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(280)

CHICAGO, OCT. 25 (AP)—A NEW YORK PHYSICIAN SAID TODAY THE EXCEPTIONALLY RIGID BACK BRACE WORN BY PRESIDENT JOHN KENNEDY MAY HAVE BEEN A FACTOR IN HIS DEATH.

DR. JOHN LATTIMER, WRITING IN THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, SAID THE RIGIDITY OF THE BRACE DID NOT PERMIT KENNEDY TO "TOPPLE OR CRUMPLE FORWARD OR Laterally" AFTER HE WAS STRUCK BY THE FIRST BULLET.

KENNEDY WAS STRUCK BY TWO BULLETS NOV. 22, 1963, AS HE RODE THROUGH DOWNTOWN DALLAS. THE FIRST BULLET STRUCK THE PRESIDENT IN THE NECK AND THE AUTOPSY DETERMINED THAT WOUND WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN FATAL, DR. LATTIMER SAID.

THE PRESIDENT COULD "ONLY TILT STIFFLY AND SLIGHTLY TO HIS LEFT, TOWARD MRS. KENNEDY, WITH THE BACK OF HIS HEAD STILL EXPOSED," DR. LATTIMER SAID.

"IT WAS WHILE HE WAS IN THIS POSITION THAT HE WAS STRUCK BY A SECOND BULLET FROM OSWALD'S (LEE HARVEY OSWALD, THE ALLEGED ASSASSIN) RIFLE, WHICH ENTERED THE BACK OF THE HEAD... AND SHATTERED INTO SEVERAL FRAGMENTS," THE DOCTOR SAID.

THE SECOND BULLET CAUSED THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH, DR. LATTIMER SAID.

DR. LATTIMER SAID KENNEDY WORE THE UNUSUALLY STIFF BRACE--A CANVAS CORSET WITH METAL STAYS--BECAUSE OF PERSISTENT BACK PAIN AND A LARGE NUMBER OF MEDICATION INJECTIONS INTO HIS BACK.

"IN ADDITION TO THIS (THE BRACE)", DR. LATTIMER SAID, "HE HAD IMMOBILIZED HIMSELF FURTHER BY WRAPPING KNITTED ELASTIC BANDAGE AROUND THE LOWER PORTION OF HIS BODY AND THE LOWER PORTION OF THE FRAME IN A FIGURE-EIGHT ARRANGEMENT..."

LATTIMER, A UROLOGIST AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS, ALSO POINTED OUT THE COINCIDENCE OF THE DEFECTIVE TELESCOPIC SIGHT ON THE WEAPON ALLEGEDLY USED TO KILL THE PRESIDENT, AND THE COURSE OF VEHICLE IN WHICH KENNEDY WAS RIDING.

THE BULLET STRUCK ABOUT FOUR INCHES TO THE RIGHT OF THE AIMING POINT BECAUSE OF THE ERRONEOUS SIGHT, DR. LATTIMER SAID, BUT THE VEHICLE'S COURSE "CURVED TO THE RIGHT JUST ENOUGH TO COMPENSATE FOR THE ERROR."

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