

copy to H. H. H. H. H.

No, there is no mention of the *reason why* it's a national historic landmark. No, the name of President John F. Kennedy is nowhere to be found on it. No, the date of the historic event that it ostensibly commemorates is not written on its face. As author Gaeton Fonzi aptly stated in the prologue to his excellent book *The Last Investigation* -- "Right here is where a man died!"

Warren Commission II

by Dave Perry

As those who have been there can tell you, the Plaza is visited by children and adults of all ages from many countries all across the globe. They ask questions; they want to know what makes this particular place so very special, in such a profound and tragic way. The plaque says nothing except that its presence somehow designates this place as a national landmark. The "who" and the "why" are not explained.

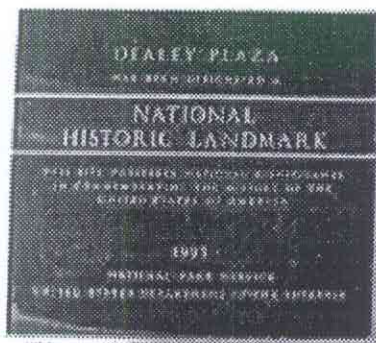
On or about July 3, 1997 the Records Review Board made public new Kennedy assassination documents. One document revealed Warren Commission member Gerald R. Ford was responsible for altering a key detail in the final report. The change had to do with the location of a bullet entry wound in Kennedy's back. The draft report read "A bullet had entered his (JFK's) back at a point slightly above the shoulder and to the right of the spine." Ford modified the sentence to read "A bullet had entered the back of his neck at a point slightly to the right of the spine." In the final version it was again changed to "A bullet had entered the base of the back of his neck slightly to the right of the spine." [see inside cover]

We believe that this sorry excuse for a commemorative plaque at the place where John Kennedy's presidency came to an untimely end should be replaced. It should *at least bear the man's name* and acknowledge the fact that he was our 35th president, and that this is the site upon which he was killed. We urge those who care for his memory to write a letter of protest (as we have) to the National Park Service in order to begin a process in which this wrong can be made right. The black mark made on the pages of history there on Elm Street should not be made any darker than it already is....

Most newspapers covering this story claimed pro-conspiracy theorists such as myself were concerned with this revelation. **Everyone** should be. Ford's alteration only served to strengthen the single bullet theory. The former President defends his actions by claiming "My changes were only an attempt to be more precise." **MORE PRECISE!** At what point does the medical musings of a lifelong politician take precedence of the reports and testimony of the doctors that performed the autopsy? It becomes clear when you review the testimony of the autopsy doctors. You see they didn't support the single bullet theory either.

-- Jan Stevens

Back in 1992 a great flap arose when the American Medical Association decided to "clarify" the autopsy doctor's positions. Shortly after the AMA published their report my rebuttal was printed in *The Third Decade*. The complete piece follows. Note how the spin-doctors have attempted to alter history.



The plaque on Elm Street in Dealey Plaza

I thought Kennedy assassination researchers had enough problems. However, Dennis L. Breo the national correspondent for the "Journal of the American Medical

Association" has written an article on the Kennedy case. Breo's piece, "JFK's death-the plain truth from the MDs who did the autopsy" appears in the May 27, 1992 issue and supports the Warren Commission autopsy findings.¹ Breo and Dr. George Lundberg, JAMA's editor, spent two days last April 1 interviewing Doctors James Humes and "J" Thornton Boswell. Humes and Boswell did the Kennedy autopsy.

Before publication, Dr. Lundberg held a press conference. He affirmed (in a classic "fox in the hen house" maneuver) his opinion that the original Kennedy autopsy was accurate. The autopsy report concluded two bullets struck the President from above and to the rear. Researchers voiced skepticism at this opinion. However, for Breo, Lundberg, Humes and Boswell it was - CASE CLOSED!

Almost thirty years after the event, there is a general belief the medical staff "bungled" the autopsy.² We now find two of the three doctors responsible have cleared themselves! The third, Dr. Pierre A. Finck, was a ballistics expert for the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology. He lives in Switzerland and unfortunately did not participate in the interview.

Dr. Lundberg emerges as though he is a spokesperson for the American Medical Association. He is only the editor of the AMA's journal. Mr. Breo's commentary is nothing more than an article in a magazine.

The study deals chiefly with the head wound. There is negligible reference to CE 399 "the magic bullet" and there only to the extent that the bullet passes through the president's body. There is nothing about how the same bullet proceeds though John Connally and ends up on a stretcher with only slight deformity?

Breo did question Humes about his tracking of this bullet. Humes remarked, "It was bothering me very greatly, like nothing you can imagine, that we could find neither the second bullet nor its exit track. "J" (Boswell) and I both knew that bullets can do funny things in the body, and we thought it might have been deflected down to the extremities. We x-rayed the entire body, but did not find the bullet."³

So what prevented them from continuing? Humes suggested, "It's true that we were influenced by the fact that we knew Jackie Kennedy was waiting upstairs to accompany the body to the White House and that Admiral Burkley wanted us to hurry as much as possible."⁴ Humes admits later that Burkley "...wanted the autopsy report by midnight Sunday, November 24 ..."⁵

These are the statements of a doctor who claims to have been "in total charge" of the autopsy and "was unfazed by all the commotion."

Breo should face the fact that he made no attempt to resolve basic questions about the second bullet. For example: The autopsy doctors claimed the bullet (CE 399) struck Kennedy in the back at an angle of 45 to 60 degrees. Why was this angle changed in the Warren Report to 17 degrees 30 minutes?

"During the later stages of this autopsy, Dr. Humes located an opening which appeared to be a bullet hole which was below the shoulders... 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."⁶

Arlen Specter reinforces the point with his questioning of Dr. Perry in Warren Volume 3 at page 373. Specter asked Perry to give an opinion whether, based upon the back wound, the neck wound was entrance or exit. But first Specter needed to qualify the question.

"Permit me to supply some additional facts, Dr. Perry, which I shall ask you to assume as being true* for purposes of having you express an opinion." One assumed fact was "... with the bullet striking him (Kennedy) at an angle of declination of approximately 45 degrees, striking the President on the upper right posterior thorax just above the upper border of the scapula..." (3H-373)

Study page 106 of The Warren Report and find the angle changes to 17 degrees 30 minutes! Why? That is the angle from the sixth floor window to the President's back. An angle of 45 degrees could not be traced back to the window.

Is there any evidence that the doctors attempted to trace the bullet path to find if the missile exited at the throat?

There was confusion between the Parkland and Bethesda doctors about the neck wound. Humes did not even realize there was anterior neck damage until he spoke over the phone with Dr. Perry on November 23.

The Warren volumes detail the disagreement between the Parkland doctors themselves over the wound being of entrance or exit.

Dr. Akin - thought it was entrance (6H-65,67).
Dr. Baxter - entrance (6H-42). Dr. Clark - did not see wound (6H-22). Nurse Henchcliffe - entrance (6H-143). Dr. Jenkins - exit (6H-48,51). Dr. Jones - entry (6H- 55,56). Dr. McClelland - did not see wound (6H-33,35).
Dr. Perry - not enough facts (6H-11). Dr. Peters - entry (6H-71).

The Commission claimed Perry and the other Parkland doctors agreed the neck wound was an exit wound. This conclusion was based on inaccurate, assumed "facts" presented by Specter and developed through Humes' autopsy report. The Commission had the gall to profess that Dr. Perry created the confusion.

"At a news conference, Dr. Perry answered a series of hypothetical questions and stated to the press a variety of possibilities could account for the President's wounds." ⁷

Looking carefully at the Warren Report, I can't find any mention of the equally hypothetical question Specter asked of Dr. Perry and the Parkland doctors.

The doctors conceded the neck wound was an exit wound based on Specter's question. However, it was still the responsibility of the autopsy doctors to track the missile that caused the back wound and learn where it exited. This didn't happen.

"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." ⁸

Also remember that Jackie and Admiral Burkley were waiting impatiently outside. Humes decided not to trace the bullet because it would involve dissecting the neck. In Humes' view, "Dissecting the neck was totally

unnecessary and would have been criminal." ⁹
There is no evidence of the bullet exiting at the neck.

Breo never had Humes tackle questions about Governor Connally's injuries. The path of CE 399 puzzled Humes. Shouldn't fair unbiased reporting require more digging? The Warren Commission assumption is CE 399 hit Kennedy in the back and exited at the throat. For the thesis to work that same missile must also injure Connally.

How did the Commission handle the conflicts between the volumes and the *Report*?

Specter: . . . could that missile have made the wound on Governor Connally's right wrist?

Dr. Humes: I think that this is most unlikely . . . This missile is basically intact; its jacket appears to me to be intact, and I do not understand how it could possibly have left fragments [in the Governor's wrist] . . . ¹⁰

Specter: Dr. Humes, under your opinion which you have just given us, what effect, if any, would that have on whether this bullet, 399, could have been the one to lodge in Governor Connally's thigh?

Humes: I think that extremely unlikely. The reports . . . from Parkland tell of an entrance wound on the lower mid thigh . . . and X rays taken there are described as showing metallic fragments in the bone, which apparently by this report were not removed and are still present in Governor Connally's thigh. I can't conceive of where they came from this missile. ¹¹

Specter: And could it have been the bullet which inflicted the wound on Governor Connally's right wrist?

Dr. Finck: No; for the reason that there are too many fragments described in that wrist. ¹²

The Warren *Report* distilled the autopsy doctors' testimony. "All the evidence indicated that the bullet found on the Governor's stretcher could have caused all his wounds. The weight of the whole bullet prior to firing was approximately 160-161 grains . . . An X ray of

the Governor's wrist showed very minute metallic fragments, and two or three of these fragments were removed from his wrist. All these fragments were sufficiently small and light so that the nearly whole bullet found on the stretcher could have deposited those pieces of metal as it tumbled through his wrist."¹³

Mr. Breo assured us of the plain truths about the Kennedy autopsy. A truth he divined from the very doctors who were responsible for the controversy. Breo's time would have been better spent looking through the Warren volumes. That is where the truth lies.

[Ed. Note: See BACK COVER for the Ford document]

Notes:

1. Dennis L. Breo, "JFK's death-the plain truth from the MDs who did the autopsy," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, (Vol. 267, No. 20, May 27, 1992) p. 2794.
2. Breo, Quoting Michael Baden M.D., p. 2802.
3. Breo, p. 2799.
4. Breo, p. 2799.
5. Breo, p. 2799.
6. *Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy*, (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964), Commission Document No. 7.)
7. *Ibid*, p. 90.
8. *Hearings and Exhibits*, CD No. 7.
9. Breo, p.2799.
10. 2H 374-375
11. 2H 376
12. 2H 382
13. Warren Report, p. 95.

Emphasis added to text by underlining

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by Joseph Backes

There have been some bizarre developments in James Earl Ray's quest for a new trial for the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The primary impetus is Ray's illness, seen as terminal after he contracted Hepatitis C in jail.

Ray was diagnosed by prison health officials with this in 1994, and was not treated. According to Dr. William Pepper, "He was in critical condition in December for a period of days. It turned out that he had terminal cirrhosis of the liver and that was the result of a hepatitis C infection...it was obvious that the prison doctors in the medical facility in Tennessee had diagnosed him having had hepatitis C in 1994. No one ever revealed it to the family or to me as counsel or to anyone else."

Ray's illness brought the King family into the judicial maelstrom, as they realized that if they wanted the unanswered questions addressed, they had to come forward. Led by Dexter King and Coretta Scott King, Dr. King's son and widow, respectively, they came forward to endorse Ray's quest for a trial, and testified in court on his behalf. This quickly led to granting the defense's request to test the rifle in evidence to see if it was the murder weapon, or nothing more than a throw down weapon.

Regarding those test results, the media has abused the word, "inconclusive" like a mantra: 68% of the bullets test fired did **not** match the death slug. Ballistics expert Dr. Robert Hathaway recommended further testing, as the issue of proper cleaning of the rifle was