

"John Kennedy wasn't a virtuous man; he just looked towards virtue and they shot his head off. America became an 'anything goes' country with his death."

--Mort Sahl

CHAPTER 5

THE AUTOPSY AND THE AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHS

We have been leading up, obliquely, to the Assassinations Committee's problem of the "Authentication of the Kennedy autopsy photographs and X-rays." The three autopsists, or alleged autopsists, signed an alleged autopsy report that was undated, meaning that it could have been written at any time after the original autopsy notes were destroyed. It was apparently written by Dr. J. J. Humes, Commander U.S.N., who signed it, whether or not he wrote it.² What we are concerned with here is the veracity of the official witnesses, the official evidence, and the integrity of the government and its panels, which have consistently been in question since November 22, 1963. The Warren Report, the Gulf of Tonkin incident, Vietnam, Watergate, El Salvador, the Libyan hit squad, the Iran-Contra Affair and many other events too numerous to list here have all called into question that integrity. The American Indians and many foreign

countries have never doubted the lack of integrity of our government, but it is only in recent years that Americans have begun to learn that we are all second-class citizens.

Arlen Specter questioned Commander (Dr.) Humes, who replied, "...the photographs and the X-rays were exposed in the morgue of the Naval Medical Center of this night, and they were not developed, neither the X-rays or the photographs. They were submitted to...either the Federal Bureau of Investigation or to the Secret Service. I am not sure..." "Did you submit those yourself immediately after they were taken, Dr. Humes?" "Again, one of the senior people present, I believe my own Commanding Officer, Captain Stover, took care of turning this material over to these authorities, and receiving a receipt...I supervised the positioning of the body for various of these examinations but as far as beyond that, I did not consider that my responsibility."(Humes Warren Commission testimony, *supra*) This man can't talk because he's scared, as we shall see.

Arlen Specter was interviewed by *U.S. News & World Report* on October 10, 1966. He was asked if he had seen the pictures. "The complete set of pictures taken at the autopsy was not made available to me or to the Commission. I was shown one picture of the back of a body which was represented to be the back of the President, although it was not technically authenticated. It showed a hole in the position identified in the autopsy report. To the best of my knowledge, the Commission did not see any

photographs or X-rays...The photographs and X-rays would, in the thinking of the Commission, not have been crucial, because they would have served only to corroborate what the autopsy surgeons had testified to under oath as opposed to adding any new facts for the Commission."

→ Where was the evidence?

~~It would seem that the evidence at this point was being co-opted by other agencies, either the Secret Service or the FBI. In an adversary hearing, the best evidence rule would exclude any testimony about the photographs and X-rays without actually introducing these materials into evidence.~~

One member of the Warren Commission, John McCloy, asked Commission Counsel Rankin "about this raw material business that is here. What does it consist of? Does it consist of the raw materials of the autopsy? They talk about the colored photographs of the President's body--do we have those?"

Mr. Rankin: "Yes, it is part of it, a small part of it. Mr. McCloy: "Are they here?"

Rankin's reply: "Yes. But we don't have the minutes of the autopsy, because we wanted to see what doctor said about something while he was saying it, to see whether it is supported by the conclusions in the autopsy and so forth, and then we have volumes of material in which people have purported to have said, or say to various agents certain things, they are not sworn..."³

A Secret Service statement claims that "the X-ray films were used for the briefing of the Warren Commission staff on the

autopsy procedure and results,"⁴ and that the evidence was turned over to the National Archives and/or the Commission.

The autopsists said, "One roll of 120 film (processed but showing no recognizable image) which we recall was seized by Secret Service agents from a Navy medical corpsman whose name is not known to us during the autopsy and immediately exposed to light."⁵

Other witnesses at Bethesda stated that the Naval photographer had taken photographs of the autopsy room itself and those present. Somebody didn't want that kind of a record: Texas Highway Patrolman, Hurchel Jacks, in his statement of November 28, 1963, said, "We were assigned by the Secret Service to prevent any pictures of any nature to be taken of the President's car or the inside." We will learn in a later chapter that on the following day, the President's limousine, a crucial piece of evidence since it had been struck in several places by bullets or fragments, was taken to Detroit, torn apart, and rebuilt, thus deliberately destroying the evidence. The boundary^a between coincidence and deliberate action seems to have again been overstepped here.

"I, James J. Humes, certify that I have destroyed by burning certain preliminary draft notes relating to Naval Medical School Autopsy Report A63-272 and have officially transmitted all other papers related to this report to higher authority." (24 November 1963.) This certificate was apparently required by the

President's personal physician, Admiral George Burkley, who wrote on it "accepted and approved this date." We might ask whether Burkley had required Humes to destroy his notes, as the above seems to indicate. Burkley, a crucial eyewitness present at both Parkland and Bethesda, was never called to answer any questions about anything. *Why not?*

In a separate certificate signed the same day by Humes, again apparently required by Burkley, who again wrote "accepted and approved," Humes wrote: "I, James J. Humes, certify that all working papers associated with Naval Medical School Autopsy Report A63-272 have remained in my personal custody at all times. Autopsy notes and the holograph draft of the final report were handed to Commanding Officer (J. H. Stover, Jr.), U. S. Medical School, at 1700, 24 November 1963. No papers relating to this case remain in my possession." Why two separate certificates when one would suffice? Humes first certifies that he destroyed his notes, and then says he handed them to his commanding officer.

- Court-martial threats
The autopsists were threatened with courts-martial as follows: "You are reminded that you are under verbal orders of the Surgeon General, U.S. Navy, to discuss with no one events connected with official duties on the evening of 22 November - 23 November, 1963.

"This letter constitutes official notification and reiteration of these verbal orders. You are warned an infraction of these orders makes you liable to Court Martial proceedings

under appropriate article of the Uniform Code of Military Justice."

Although the Dallas doctors presented evidence that two shots hit the President from in front, the Secret Service claimed they "obtained a reversal of their original view that the bullet in his neck entered from the front.

"The investigators did so by showing the surgeons a document described as an autopsy report from the United States Naval Hospital at Bethesda. The surgeons changed their original view to conform with the report they were shown."

In fact none of the doctors, with one possible exception, changed their opinion when they later testified to the Warren Commission. What they had to say was simply ignored. The possible exception was Dr. Marion Jenkins, who has a consistent track record of waffling. Specter asked him, "Have you ever changed any of your original opinions in connection with the wounds received by President Kennedy?"

Dr. Jenkins: "I guess so. The first day I had thought because of his pneumo-thorax, that his wound must have gone -- that the one bullet must have traversed his pleura, must have gotten into his lung cavity, his chest cavity, I mean, and from what you say now, I know it did not go that way. I thought it did"(Testimony to the Warren Commission). *Something* must have gotten into the chest cavity, because chest tubes were inserted in the President to drain all the blood that was collecting

there. The transcripts make it clear that Specter bullied all these doctors and anyone else with testimony contradicting the theory he was about to invent. The government was in serious trouble because the evidence demonstrated far too many shots from too many directions, and far too many gunmen.

The New York Times reported on December 5, 1963, "Most private citizens who had cooperated with newsmen reporting the crime have refused to give further help after being interviewed by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation."

At this point, the FBI report on the assassination had been leaked out to the press long before the Warren Report was issued. It said that John Connally was not hit by the same bullet that hit the President in the throat, meaning that at least four shots had been fired: two hitting Kennedy and two more hitting Connally and a bystander. Only later did they discover that this was impossible for the alleged weapon.

The known facts had to undergo change, so the government and its propaganda organs began inventing a new story. On December 6, 1963, *Life Magazine*, which owned the Zapruder film, reported that "the 8 mm. film shows the President turning his body far around to the right as he waves to someone in the crowd. His throat is exposed--towards the sniper's nest--just before he clutches it." No one outside of the government and Time/Life Inc. had seen the film until years later, and the Warren Commission knew that this description was not true. But *Life Magazine* is admitting, still,

Source?

Not true
of FBI - it
ignores
Tape

Not
true

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that the throat wound is an entry wound. Meanwhile *Life*, Dan Rather, and the Warren Commission were reversing the frames of the film to have the frontal head shot coming from behind. Next, Gerald Ford had Kennedy waving at the crowd in order to bunch up his coat and shirt so that Ford could explain the holes so far down on his clothes. This invention didn't work either, because there were too many photographs taken during the shooting. Note the FBI-SS reenactment of the crime and where they have the entries pinned on the victim in the illustration.

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earlier
When news of the autopsy report was originally leaked, around December 18, 1963, Nat Haseltine wrote, "President Kennedy was shot twice, both times from the rear, and could readily have survived the first bullet which was found deep in his shoulder." The Associated Press admitted on the same day that this bullet "penetrated two or three inches." *The New York Times* also said "that bullet lodged in his shoulder." As some newspapers noted, why was the President not thrown down and protected when his life could have been so easily saved? Why didn't the car drive off at top speed upon the first shot?

Haseltine went on to write: "The second bullet to hit the President, however, tore off the right rear portion of his head so destructively as to be 'completely incompatible with life.' A fragment was deflected and passed out the front of the throat creating the erroneous belief he may have been shot from two angles." *The New York Times* repeated this on January 25, 1964.

As Dr. Perry and all the others had said, that throat wound was very small.

*No chance
of mist so*

This lie didn't work either, because there were too many photographs to show that the President was struck in the throat long before he was hit in the head, as the government discovered too late, to its woe.

*does not
support
above*

Secret Service Agent Glenn Bennett, who was just behind the President in the next car, said: "I looked at the back of the President. I heard another firecracker noise and saw the shot hit the President about four inches down from the right shoulder."

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Haseltine continued: "These are the findings of the as yet unofficial report of the pathologists who performed the autopsy on the President's body the night of Nov. 22...The disclosure that a bullet hit the President in the back shoulder, 5 to 7 inches below the collar line, ..." The government tried this fact out on us until they found that the bullet would have had to go upwards through the President's body at much too high an angle to also strike John Connally, so the entry place on the back was moved upwards by six inches.

Dr. Humes wrote in the autopsy report: "2. The second wound presumably of entry is that described above in the upper right posterior thorax...The missile path through the fascia and musculature cannot be easily probed. The wound presumably of exit was that described by Dr. Malcolm Perry of Dallas in the low anterior cervical region. When observed by Dr. Perry, the wound

measured 'a few millimeters in diameter,' however it was extended as a tracheotomy incision and thus its character is distorted at the time of autopsy."⁹ The thorax is the chest, not the neck. We have massive testimony from the doctors in Dallas that the throat wound was an entry wound, and they all still insist on it today.¹⁰ Where did Dr. Humes get the idea that the throat wound was "the wound presumably of exit" when he never saw that wound at all,¹¹ had no idea how many shots were fired unless he was told that the President was hit only twice, and when he had been told only after the body was taken away from him that there was a wound in the throat and that it was an entry wound? Where did he get this idea?

What kind of an autopsy is this? Dr. Perry certainly never told him that the throat wound was a wound of exit. In fact, all the doctors who saw the throat wound said that it was an entry wound, and that it was very small, even made by a small caliber weapon.¹² An entry wound closes up somewhat so that its diameter is smaller than the diameter of the transiting bullet, because of the elasticity of the skin.

They made it up.

It is of crucial importance here to know that the autopsists really had no way to judge how many shots had been fired. They fixed the brain in preserving solution and did not section it. They would not have known if a frangible or exploding bullet had also struck the President in the head, which would not appear so

obvious to them, without much more of an examination than the one they performed.

→ Dr. Finck testifies

One of the autopsists previously testified in New Orleans, before District Attorney Jim Garrison. Q. "Did you have an occasion to dissect the track of that particular bullet in the victim as it lay on the autopsy table?" Dr. Pierre Finck was asked, about the bullet in the back.

A. "I did not dissect the track in the neck."

Q. "Why?"

A. "This leads into the disclosure of the medical records."

"You should answer, doctor," the judge said.

A. "We didn't remove the organs of the neck."

Q. "Why not, doctor?"

A. "For the reason that we were told to examine the head wounds, and that the--"

Q. "Are you saying someone told you not to dissect the track?"

A. "I was told that the family wanted an examination of the head, as I recall, the head and chest, but the prosecutors in this autopsy didn't remove the organs of the neck, to my recollection."

Q. "You have said they did not, I want to know why didn't you as an autopsy pathologist attempt to ascertain the track through the body which you had on the autopsy table in trying to ascertain the cause or causes of death? Why?"

A. "I had the cause of death."

Q. "Why did you not trace the track of the wound?"

A. "As I recall I didn't remove these organs from the neck."

Q. "I didn't hear you," Mr. Oser said.

A. "I examined the wounds but I didn't remove the organs of the neck."

Q. "Why did you not dissect the track of the bullet wound that you have described today and you saw at the time of the autopsy at the time you examined the body? Why?"

A. "As I recall I was told not to, but I don't remember by whom."

Q. "You were told not to but you don't remember by whom?"

A. "Right."

Q. "Could it have been one of the Admirals or one of the Generals in the room?"

A. "I don't recall."

After a couple of days of this, Colonel Finck, in the trial of Clay Shaw for conspiracy in the murder of President Kennedy, was asked, "Can you give me the name of the General that you said told Dr. Humes not to talk about the autopsy report?"

A. "This was not a General, it was an Admiral."

Finck had originally said, "I heard an Army General. I don't remember his name, stating 'I am! (in charge).'"

Q. "Colonel, did you feel that you had to take orders from this Army General that was there directing the autopsy?"

A. "No, because there were others, there were Admirals."

Q. "There were Admirals?"

A. "Oh, yes, there were Admirals, and when you are a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army you just follow orders, and at the end of the autopsy we were specifically told--as I recall it, it was by Admiral Kenney, the Surgeon General of the Navy--this is subject to verifications--we were specifically told not to discuss the case."¹³

Secret Service agent Roy Kellerman told the Warren Commission "A Colonel Finck--during the examination of the President, from the hole that was in his shoulder, and with a probe, and we were standing right alongside of him, he is probing inside the shoulder with his instrument and I said 'Colonel, where did it go?' He said 'There are no lanes for an outlet of this entry in this man's shoulder.'"¹⁴

At this point, we must conclude that someone is lying, and that this is where the coverup begins.

→ Distorted perspective

The alleged autopsy photo of the President's back was taken, not by turning him over and photographing the wound, but by lifting up the head and shoulders so that there is a distorted perspective of how far down the back wound lies. That wound has been placed all the way from the back of the neck, as in the official Warren Commission illustration shown by the Committee as JFK Exhibit F-47,¹⁵ to six inches down from the shoulder, as the holes in the President's suit and shirt clearly show.

Warren Commission Document 7 states, "During the latter

It is in
FBI record

stages of this autopsy, Dr. Humes located an opening which appeared to be a bullet hole which was below the shoulders and two inches to the right of the middle line of the spinal column. This opening was probed by Dr. Humes with the finger, at which time it was determined that the trajectory of the missile entering at this point had entered at a downward position of 45 to 60 degrees. Further probing determined that the distance traveled by this missile was a short distance inasmuch as the end of the opening could be felt with the finger." Where was the bullet? We have a receipt for "one missile" recovered during the autopsy signed by FBI agents. "We hereby acknowledge receipt of a missile(sic) removed by Commander James J. Humes, MC, USN on this date.... (signed) Francis X. O'Neill, Jr. and James W. Sibert."¹⁶ What happened to this bullet? Since four large "fragments" were also recovered, the missile(sic) must be a bullet. It was later The FBI and other authorities later denied that any bullet had been found.

So far, this bullet, entering at a downward angle, could not have turned upward and come out of the neck. Note that they state that the bullet was two inches to the right of the spinal column, but do not say how many inches down it is from the shoulders. The important thing is that this entry wound in the back could not have come out of the throat, because it did not go anywhere. "The end of the opening could be felt with the finger."

All three doctors at the autopsy probed the wound in the

back with their fingers up to the first or second knuckle--a penetration of 1 or 2 inches. They used a metal probe, as well. But this wound was never dissected.

"I did not dissect the track in the neck," Dr. Finck tells us. "We didn't remove the organs of the neck." Why not? Because they did not know that there was a wound in the neck.

Dr. Humes wrote of the neck wound, "When observed by Dr. Perry (of Parkland Hospital) the wound measured 'a few millimeters in diameter,' however it was extended as a tracheotomy incision and thus its character is distorted at the time of autopsy." Humes does not tell us that he did not know that there was a bullet wound in the throat, that he did not speak to Dr. Perry until after the autopsy. The wound of "a few millimeters in diameter" meant that it was very small. Dr. Perry said that it was "3 to 5 millimeters in diameter." "No more than a pinprick," Dr. Baxter told co-author Livingstone in 1979. Nevertheless, the missile did tear open the President's trachea.

Close examination of the Zapruder film and other photographs indicate that the President was first struck in the throat at about frame 189 of the Zapruder film, which is now where the Committee places the second shot fired. Co-author Robert Groden says that the President was shot in the back at frame 230 of the film, when he is propelled forward.

At the end of Dr. Humes' testimony before the panel of doctors at the Assassinations Committee, he says something very

strange: That he will not talk about the case to anyone inappropriate.¹⁷ Is he still acting under orders? Have these men been intimidated? They ought to have been. The Assassinations Committee published a list of the names of everyone supposedly in the autopsy room. They list the names of the men they say took the autopsy photographs. But among the names missing from this list is Lieutenant William Pitzer, who, according to an article printed after his alleged suicide, was in fact the man who took the photographs. Pitzer's family and friends believed that he had been murdered, that he had no reason to commit suicide, and had been badly frightened by repeated threats because he knew too much.¹⁸

The bullet wound in the neck was never examined. "This meant that there was a very real possibility that the bullet even yet was lodged in the thick extension of the spine which forms the center of the neck," Jim Garrison writes. "A probe of the neck wound by the pathologists in the Bethesda autopsy room would have revealed which way the truth lay. In retrospect, it is easy to see that this is precisely why no such probe was allowed."¹⁹ How credible are the autopsists? Is the autopsy report credible when part of it was clearly made up, clearly invented on the basis of hearsay, and clearly speculative with regard to the neck wound? We have to weigh the evidence and give credence to what is sufficiently corroborated by other credible evidence.

-△ Above or below?

W hch?

The autopsy report tells us that "situated in the posterior scalp approximately 2.5 cm. laterally to the right and slightly above the external occipital protuberance is a lacerated wound (sic) measure 15 x 6 mm. In the underlying bone is a corresponding wound through the skull which exhibits bevelling of the margins of the bone when viewed from the inner aspect of the skull."²⁰

Don't you know?

Did this originally read "slightly below" the external occipital protuberance? When former Commander Humes testified before the panel of doctors at the Assassinations Committee, he was asked about the head wound: "Where is the point of entrance? That doesn't show?"

"It doesn't show. It's below the external occipital protuberance."

"It's below it?" Dr. Petty asked, incredulously.

"Right."

"Not above it?"

"No. It's to the right and inferior to the external occipital protuberance. And when the scalp was reflected from there, there was virtually an identical wound in the occipital bone."

Somebody changed "below" to "above" in the report, just as "puncture" became "laceration," just as Jacqueline Kennedy's testimony was altered, and the way FBI reports were written two ways, one for the public and one for the file.

"Then this is the entrance wound. The one down by the

margin of the hair in the back?" Petty asked.²¹ Looking at the illustration, note the white spot on the hair at the top of the neck, just above the hairline.²² This is what they are referring to, where a white tab was fixed to the back of a man's head at his hairline in the re-enactment of the crime.

(The government's placement of the inshoot wound in the back of the head had moved five inches, to the cowlick area, from where Humes saw it. It moved in 1968, when Attorney General Ramsey Clark convened a secret panel of doctors headed by the Medical Examiner of Maryland, Dr. Russell S. Fisher, who was closely connected to the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology. That panel was shown the fake autopsy photos and X-rays and reported what they saw. The wound on the head had to be moved because the trajectory to the "assassin's window" was not right.)

"Well, in terms of the inshoot, my impression when I first looked at these films was that the inshoot was higher," Dr. Davis said.

"No, no, that's no wound," Dr. Humes said, pointing to the newly discovered apparent bullet hole in the cowlick.

"I interpret that as a wound, and the other, lower down in the neck, as just being a contaminant, a piece of brain tissue," Dr. Davis said.

Humes: "No, that was a wound, and the wound on the skull precisely coincided with it."

"But they describe, some of them, the entrance wound they

feel being 10 centimeters above the occipital protuberance," Dr. Coe said.

"Well, there have been all sorts of changes from the original--I mean, right and left and up and down,"²³ Dr. Petty said. Clearly the doctors were seeing different things, different pictures, different evidence.

As we discuss the credibility of the witnesses and the evidence upon which this whole cover-up hangs, let us quote the death certificate signed by Admiral George G. Burkley, President Kennedy's personal doctor. Unbelievably, he simply says that the President "was struck in the head." Then he says, "A second wound occurred in the posterior back at about the level of the third thoracic vertebra."²⁴ This is almost six inches below where the Warren Commission finally moved the wound. We note that the Assassinations Committee has now moved the wound several inches closer to this back position than it previously was with the Warren Commission.

Source?

Humes had placed the wound roughly in the same location where Burkley placed it: "Situated on the upper right posterior thorax just above the upper border of the scapula there is a 7 x 4 millimeter oval wound. This wound is measured to be 15 cm. from the tip of the right acromion process and 14 cm. below the tip of the right mastoid process."²⁵ These are not the landmarks of the autopsy protocol. The mastoid process is on the head.

"Well, there have been all sorts of changes from the

original--I mean, right and left and up and down." Indeed.

Under pressure during his interview with the medical panel, from which Dr. Cyril Wecht had been expressly excluded, Humes would not retract his statement about the entry wound in the head. Afterwards Dr. Humes was prepped for his public national TV appearance during the hearings on September 7, 1978: "Yes, I think that I do have a different opinion. No. 1, it was a casual kind of a discussion that we were having with the panel members, as I recall it...We described the wound of entrance in the posterior scalp as being above and to the right of the external occipital protuberance, a bony knob on the back of the head...and it is obvious to me as I sit here now with this markedly enlarged drawing of the photograph that the upper defect to which you pointed (in the cowlick area) or the upper object is clearly in the location of where we said approximately where it was, above the external occipital protuberance; therefore, I believe that is the wound entry." This is a movement of some four inches from where he placed it in 1963, and not "slightly above the occipital protuberance" as the autopsy report said.

"It (sic) relative position to bony structure underneath it is somewhat altered by the fact that there were fractures of the skull under this and the President's head had to be held in this position thus making some distortion of anatomic structures to produce this picture."²⁶ Why did they not turn the body over to take the picture? Now we are beginning, but only just beginning,

to find out what the skull really looked like back there. "Do you want to know what it really looked like?" Dr Marion Jenkins said to co-author Livingstone when he saw the government picture. "*No, no, not like that!*"

"By the same token," Dr. Humes went on, "the object in the lower portion, which I apparently and I believe now erroneously previously identified before the most recent panel, is far below the external occipital protuberance and would not fit with the original autopsy findings."²⁷ It wasn't "far below," perhaps half an inch at most. At the time of the autopsy, he and Dr. Boswell had seen only one gunshot wound between them.

Gary Cornwall, Deputy Chief Counsel of the Assassinations Committee, asked: "Your initial autopsy report indicated that, as you have just stated, the wound was, indeed, above, I believe the report is worded in terms of "slightly above" the external occipital protuberance. The testimony today indicates that the panel places that at approximately 10 centimeters above the external occipital protuberance. Would that discrepancy be explainable?"

"Well. I have a little trouble with that; 10 centimeters is a significant--4 inches," Dr. Humes said.

Then Cornwall begins leading the witness: "To determine whether we can understand how such a discrepancy might have occurred. The autopsy was completed late at night; is that correct?"

"That's correct." Humes is led through more questions showing that they were up until 5 A.M. after the autopsy, and then the next day "Spoke with Dr. Perry and learned of the wound in the front of the neck and things became a lot more obvious to us as to what had occurred." That is, there were wounds they missed. "...Was the distance between the wound and the external occipital protuberance noted on those notes?"

"It was not noted, in any greater detail than appears in the final report."

"So, the exact distance, then, above the external occipital protuberance was not noted--"

"Was not noted, with the feeling, of course, that the photographs and X-rays that we had made would, of themselves suffice to accurately locate this wound."²⁸ Humes told the Warren Commission that he didn't know whether or not he would be allowed to see the autopsy photographs and X-rays before or when he testified. "When apprised of the necessity for our appearance before this Commission, we did not know whether or not the photographs, which we had made, would be available to the Commission."²⁹ He wasn't, of course, allowed to see them. Some great power was controlling the evidence, even keeping it from the Commission, and destroying it.

That is the end of this line of questioning, for TV, in the public hearings. The doctor was made to say that the position of the "entry" wound in the back of the head was not noted. But of

did he
ask?
did it
ask? This
is false

course, Humes had noted it precisely in the autopsy report:
"Situating in the posterior scalp approximately 2.5 cm. laterally
to the right and slightly above the external occipital
protuberance..."

⌘ Phoney evidence

There can ~~any~~^{no} longer be any question, although this has
never before been voiced publicly, that a lot of the evidence in
this case is phoney.

"I only have one final question...the notes are no longer in
existence; is that correct?"

"The original notes which were stained with the blood of our
late President, I felt, were inappropriate to retain...."³⁰ Humes
replied. But the sketches with the blood on them were kept, and
we have seen above that the notes may not have, actually been
destroyed.

During Humes' interview with the Assassinations Committee's
panel of doctors, Humes caught himself as he was beginning to get
mixed up about the wounds. Dr. Michael Baden asked: "Now, for
example, not exploring the wound from the back to the neck, that
was not done. I mean, cutting it open completely, that wasn't
done specifically. Was that because somebody said don't do it?"

Dr. Humes: "Now wait a minute, that wound was excised."

Dr. Baden: "The back wound?"

Humes: "Yes, sir. The back of the neck, and there are
microscopic slides of that wound?"

Baden: "I see. The skin was taken out. And then was it --"

Humes: "It was probed."

Baden: "Was it opened up?"

Humes: "It was not laid open."

Baden: "Now, that was your decision as opposed to somebody else's decision?"

Humes: "Yes, it was mine."

Baden: "With everything else going on at the time?"

Humes: "Yes. Our collective decisions, I suppose."³¹

The focus of the previous section was the Committee's attempt at "AUTHENTICATION OF THE KENNEDY AUTOPSY PHOTOGRAPHS AND X-RAYS." The very first note in this section says, "Because the Department of Defense was unable to locate the camera and lens that were used to take these photographs, the panel was unable to engage in an analysis similar to the one undertaken with the Oswald backyard pictures that was designed to determine whether a particular camera in issue had been used to take the photographs that were the subject of inquiry."³²

We can add this to our long list of missing or destroyed evidence and dead witnesses.

"Conclusion: the postmortem photographs and X-rays in the custody of the National Archives purporting to depict Kennedy do, in fact, depict him.

"2. There is no evidence that either the Kennedy autopsy

photographs or X-rays have been altered."³³ Yet the Committee did in fact gather evidence of forgery, as we have seen.

△ The Groden analysis

Co-author Robert Groden, long a critic of the official cover-up, was a consultant to the Committee: his views were published at the end of Vol. VI. He says, after describing how a soft edge matte insertion forgery of a photograph is done: "The final result is what appears to be the rear of the President's head with a small wound of entry near the top. The same thing done to the other original in register and the result is a pair of virtually undetectable forgeries of the finest possible quality. The technique would allow the integrity of stereo views."³⁴ The Committee had allowed Groden to test the pictures, and then printed his results as above. Commercial photographers often make composites, and we see them all the time.

Groden viewed the autopsy photographs in stereo pairs, after reduction to 35 mm. The matte line clearly stood out from the rest of the photograph, demonstrating that the pictures are forgeries. The rest of the background area matched, but not the matte line. The forgeries are extremely good, and to the untrained observer might appear as perfect pairs, but the edge of the matte seems to stand out closer to the observer. They do not match perfectly, and for those who know what to look for, the discrepancy can easily be spotted. The pictures are taken an inch or two apart without using a tripod. "There is a discomfort to

the eyes," Groden finds.

When so many people cast doubt on the authenticity of various pieces of evidence in this case, such as the backyard photos and the autopsy pictures, even if only one competent person questions the authenticity of the material, it is to be seriously doubted that it can be authentic, because the others did not know what to look for. Once they know what to look for, then it is another story. Leading European experts say that some of the material in the JFK case is phoney. When asked "Would you be prepared to produce yourself those photographs as evidence in court?" about the Oswald "backyard photos:" "After having examined them--definitely not. I couldn't resort to producing anything in court which was other than just the original print from the original negative, even to the point if there was a flaw in the negative..."²⁵ So said Detective Superintendent Thompson of Great Britain. While citizens of other countries may consider the possibility, it just is not in the American mind to consider that evidence might be fabricated, especially by the authorities. Americans have long placed their trust in "the authorities."

The Assassinations Committee does admit that the autopsy photographs "are generally of rather poor photographic quality. 2. Some, particularly close-up views, were taken in such a manner that it is nearly impossible to orient anatomically the direction of view. 3. In many, scalar references are entirely lacking, or when present, were positioned in such a manner to make it

difficult or impossible to obtain accurate measurements of critical features (such as the wound in the upper back) from anatomical landmarks. 4. None of the photographs contain information identifying the victim; such as his name, the autopsy case number, and the date and place of examination. 5...In fact, in a criminal trial, the defense would probably raise many objections to an attempt to introduce such poorly made and documented photographs as evidence."²⁶

Dr. Wilber writes that the autopsy photographs are "unverified and may have no probative value" in a court of law.

The Clark Panel of doctors also noted the poor quality of the photographs. "Due to lack of contrast of structures portrayed and lack of clarity of detail in these photographs, the only conclusion reached by the Panel from study of this series was that there was no exiting bullet defect in the supraorbital region of the skull."²⁷

Did all this happen accidentally, or was it deliberate?

"The Warren Commission based its findings primarily upon the testimony of the doctors who had treated the President at Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas and the doctors who performed the autopsy on the President at the Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md." On the contrary, this evidence was *completely* ignored.

"In forming this conclusion, neither the members of the Warren Commission, nor its staff, nor the doctors who had

performed the autopsy, took advantage of the X-rays and photographs of the President that were taken during the course of the autopsy. The reason for the failure of the Warren Commission to examine these primary materials is that there was a commitment to make public all evidence examined by the Commission."³⁶

So says the House Committee. What are they trying to tell us? That had the Warren Commission seen the autopsy evidence, the result would have been different? Not a chance. The Commission placed in the National Archives hundreds of documents at least up to the number of Commission Document 1552 which were classified and to be withheld from the public until the year 2039. Many of these documents, if not all, were reviewed by the Commission. They included dental reports, Jack Ruby's tax return, Oswald's tax return--which would be interesting for us to see--and countless other items. It is hard to see how any of this can or should be withheld from the public. Some of it has now been released, and has gone a long way towards solving the case. Without assassination critic and researcher Harold Weisberg and his Freedom of Information Act suits, we would have next to nothing.

If both the Warren Commission and the autopsy doctors did not see the alleged autopsy evidence at the time, it is difficult to see how unqualified persons on the Warren Commission could then decide what the evidence was without having seen it.

Why has the Assassinations Committee bothered to repeat the

theories of the Warren Commission, when they did not investigate the basic findings of the Commission themselves? "The (Warren) Commission was concerned that publication of the autopsy X-rays and photographs would be an invasion of the privacy of the Kennedy family."³⁹ This did not deter the Assassinations Committee from publishing precise copies of some of the alleged autopsy materials, so real that they do not appear to be copies at all. Certainly the Warren Commission looked at many of the other materials they had, and did not publish those.

The Assassinations Committee found, in repeating without new investigation the findings of the Warren Commission, as follows:

"(a) Reliance on scientific analysis. The committee believed from the beginning of its investigation that the most reliable evidence upon which it could base determinations as to what happened in Dealey Plaza on November 22, 1963, was an analysis of hard scientific data....(1) The medical evidence....The committee also employed experts to authenticate the autopsy photographs....The committee, in light of the numerous issues that had arisen over the years with respect to autopsy X-rays and photographs, believed authentication to be a crucial step in the investigation. ... Two questions were put to these experts:

"Could the photographs and X-rays stored in the National Archives be positively identified as being of President Kennedy?

Was there any evidence that any of these photographs and X-rays had been altered in any manner?"⁴⁰

The Committee's experts, for whom panel member Dr. Cyril Wecht had scathing words, found that the pictures were of Kennedy.⁴¹ But proper procedures were not followed in taking the pictures of the back of the head, and it cannot in fact be identified as that of Kennedy.⁴² The evidence presented by the Committee to say that it is authentic is invalid. Further, since it is believed by several researchers that Navy Lt. Cmdr. William Bruce Pitzer--who had been trained as an X-ray technician and may have filmed the autopsy--was apparently murdered in the same hospital, not many will stick their necks out to say that the pictures are fake.

Of course the Committee found that the pictures were of the President. They ignored certain things, certain facts, because each hand was shielded from the other. "They concluded there was no evidence of the photographic or radiographic materials having been altered."⁴³ How?

The panel of so-called photographic experts did not know what to look for, and did not run a simple test on the questionable photograph. They had no reason to believe that it was forged, so they did not look at it with this question in mind, nor did they test it. After they saw the forged photograph,

co-author Robert Groden, a consultant to the Assassinations Committee, asked to see and test the picture. This test was simply to make successive generations of prints which brought out a matte line--where another picture was inserted to cover over a large hole in the back of the head.⁴⁴ The picture is a composite, if not simply the picture of someone else's head. Clever composites are made all the time by photographic technicians and the advertising industry.

Had the experts consulted with the doctors and nurses at Parkland or read their testimony, they would have learned of this large hole.

- A secret break-in

~~One week~~ after Groden's study and initial report, the CIA's liaison with the Assassinations Committee, Regis Blahut, broke into their safe and removed the photos, specifically the photographs of the back of the head.⁴⁵ The fact that this man once worked for James McCord⁴⁶, who Jim Hougan maintains entrapped Howard Hunt (who was employed by the Committee to Re-Elect the President (Nixon) (CREEP)) and his Cubans in Watergate,⁴⁷ is of great significance in understanding this whole story.

But no one knew about that break-in until the summer of 1979, long after the Committee and Groden had their shot at the pictures. Only investigators from the FBI, CIA, Washington, D.C. Police, and the Committee Chief Counsel G. Robert Blakey, knew about it, and they kept it a secret.

"Consequently, the committee determined that the autopsy X-rays and photographs were a valid basis for the conclusions of the committee's forensic pathology panel."⁴⁸ This is how the Assassinations Committee covered up: Nobody asked the right questions.

"The forensic pathology panel concluded that President Kennedy was struck by two, and only two, bullets, each of which entered from the rear."⁴⁹ In other words they had a photograph that apparently showed a small hole in the back of the head at the cowlick. The fact was, they weren't too sure if it was at the hairline where the autopsists had placed it, and where they could now see a bit of "dried brain tissue," or somewhere else: At the cowlick. These fabricated pictures were the basis for the conclusion that there was only one bullet to the head. Of course the brain was missing, along with a lot of other evidence in the case, so there was no way of proving anything.

Dr. James Humes, the autopsist, was shown the pictures and cried "What's that?" at the new point of entry. Both he and Dr. Boswell insisted that the neat little mark at the cowlick was not the point of entry, but that it was four inches away, near the hairline. "No, no, that's no wound," he said.⁵⁰ His evidence, and that of his colleague, Dr. Boswell, was ignored by the distinguished panel of doctors. There was one exception: Dr. Cyril Wecht who, of course, was not told about the meeting with Humes, and so wasn't there. The first microscopic footnote of the

un-indexed report appears: "In many of its conclusions, the forensic pathology panel voted 8 to 1, with the dissenting vote being consistently that of Cyril H. Wecht, M.D., coroner of Allegheny County, PA. In all references to conclusions of the panel, unless it is specifically stated that it was unanimous, it should be assumed that Dr. Wecht dissented."⁵¹

The *autopsists* didn't go quietly, either. But almost no-one heard them. The "expert" panel of doctors failed to ask the autopsists where the large hole was, what Dr. Boswell's drawing meant, or any of the other questions that had to be asked. It was a non-event.

→ Troubling discrepancies

On January 12, 1982, Dr. Cyril Wecht wrote co-author Livingstone about the autopsy pictures he saw: "The massive head wound does not involve the occipital region in the photographs that I studied. It involves the right parietal-temporal zones with slight extension into the right frontal area. In other words, the 'back of the skull' was not blown away or shattered." These are the same pictures that Dr. Lattimer and the Clark panel saw in 1968.

On January 19, 1982, Dr. Wecht insisted to Livingstone over the phone that the large defect he saw in the pictures and X-rays did not extend back behind the ear. This agrees with what the authors saw. The pictures Dr. Wecht, the authors and others have seen do not depict the massive defect extending behind the ear.

Neither of these two positions shows the massive defect where it was in Dallas and Bethesda: Dr. Jenkins insisted to the Assassinations Committee that "only one segment of bone was blown out--it was a segment of occipital or temporal bone...a portion of the cerebellum (lower rear brain) was hanging out from a hole in the right--rear of the head."⁵² Dr. Perry repeated to the Committee that he believed the head wound "was located in the occipital-parietal region of the skull and the right posterior aspect of the skull was missing."⁵³ Dr. Carrico told the Assassinations Committee, "The head wound was a much larger wound than the neck wound. It is 5 by 7 cm., two and a half by three inches, ragged, had blood and hair all around it, located in the part of the parietal-occipital region ... above and posterior to the ear, almost from the crown of the head."⁵⁴

How can another set of photographs and X-rays exist, neither of which agrees with the reports of the doctors in Dallas or the autopsists in Bethesda?

In Harold Weisberg's *Postmortem* and Josiah Thompson's *Six Seconds In Dallas*, Dr. Humes testifies that ~~the X-rays~~ and photographs that were taken were exposed and destroyed.⁵⁵ We have other testimony that the Secret Service did this.⁵⁶ Then where did the pictures we do have come from? Certainly, these pictures do not remotely resemble the wounds we know about, which are established with overwhelming evidence.

In view of the testimony of the doctors at Parkland Hospital years ago to the Warren Commission and to co-author Livingstone in 1979 upon viewing copies, and in one case, the actual autopsy photographs themselves, that there was a large hole in the back of the head which does not appear in the official government picture of the back of the head, and in view of expert evaluation of the photos by co-author Robert Groden declaring that there is evidence of forgery when successive generations of prints are made, the weight of the evidence is that the pictures are forged.

The coffin was closed. Obviously, they didn't want us to know what the face and head looked like.

Dr. Charles Wilber, a forensic scientist, wrote that, "In fact, there is really no evidence from the autopsy that the pathologists did a thorough search of the President's head to see whether more than one bullet hit him in the head. As far as is known, the hair was not combed carefully to identify other entrance wounds. Usually, when there is a question of bullet wounds to the head that might be hidden, the hair is combed and even parts of this hair are shaved off to get a clearer picture of what occurred.

? ↓
"The complete autopsy report as written by the pathologists was altered during its route through military channels. Certain sections were removed. Admiral George Burkley, who was President Kennedy's personal physician, admitted that he doctored the autopsy report. What happened to the first report that went to

Admiral Burkley? Two months passed before he released portions of the autopsy. Probably the other parts were destroyed in some way. This is not a frivolous suggestion because the first report that was written, the original draft that indicated where the bullets went into the body and came out of the body; the report that indicated where the wounds were, how many bullets were there, and the paths of these bullets; the report that indicated whether any bullets were still in Kennedy's body, was burned by Doctor Humes, who wrote it. It is very difficult to understand how the original draft of such an important autopsy could be burned...

"A lie begets further lies...awareness of the devastating results of lying as official policy...No lie can be justified in terms of the end result. For, in the long run, an official lie begins a chain of further lies, so that when the truth finally surfaces, there is revealed a stinking morass of interlocking lies that cause long-term, if not permanent, damage to the government."⁵⁷

→ No basic evidence

Stanley Reeton, another researcher, writes, "One can look in vain through the Warren Report and Exhibits and never find a basic evidentiary document. This document is the death certificate of President Kennedy. Until 1975, it had been suppressed from public examination. The death certificate was drafted on November 23, 1963, by Dr. George Burkley. According to Burkley, the non-fatal posterior wound was located in the back, at about the third thoracic vertebra."⁵⁸ This is exactly where

the holes in the clothes are, and where the wound appears on Dr. Boswell's drawing. "It is pertinent that the death certificate was drafted on November 23, the day before Burkley verified the autopsy face sheet (Boswell's drawings). This proves Burkley was not verifying a 'mistake' when he signed the autopsy face sheet, for he knew Boswell correctly located the wound on the back. The significance of the face sheet and the death certificate matching in regard to the wound on the back cannot be overemphasized. It cannot be argued that Burkley drafted the death certificate based on inaccurate information, for he too was present at the autopsy."⁵⁹

The Top Secret transcript of the January 27, 1964 executive session of the Warren Commission made this an incontrovertible fact. The non-fatal posterior wound was located in the President's back, at a point lower than the anterior neck wound. J. Lee Rankin (General Counsel to the Warren Commission): "Then there is a great range of material in regard to the wounds, and the autopsy and this point of exit or entrance of the bullet in the front of the neck, and that all has to be developed much more than we have at the present time."

"We have an explanation here in the autopsy that probably a fragment came out the front of the neck, but with the elevation the shot must have come from, and the angle, it seems quite apparent now, since we have the picture of where the bullet entered in the back, that the bullet entered below the shoulder

blades to the right of the backbone, which is below the place where the picture shows the bullet came out in (above) the neckband of the shirt in front, and the bullet according to the autopsy didn't strike any bone at all. That particular bullet, and go through. So that is how it could turn and--"

Representative Boggs: "I thought I read that the bullet just went in a finger's length."

Mr. Rankin: "That is what they first said. They reached in and they could feel where it came; it didn't go any further than that, about part of the finger or something, part of the autopsy, and then they proceeded to reconstruct where they thought the bullet went...So the basic problem, what kind of wound it was in the front of the neck is of great importance to the investigation. We believe it must be related in some way to the three shots from the rear."

Senator Cooper: "You mean in the back?"

Mr. Rankin: "One, or something from a shot at the top of the head."⁶⁰ Obviously, the Commission did not have the same autopsy report we now have. Stanley Keeton writes that "The only logical explanation for this discrepancy is that the final autopsy report delivered to the Commission in late December 1963 was changed by March 1964, when the lone assassin theory necessitated the transformation of a back wound into a neck wound."⁶¹ Rankin did in fact have an autopsy picture which showed a back wound rather than a neck wound, although it was later denied that the Warren

Commissioners had ever seen the pictures.

We know that the FBI report written by two agents--Sibert and O'Neill--who were present for the autopsy, made clear that the wound was far down on the back, but this is not the report referred to by Rankin.

Beneath all the scientific jargon about authentication is ultimately only one method by which experts test photos: Observation in stereo. That method depends upon only one factor: *Eyeballing*. It is a matter of judgement, and there is nothing whatsoever scientific about it. It can depend upon the eyesight, attitude, momentary fitness or political persuasion of the observer. This method is also heavily dependent upon whether the observer knows what he is looking for.

The truth is that the alleged autopsy photographs and X-rays have never been and cannot be authenticated. They are totally at variance with the autopsy report itself, and with all the other evidence. "... We must conclude that the autopsy photographs in the National Archives which show a wound in the back of the President's neck cannot be authentic...it is apparent that some of the autopsy materials have been fabricated."⁶² Keeton writes.

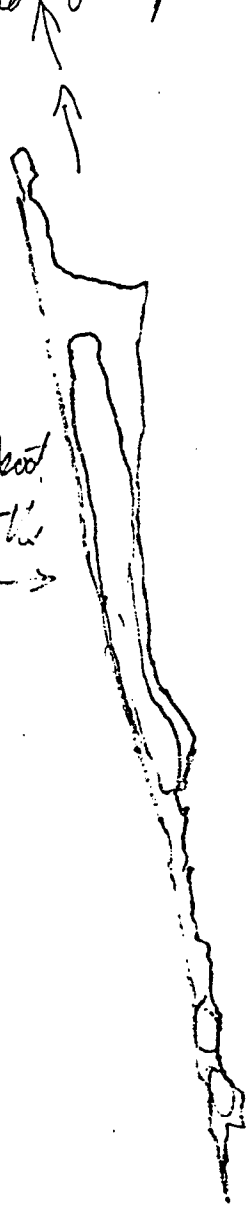
minutes to manhole on SW end of overpass behind rail on overpass, between 2nd & 3rd posts, left of car - a perfect sniper's nest

on 3' 1" blk

30 sidewalk blk's for corner curb.

between 1st 2 lamp posts just before pergola

curb
3 3/4 feet length



Apparent bullet scar?
Jan 22, 1976

This seems to be where a head shot would have hit the walk or missing about the time K. was struck in the head, to the right rear of car.