

Station WBAI, New York
KPFA, Berkeley

(Aug. 10, 1966)

Excerpts from interview of Edward Jay Epstein, author of Inquest; The Warren Commission and the Establishment of Truth, WBAI, New York, re-broadcast by KPFA, Berkeley, Calif., Aug. 10, 1966. Interviewed by Elsa Knight Thompson and Frank Millspaugh. 3 3/4 ips. Tape not kept.

290 ft.

Epstein --Oh, I wanted to say something. You know there were photographs taken of the autopsy.

Millspaugh -- Umhumh.

Epstein -- And, I never saw these photographs. No member of the staff ever saw these photographs, and the Commission never saw these photographs. But these photographs would show exactly where the bullets struck Kennedy.

Millspaugh -- Who possesses the photographs ?

Epstein -- Well, after the autopsy the photographs were turned over to the Secret Service, their protective research section, a man named Bob Bock, and from that point on no one knows what happened to them. Some lawyers think that they were turned over to the Kennedy family, some lawyers think they remained in the White House.

Millspaugh -- Did you talk to Mr. Balk (?) ?

Epstein --- No, I didn't talk to him. The point that I was trying to make was that the Commission had not seen these films. Well, Mr. Balk -- The Secret Service said that

Thompson -- Did the Commission ever demand them ?

Epstein -- I don't know that; I don't think they did. I know that some lawyers on the Commission -- one in particular was on the verge of tears when he found out that they wouldn't have the autopsy photographs to work from. And the reason I'm bringing this out is that this whole question of where the bullets struck the President -- rather than depending on the shirt, or the jacket hole or Secret Service testimony -- could be settled in a matter of minutes, even today, by looking at the autopsy photographs.

And the autopsy photographs are undeveloped, as far as I know, and they are in color, which means in about five years they will decompose and you won't be able to tell anything from them. Which means that three years have now passed, which means that in a few years, unless these autopsy photographs are developed, the mystery will remain a mystery forever,

but today it's still in the realm of ascertainable knowledge exactly where the bullet hit the President. So for me to make a conclusion in my book without seeing these autopsy photographs or without having anyone see them I mean I think would be going a little out

Millspaugh -- Yes, it might not be going quite as far out as other people having reached conclusions without seeing the photographs, but ...

Thompson -- Yes, this is the really astounding thing to me, because I don't believe you put that in the book, did you ?

Epstein -- A footnote.

Thompson -- I see, because I don't recall it. But that the Warren Commission could have issued its statements -- I mean, some of the contradictions about, you know -- was he or was he not in the FBI, and never seeing various files that they ask for, and so on, all of this can, on a large project, get lost in the shuffle, if one wishes to charitable about life.

Thompson (contd) But that the autopsy photographs were never shown to the Warren Commission, and that the Commission published without having seen them and also published without giving the contradictory FBI report of the shooting, seems to me to open the question as to whether or not this can be classified under sheer -- sort of, what is it the British do -- Muddle through? Or it seems as if a decision must have been taken somewhere along the line.....

Epstein -- Well it's a very alarming thing, I agree with you, that there is an unresolved contradiction in the Warren Report today, a contradiction between the ~~Warren Report and the~~ FBI report and the Warren Report on what the autopsy results were, and neither the FBI nor the Warren Commission saw the photographs, and the photographs today would settle the question, and even knowing this contradiction exists, no one in the government would even -- I mean, when my book was published, and the FBI report, they wouldn't simply say, well, the autopsy pictures will show where the wound is and this question does not have to become the subject of a debate. I think it's a --- but to say it's a question of muddling through -- I'm not sure of that because I'm not sure the Commission didn't try to obtain the pictures, the photographs, and that they were refused. I mean that's possible too.

Thompson -- Well then why wasn't that included in the report? That they had tried and failed?

Epstein -- Well quite a lot was not included in the report. The whole problem of a possible second assassin was n't included in the report -- what the film analysis had really led them to the conclusion -- and I mean they glossed over a great deal that wasn't in the report. But this -- you're right. I mean in other words if this report was to be a report of all the facts, so there should be no more doubts whatsoever, and the whole truth about the Kennedy assassination, they should have said that there was a contradiction between the FBI and the final autopsy report, and that they had not seen the photographs to resolve it, and they ~~of course ought to have~~ said that ~~they~~ they believed the autopsy doctors. could also have