early on because we thought that it was from a tracheotomy. But it was the exit wound."

On that grim November night in 1963, Dr. Ebersole, a Navy commander, had been serving as assistant chief of radiology at Bethesda for only four months.

"At the time, the chief of radiology was absent ... and I was acting chief of radiology," Dr. Ebersole said. "I was asked to assist in the autopsy in case X rays were required."

"I was present in the autopsy room from the time the casket arrived from Dallas until the autopsy was concluded. Roughly 15 X rays were taken."

Dr. Ebersole, of course, could have had no idea that the X rays would be used for anything more than the location of a bullet possibly lodged in the body; that the angle and direction of the shots would much later be called into question.

Dr. Ebersole, his wife, Marian, and their six children arrived in Lancaster in the summer of 1970, shortly after he retired from the Navy and Bethesda.

Dallas Times Herald 3-9-78

Doctor says bullets fired behind JFK

LANCASTER, Pa. (AP) — The radiologist who performed the autopsy X-rays on the body of President John F. Kennedy broke a 15-year silence on the presidential assassination Wednesday, claiming the fatal bullets could not have come from the front as some persons have claimed.

Dr. John H. Ebersole, now chief of radiation therapy at Lancaster restaurant subjoined in JFK probe, Page 1D.

Caster General Hospital, said his conclusions parallel those of the federal Warren Commission, which said the bullets were fired from somewhere behind the Kennedy motorcade in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Warren Commission critics have claimed bullets may have been fired from a position in front of the motorcade.

Ebersole, formerly assistant chief of radiology at Bethesda, Md., Naval Hospital where the autopsy was performed, said he was speaking out on the issue because he has been summoned

to meet with investigators from the House Select Committee on Assassinations Saturday at the National Archives where the X-rays are stored.

"I would say unequivocally the bullet came from the side or back," Ebersole said. "The front of the body, except for a very slight bruise above the right eye on the forehead, was absolutely intact. It was the back of the head that was blown off."

"There is no way that I can see on the basis of the X-rays that the bullet came from anywhere in the 180 degree angle to the front, assuming Kennedy was facing forward. It looked to me like an almost right to left shot from the rear."

Ebersole said he has not been told the reason for being called to meet with congressional investigators, but said he believes some X-ray pencil marks may be puzzling them. Ebersole said he marked some of the Kennedy X-rays to assist a sculptor at the request of the White House.

The sculptor was making a Kennedy bust, he said.