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*Very interesting
shows a lot of
thought.*

EVALUATION OF THE PATHOLOGY OF THE WOUNDING OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

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Biological Aspects of
Forensic Science
April 26, 1982

EVALUATION OF THE PATHOLOGY OF THE WOUNDING OF JOHN F. KENNEDY

ABSTRACT

This is a true story. In November 1963, I heard the first reports of the shooting in Dallas. On May 19, 1967 I was asked to participate in a shooting test conducted by the Columbia Broadcasting System. The test was to determine a highly controversial point concerning the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Could the Italian rifle be fired as fast and as accurately as Oswald had to in Dallas? I proved that it could. My aroused curiosity led me to Dr. Russel S. Fisher who had studied the original photographs and x-rays taken during the autopsy. He noted that the entry and exit points in the head were far removed from those shown by the Warren Commission. There was also great difference in bullet behavior. I next visited Dr. Alfred Olivier at Edgewood Arsenal. He had fired test shots into inert skulls for the Warren Commission. Ralph Reppert, Sunpapers reporter, interviewed me. Shortly thereafter, I discovered the location of the "rifle." With this information I reconstructed, in my opinion, what took place in Dallas, that is, that the fatal bullet was accidentally fired by a bodyguard in the following car.

Around this time the Select Committee on Assassinations was formed. I was also asked to write an article for the Maryland State Medical Journal. Both articles were presented to the Select Committee. Although evidence presented to the Select Committee and conversations with a number of experts all tended to confirm my deductions, a reevaluation of the medical evidence has led me to believe that regardless of the origin of the ^{THIRD} bullet, Kennedy would probably have not survived the original throat wound inflicted by Oswald.

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I. Pre-Publication and Publication

On a May morning in 1967 the telephone rang in my home in Towson, Maryland. It was Bill Fitchett, a hunting buddy, with a strange request. Someone was conducting rifle tests, with hunters and target shooters of varied backgrounds, in an effort to prove something. Could I take the day off and help out? Suspecting the results of the tests might be used later as evidence in a court case, I agreed to participate.

I am a gunsmith, owning and operating Donahue's Gun Specialties on Dulaney Valley Road in Towson. I have developed patentable additions and modifications for firearms, principally with Remington and Winchester. I worked on the guns of Olympic Team shooters and am often consulted by attorneys to testify as a firearms expert and examiner.

Half an hour later Bill Fitchett, with his brother T. Somerset (Set) Fitchett, another hunting buddy, picked me up and we drove to the Maryland Lava Company, near Bel Air. There we picked up John Dinning, the Fitchetts' brother-in-law, had lunch and headed for the H. P. White Ballistics Laboratory not far away.

This installation has laboratories for incredibly fine testing, plus nearly a hundred acres of partially wooded land with firing ranges. It is the biggest independent ballistics research center in the country. There they conduct performance tests with arms and ammunition for clients ranging from inventors and arms manufacturers to insurance companies and police departments.

Laboratory technicians took the four of us to a basement range.

One of the laboratory men directed me to a firing point. Up to this time I had no idea what tests we were to perform or why. Approaching the range bench I saw a high powered military rifle lying on its side. The gun was an Italian Mannlicher-Carcano of the same make and model Lee Harvey Oswald is said to have fired at President Kennedy in Dallas on November 22, 1963. None of us had ever before fired a Mannlicher. Like the Oswald rifle, this one was equipped with an inexpensive Japanese four-power telescopic sight designed for a .22 rifle.

Bit by bit, we were filled in on the test. Many had criticized the Warren Report for its one-assassin theory, claiming it was impossible to fire the Mannlicher-Carcano three times in the 6.5 seconds the assassin is thought to have had to fire at the President. The Columbia Broadcasting System, in a televised testing program later to be narrated by Walter Cronkite, was trying either to prove or disprove the claim.

Like the Oswald rifle, the test weapon was equipped with a "makeshift" sling.

We were told to fire three series of three shots each at a target about 150 feet away, each series as close as possible to five seconds. I noticed that the cartridges handed me, although of the same type Oswald had fired, were not new ammunition, but reloads.

I also noticed that some of the range's terminal lights weren't working, leaving the target less visible than we would have liked, and the target itself was already well peppered with bullet holes, which would make it impossible to determine any accuracy.

No matter, the three of us were told; this phase of the test firing wasn't being made to prove accuracy, but merely to let them famil-

iarize us with the Mannlicher-Carcano.

It required familiarization. It is a six-shot rifle which operates with a bolt action similar to that of the .30-caliber 1903 Springfield used by most American draftees in basic training in both World Wars. But its bolt action is much stiffer, even awkward. After a spent shell is ejected by the drawn back bolt, the bolt must be thrust forward with considerable force by the heel of the hand to insert a new shell into the breech.

The offhand approach to the test firing, I learned, was deliberate. CBS had given none of its test marksmen any more advance notice than necessary, apparently feeling that if any of us had time to practice with the Mannlicher, the test scores would have been meaningless. I also learned we were not to be paid for our time and trouble, regardless of what kind of scores we shot, another CBS measure in the interests of impartiality. *(but unfair for professionals such as yourself)*

After firing, we left the basement range and moved to a hilly, heavily wooded spot on the laboratory grounds. Here we found a partial reconstruction of the Dealy Plaza site in Dallas where President Kennedy had been shot. Workmen had constructed a 60-foot wooden tower on the side of a hill. In a route which had been surveyed and staked out to duplicate Elm Street in Dallas, was a miniature railroad *straight, not curved* track. On it was an electrically powered vehicle which could be made to travel at about 11 miles an hour, the speed of the presidential procession as it moved along Elm Street on that fateful day. Mounted on the vehicle was a standard FBI rapid-fire training target, the life-size silhouette of a man's head and shoulders. *Not longer than 7*

I could see a lot of planning had gone into the CBS test. FBI

and military marksmen had test-fired Oswald's rifle for the Warren Commission's fact finding on the rifle's capabilities. The questions at hand had dealt with how the rifle would perform against a moving target. But the FBI had done its test-firing at stationary targets. They did not explain why.

The FBI marksmen also had fired from an elevation of only about 30 feet, CBS was later to explain in its broadcasts--which was about half the height of the sixth floor of the school book depository from which Oswald allegedly fired.

At the base of the higher tower CBS had built, I was handed another Mannlicher-Carcano.

I was giving my full attention to the business at hand. It didn't hit me until later--like a dash of cold water--that I had noticed the serial number on that rifle. Because most military firearms have at least six- or seven-digit serial numbers, this one had caught my attention. I remember it as C 2766. *ask Arlene?*

In all honesty, I must admit my imagination could play tricks on me as readily as with the next man, and it is possible that my subconscious mind is still working overtime on this incident. But in my heart I still feel 100 per cent sure I remember that number correctly. The serial number on the rifle Oswald used, I later ascertained by checking the Warren Report [5, p. 86], was C 2766. That weapon is supposed to have been locked up, along with other assassination evidence, in the National Archives.

The day had turned windy and cloudy, and I felt the tower shudder as a gust of wind hit it. At the top level were other members of the test group, three state policemen in uniform, two wearing pistol



expert medals, the third with a sharpshooter rating. Months later I discovered that an additional seven marksmen fired the following day.

The three of us comprising the civilian half of the six-man test team represented a varied background. Set Fitchett is an excellent all-around marksman, highly skilled with pistol, rifle and shotgun. As a varmint hunter, he is thoroughly familiar with the scope sight.

His brother Bill (William Wells Fitchett) is an excellent shot with rifle or shotgun, not only a good target marksman but also one of the finest field shots I know.

As for my own background, I have been a pretty decent marksman since I have been big enough to lift a rifle. Long ago I took the NRA target shooting course in Towson Armory and became an expert small bore rifleman. My principal sports targets for some years have been clay pigeons. My NRA rating with the scattergun is expert.

However, toward the end of World War II I bought a Model 54 .257 Roberts Bullgun, a target rifle made by Winchester. It is equipped with an eight-power scope, and fires a high-velocity shell similar in many respects to those fired in the type of rifle Oswald had. In long-range varmint hunting, I became proficient enough with the rifle and the special ammunition to kill crows and woodchucks, sometimes more than 300 yards away.

Atop the tower, I found the small area crowded with seven other men, plus banks of CBS photographic and recording equipment. I was surprised to note the windowsill, built as a copy of that in the Texas School Book Depository, was only $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the floor. A few packing cases were scattered around, as they had been on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository.

I had taken off the coat of my business suit and put on a light woolen hunting shirt which allowed freedom of movement. This was a multi-colored checkered shirt. Years later, I was startled to find that I had donned the same type of shirt that Lee Oswald had worn on 22 November 1963. Along with the other marksmen, I was told I could fire in any position I chose, and could rig up any kind of a rifle rest I liked with the scattered cartons.

The police officers fired first, from various positions. Some moved the boxes around to use as rifle rests. Everybody had a lot of trouble stabilizing the rifle. The bolt action was so clumsy that after a man squeezed off a shot, ejected the empty cartridge, and rammed in a new one with that stiff bolt mechanism, his rifle remained nowhere near on-target, and he had to find the target in his scope sight and aim all over again.

Firing was further complicated because time was such an important factor. As the silhouette target moved at 11 miles an hour it passed two stakes. The first represented the first instant and spot in which Oswald would have had a possible shot at the President. The second marked the position of the presidential car when the Zapruder films and other evidence had shown that the last shot was fired.

Test marksmen were not allowed to fire until the vehicle passed the first stake, and shots squeezed off after it passed the second stake were not recorded in the elaborate set up of cameras, timing devices and other measuring instruments.

As the test proceeded rain began to fall, the wind rose and the tower swayed with each gust.

When it came my turn to fire, I decided on the position Oswald

might have chosen, since we were about the same size. Oswald was 5'9" and weighed 169 pounds; I am an inch shorter and, at the time of the test, 5 pounds heavier.

I didn't consider firing from a standing position. Oswald couldn't have, for only the lower part of the window from which he is said to have fired had been open. I felt it would have been nearly impossible, anyhow, for any man in that position to operate a bolt properly for accurate and rapid firing.

The 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch height of the windowsill ruled out firing from the prone or sitting position--Oswald wasn't tall enough--so I adopted my own variation of the kneeling position.

Actually, it was more of a squat, with my left leg bent under me, my right knee bent, my buttock resting on the heel of my right foot. It is a position I had earlier found comfortable and effective in field shooting.

I twined the rifle sling around my left arm in an arrangement known as the "hasty sling." *like that on a combat rifle*

Due to a stuck bolt, I got off only one shot in my first series. It's hard for me to believe Oswald was a professional hit man, as many people say he was. I can't imagine a real pro trying to do a job with a weapon as cheap, shoddy and unreliable as that Manlicher. I was still working the bolt imperfectly in my second series and I got off only two shots. Both, however, were hits. They were recorded by a motion picture camera mounted on the carriage of the moving target.

*hazy
mist!*

In my third series of three, I fired the split-second the target passed the first stake. With my right hand I hit the bolt handle to eject. It was stuck again. Realizing how little time I had, I hit

How about other misfires? R. Helms on Oct 10 1963!

8

the bolt with all the force possible, ejecting the empty. I felt more than half my time had passed when I slammed the bolt forward to insert the second round, picked up the target in the cross hairs, and fired.

Even while the rifle was in its period of recoil, I brought up my right hand, hit the bolt to eject, slammed it forward to load, picked up the target, and squeezed off my final shot.

By the time I ejected the last shell, took off the sling and stood up, the target had been returned and was being examined. My three shots were hits, within a 3-inch circle in the central head area. I heard a technician at the base of the tower call out: "We've got a good one! Four-point-eight seconds from first to last shot!"

A second timing device clocked the three shots at 5.2 seconds. (b) But at even the slower reading, I had supported the Warren Report's indication that one assassin could have fired three shots from a Mannlicher-Carcano within 6.5 seconds. I was not informed until several days later that, out of scores of test firings which had been made in the previous years, no one before this had ever fired three shots from a Mannlicher-Carcano in less than 6.5 seconds scoring three hits. This was the only performance which equaled or excelled that attributed to Lee Harvey Oswald.

CBS televised its test findings the following month during a widely heralded news inquiry, "The Warren Report," which began with an hour of commentary from 10 to 11 P.M. on Sunday, June 25, and continued with additional hour-long segments on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Walter Cronkite, the principal commentator, stated as the opinion of CBS News that "the role of the FBI as well as the Secret Service,

both in the assassination and its aftermath, has been less than glorious," and said performances of the two agencies had weakened the credibility of the Warren Report.

CBS had concluded, Mr. Cronkite said, that Lee Harvey Oswald shot President Kennedy, but in the following sentence he pointed out: ". . . we drew the line between Oswald as a killer, and Oswald as the killer."

The commentator also noted that "although the Warren Commission had full power to conduct its own independent investigation, it permitted the FBI and CIA to investigate themselves--and so cast a permanent shadow on the answers."

The entire CBS firing sequence must have cost CBS at least \$150,000.00. The main purpose of this elaborate setup was to determine if it was possible to fire three shots and hit a moving target under conditions similar to Dealy Plaza. The fact that anyone was capable of firing and scoring three hits in less than six seconds greatly increased the credibility of the Warren Report. For some reason, however, Walter Cronkite failed to make any mention of this important fact.

My interest in the assassination was piqued. I bought and read a condensation of the Warren Report, and later began reading different books critical of the report. I read Whitewash, written by a former OSS intelligence analyst turned chicken farmer; Rush to Judgment, by Mark Lane, an attorney and former New York State assemblyman; Six Seconds in Dallas, by Josiah Thompson, a professor of philosophy; books by newspapermen, law enforcement agents and others. However, nothing changed my opinion as to the validity of the Warren Report. I

did think, and still do, that it was unfortunate that none of the authors criticizing it had knowledge of ballistics weapons capabilities.

Too many, I felt, had accepted careless, broad and generalized descriptive terms, and based their arguments on them. I resented seeing the term "pin-point accuracy" mentioned in connection with Lee Harvey Oswald. Out of the two or three or however many shots he is supposed to have gotten off (the Warren Report indicates there were three), one missed the presidential limousine.

Another fallacy, widely accepted once it was reported, was that the Mannlicher-Carcano requires a minimum of 2.3 seconds for bolt action between shots. I got off my last two shots in less than two seconds.

Proper technique is the answer. Robert Frazier, of the FBI, had claimed the 2.3-second limitations of the Mannlicher-Carcano after firing the weapon Oswald had used.

Later, in a magazine article, I saw a picture of Mr. Frazier presumably posing to show how he had fired the rifle. His technique was totally improper! He had a box for a rifle rest and was not using a sling. These two factors alone would rule him out as a competent rapid-fire and accurate marksman with this weapon.

But the most glaring error was the way Mr. Frazier was shown manipulating the bolt. The Mannlicher-Carcano bolt is a stiff, awkward affair. Moving it back and forth to eject an empty shell and reload requires effort, so much so that with the palm of his hand the marksman must hit the bolt forcibly, in both the forward and backward strokes. There isn't enough time between shots for the most competent

marksman to close his hand, so he leaves it open.

I examined the picture with disbelief. Frazier was grasping the bolt with his thumb and fingers, as you would hold the handle of a teacup.

Later I read in Thomas G. Buchanan's book Who Killed Kennedy?:

It is doubtful if a single man exists who could have fired this weapon with the skill required [in the time required]. But if the feat is possible, it is, in the opinion of the experts, a superlative performance which requires one of the world's best marksmen. . . . [27, p. 80] (b7)

Although I would have enjoyed being labeled "one of the world's best marksmen," I wrote off that incorrect phrase of Mr. Buchanan's explanation, and others like it, as lack of knowledge. The irritation whetted my curiosity further, and I began accumulating more assassination records.

Another irritation was the widely circulated description of the 6.5mm Mannlicher-Carcano cartridge, which hit both President Kennedy and Governor Connally, as a low-to-medium-powered military cartridge which could not possibly have penetrated two men. *Connally was hit in the back.*

The fact is, the cartridge is extremely powerful. Its caliber is .264. Its long, heavy, 160-grain bullet leaves the rifle muzzle at 2,234 feet per second. It was designed for deep penetration. In fact, Koromojo Bell, an African big game hunter, has used a 6.5mm Mannlicher--with ammunition ballistics similar to that of Oswald's rifle--to kill scores of elephants with single head shots. And still there are so-called experts who claim the cartridge fired by Oswald hadn't the power to penetrate two live men.

As I read all evidence and speculation I could find about the

assassination, I realized I might be lured into the trap which had ensnared the more vitriolic critics of the Warren Report. Most, I felt, had perpetuated oft-repeated criticisms of the report, emphasizing certain aspects while playing down or ignoring evidence which didn't fit their theories. *(very good!) Comment report from #D.D. (arrived in 12/10)*

I reorganized the information I had assembled, then went carefully through it again, considering each item for its possibilities or impossibilities as a rifle expert and marksman would see them.

I decided not to concern myself with the many and often bizarre theories of assassination conspiracies.

When I had read the news stories of the assassination I had noted ballistics inconsistencies, but attributed them to either careless reporting or well meaning but incorrect statements by spokesmen who weren't familiar with firearms. After I saw that many inconsistencies were included in widely accepted reports, I began scrutinizing them.

In my re-study, even the basic ballistics reported and accepted looked wrong.

To oversimplify an example of ballistics performance, fasten a tin can to a fence post and shoot a hole through it with a .22 rifle. Run a soda straw through the holes in the can and (with the can in its original position) the straw will define the line of fire.

A bullet fired from a window on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository, the one which the Warren Report accepts as the fatal bullet, should have entered the rear, upper side of the President's head, and exited at the front, lower central part of the skull, slightly to the right of the midline. But, according to the evidence given to the Warren Commission, the bullet entered the right, rear

part of the skull, somehow made a right turn after it penetrated, and blew out a right, parietal section of the skull, an area almost as large as a saucer.

I realize bullets can take strange courses after they enter a body. Forensic medical investigations report many of them. But to accept this ballistical bit of evidence, we must accept it blindly as a highly unusual, completely unexplained factor.

Other evidence I found hard to accept was a statement Roy Kellerman, a Secret Service agent, made after the assassination. Mr. Kellerman, who had been riding in the right front seat of the presidential limousine, testified that as the firing began, he had heard the President exclaim: "My God, I am hit!" The agent was positive in this assertion. (20, 21)

noted 1/21/68
The Zapruder film indicates the President's first violent reaction to having been hit was from the bullet which entered his back, passed through his throat, nicked his necktie and went through Governor Connally's upper body and wrist and lodged in his thigh.

That high-velocity bullet moved faster than the speed of sound. It would have been impossible for anybody in the presidential car to have heard the shot before the bullet hit. With his cervical vertebra and throat damaged by the bullet, how could the President have exclaimed anything? *(Could they have heard the shock waves generated by the bullet?)*

Inconsistencies in the comparative behavior of the two bullets that hit the President also bothered me.

How could they have heard the shot before the bullet hit?
The bullet that entered the President's back and tore through his throat passed through Governor Connally's right side, near the armpit, shattering a portion of his right fifth rib. It came out of the

How could this be physically possible, given their positions, angle, etc

Governor's right chest, just below the nipple, fractured a bone as it passed on through his wrist, and moved on to lodge in his thigh.

Missing only, however, sufficient.

This performance was normal for this particular type of bullet.

It is a long, heavy, metal-jacketed, high-velocity bullet designed to penetrate and pass through cleanly, no matter what part of a body it strikes. How well that bullet performed as it was designed to can be seen by the fact that after having passed through the President, then twice shattering bone, breaking Governor Connally's rib and wrist, it remained intact. It still held its clean shape, remaining close enough to its original form that it has often been referred to in official reports as "the pristine bullet."

or the official story is right because it says bullet hitting bone was not broken off.

Now let's compare the "twin bullet" which seconds later inflicted the President's fatal head wound. It is accepted by the Warren Report that this was fired by Oswald and was an identical piece of ammunition fired from the same rifle.

But how drastically different can two pieces of supposedly identical ammunition perform? This second one did not come close to passing cleanly through. Upon penetration, it blew the President's skull apart in an explosion of fragments, leaving a huge exit portal. It performed not as a bullet encased in a rigid metal jacket would have performed, but more as a frangible, soft or hollow-nosed missile, with a thin metal jacket traveling at a high velocity which might measure at around 3,000 feet per second. Among other metal fragments, 30 to 40 dustlike particles of the disintegrated bullet are said to have been visible on head X-rays taken after the President's death.

Had this type of bullet entered the President's back, it would have killed him instantly.

I studied pictures of shell jacket and other bullet fragments removed from the President's skull during an autopsy performed at the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, Maryland, under the direction of Cmdr. James J. Humes. I was convinced that two of the fragments were from two different types of ammunition. I wrote to the National Archives and Records Service of the United States General Services Administration, asking for more information.

"The two bullet fragments to which you refer are Commission Exhibit 843," answered Miss Jane Smith, director of the Civil Archives Division. "We shall be pleased to show you this exhibit in the National Archives."

But in the following paragraph Miss Smith wrote:

Enclosed is a copy of our regulations concerning access to security classified documents. We are not aware of any researchers who have been given access to classified documents in the records of the Commission by the agencies that prepared the documents, through the procedures listed in these regulations. (Emphasis added.)

*Fragment not
classified
Autograph correct*

I replied, trying to learn if there was some reason I shouldn't be given permission to look at the evidence, but I never heard from the agency.

I wrote to the Secret Service, asking for the names of the agents riding in the car behind the President. I asked if they were still agents and, if so, in what capacity, what weapons they had, their caliber, and if any changes had been made in the agency's weapons since the assassination.

I received a copy of a letter James Rowley, the Chief of Secret Service, had written in answering similar questions (from the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy)

four years earlier. The President's follow-up car had been driven by Samuel Kinney, and also had been occupied by Emory Roberts, Clinton Hill, William McIntyre, John Ready, Paul Landis, Glen Bennett and George Hickey, all Secret Service special agents. Also in the car were Dave Powers and Kenneth O'Donnell, assistants to President Kennedy, who were not armed.

I went through the list of names again. There was something most unusual about this list--something that nagged at my memory--a name I had seen and heard years ago. Which one? Days later, it suddenly came to me. Emory Roberts. He was a Baltimore County Police officer assigned to the Towson Police Station. I knew him when I was attending Towson High School in 1941. I even remember when he left the department for the Secret Service. He was the assistant agent in charge, seated next to Sam Kinney, the driver, in the right front seat of the follow up car. What would he tell me, if anything? I attempted to locate him through a retired Secret Service Agent organization. He had retired and had a home in Brookville, Maryland. On May 23, 1977 I called Eve Dempshire for some information on Emory Roberts. She kept track of the Secret Service agents for the association. Roberts had died of a heart attack in 1973. (Emory had graduated from Towson High School in 1932, nine years before me.)

In answer to a subsequent letter to the agency, in which I repeated my questions, I was informed that the Secret Service did not disclose the types of weapons it used, other than its issue of .38-caliber revolvers, and that no shots were fired by the Secret Service at the time of the assassination.

As a gunsmith, I had a natural curiosity about the different

kinds of firearms and ammunition known to have been in and around Dealy Plaza on the day of the assassination. The difference between the various types of ammunition known to have been there would be as different as black and white.

The type of penetrating military bullet fired by Oswald, for example, although a good choice for a sniper, would never be carried by bodyguards or anybody else who might have to fire at somebody in a crowd. That type of bullet could pass through three or four people and possibly kill the fifth. *Not according to the official reports*

For use in a crowd a bodyguard's weapons could sensibly be loaded only with frangible, self-destructive bullets. A high-velocity automatic or semi-automatic .22, such as the M-16, would be an ideal weapon. Loaded with hollow-point or thin-jacketed bullets, soft-nosed missiles like the Hornady super explosive would satisfy two most important requirements—they would immobilize an enemy instantly by creating shock and a massive wound, and they would disintegrate in whatever they hit, moving no farther to harm anybody else. *Long*

My continuing study of the President's head wound turned up a puzzling inconsistency. The Warren Report had accepted the idea that the bullet that inflicted the final wound had entered the right, rear area of the skull at a point somewhat above the outermost protuberance; at about the same level, for example, as the upper part of the ear. The accepted diagram of the wound was drawn freehand after autopsy proceedings from a verbal description.

At this point I began to have reservations about the Warren Commission's version of the location of the fatal entrance wound. As stated by Capt. Humes:

The fatal missile entered the skull above and to the right of the external occipital protuberance. A portion of the projectile traversed the cranial cavity in a posterior-anterior direction depositing minute particles along its path. A portion of the projectile made its exit through the parietal bone on the right, carrying with it portions of the cerebrum, skull, and scalp. The two wounds of the skull combined with the force of the missile produced extensive fragmentation of the skull, laceration of the superior sagittal sinus and the right cerebral hemisphere. [4, pp. 2-3] (1-8)

The trajectory of left to right was baffling and the position of his head with reference to the trajectory of down to up was awkward. I had now developed a deep suspicion as to what had actually occurred.

In March of 1968, I stopped by B. T. Smith Pharmacy in downtown Baltimore for a visit with the owner. Bernie Smith was a long-time friend and an "assassination buff." During our conversation I mentioned my suspicions about what actually took place that day in Dallas. He then told me that his neighbor was Russel S. Fisher, M.D., Maryland's Chief Medical Examiner and an international expert in Forensic Pathology. Shortly thereafter Bernie arranged a meeting at his home between Dr. Fisher and myself. Dr. Fisher presented me with some incredible information. He had recently returned from Washington where, on February 26 and 27, he had examined photographs and X-rays of the autopsy of John F. Kennedy. This was the first time these photos and X-rays had ever been seen by anyone outside the government. The material was extensive, including both black and white and color photos:

1. Head viewed from right and above. (10 pix)
2. Part of face and neck, shoulder and upper chest. (9 pix)
3. Head and neck viewed from left side. (7 pix)

4. Head viewed from behind. (4 pix)
5. Cranial cavity with brain removed. (4 pix)
6. Back of body including neck. (4 pix)
7. Brain viewed from above. (3 pix)
8. Brain viewed from below. (4 pix)

Dr. Fisher examined no less than 45 pictures of the skull and brain before the skull was flexed. After the skull was flexed (scalp incised along the lower part of the skull and forward to the ear, then the scalp is pulled forward over the face), Dr. Fisher then examined the following pictures:

1. Skull, A-P view (1)
2. Skull, left lateral (2)
3. Skull, fragments (3) [4, p. 2 and 3]

There was a total of six pictures of the flexed skull taken during the autopsy proceedings. I was surprised at the information he presented. The wound in President Kennedy's head was not "one inch to right of and somewhat above the external occipital protuberance," but far from that. It was "25mm to the right of the midline of the skull and 100mm (4 inches) above the external occipital protuberance." Continuing, "There is a large metallic fragment embedded in the outer table of the skull close to the lower edge of the hole measuring 6.5mm in diameter" [4, p. 4]. This fragment was not listed in any previous material. It was described as a fragment, not a smear. (Later on this would be most important.) Dr. Fisher pointed out the earlier reported exit portal was equally erroneous. The true point of exit was "anterior to the coronal suture and 100mm to the right of the midline." The actual path of the projectile was 45° to the midline, from up to down and

Such optimism not in Fisher's report

20

from left to right. This information supported my suspicions. I explained to Dr. Fisher what I thought had taken place. I will never forget his answer—"It certainly explains the strange actions of the government." He then told me that the committee had adjourned in disagreement with Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who was in charge of the investigation. Certain evidence was denied them, especially access to the President's brain and coronal sections. Dr. Fisher gave me a copy of the report: "1968 Panel Review of Photographs, X-ray Films, Documents and Other Evidence Pertaining to the Fatal Wounding of President Kennedy on November 26, 1963 in Dallas, TX" [4]. He also gave me his notes and sketches made during our meeting [30].

At this point I was primarily interested in the head wound and its origin. Shortly after my meeting with Dr. Fisher I went to Edgewood Arsenal where I met with Alfred Olivier, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Olivier was a specialist in the wound pathology lab now known as Bio-Physics, and did extensive experimentation on the JFK assassination for the Warren Commission [5, p. 1]. He had fired at ten "inert" skulls filled with gelatine, attempting to duplicate the head wound. Only one came close; however, none had the true wound channel. He had concentrated on the occipital protuberance-parietal wound [5, p. 2]. The only test he did that had any meaning involved firing Carcano bullets (162 gr, .264 cal. gilding metal jacket at 2240'/sec) into the skulls. These skulls all remained on the podium with the exception of one. This indicated that very little of the projectile energy was transmitted to the skull. Another property of the Carcano bullet failed to materialize. The shattering effect of the bullet that struck JFK was quite different from those tested.

Should have pointed up Dr. Dolan

When I told Dr. Olivier of my suspicion and of the totally incorrect point of entry and exit, he asked me if I had discussed my theory with Dr. Fisher. When I answered in the affirmative, his face was expressionless and he did not answer. Even though the true location and extent of the head wound was known, Dr. Olivier knowingly or not had fired an elaborate series of tests having virtually no significance whatsoever. *Not because it did not exist - you didn't get it*

From 1969 to 1976 I collected and read as many articles on JFK as possible. Nothing much materialized. I was still collecting and filing information. Then, in the fall of 1976, Ralph Reppart, a feature writer with the Sunpapers Sunday Magazine section called me about doing a feature on the Civil War. At that time I was collecting and shooting Civil War breech loading caplocks. Since I own a gunshop with machinery such as a Bridgeport milling machine and a Southbend tool room lathe, I had made ammunition for the Gallagher, Maynard, and even a centerfire conversion for a Spencer rim fire rifle and carbine. Ralph had originally called Detective Sergeant Bill Welsh, Maryland State Police Firearms Examiner. Bill suggested he call me. Ralph walked in my shop one day to interview me about Civil War weapons. I was completely unaware that Ralph was a JFK "assassination buff." He soon noticed some books I had on the subject. We were off and running. We were soon far off the subject of Civil War weapons and deep into the JFK assassination. He became fascinated with my theory. He presented some of the subject matter to his editor, Hal Williams, who was also an assassination buff. Hal was intrigued. I wrote a basic article with all my source material and presented it to Ralph. He, in turn, presented it to Hal Williams. However, we had a

problem. From studying the trajectory and behavior of the bullet inflicting the massive head wound, I had determined that it could not have originated from Oswald's Carcano. The line of flight was from left to right and up to down, ruling out the possibility of Oswald firing that shot. The explosive effect, small entry wound, and enormous skull destruction indicated it was a small caliber, high velocity ^(bullet built) in the 3000 feet per second class. Where was the gun and who fired the shot? Another uncanny coincidence took place. A friend of mine, Warner Minetree, walked into my gunshop one Friday evening. He handed me William Manchester's book Death of a President. I thumbed rapidly through the pages, stopping by chance at the beginning of chapter III, "Market." Manchester was describing the chaos in the motorcade immediately after the shooting. I had an eerie sensation, a sudden chill. There, near the middle of the page in italics, in a single sentence, was what I was looking for. Manchester described one of the Secret Service bodyguards in the "Queen Mary" as pointing the barrel of an AR-15 aimlessly around [l, p. 159]. Here, perhaps, was the loose thread that would unravel the mystery. Even though Secret Service chief James Rowley had refused to tell me one of his agents was armed with this type weapon, it had already been published in a national best seller. Why the deception? What were they hiding? On March 23, 1977, I discovered the location of the weapon.

Manchester described the location of the agents in the Queen Mary:

Have covered this in with I did find a copy of the book in the 2000s
 Agent George Hickey sat in the left rear, agent Glen Bennet in the right rear. On the seat between them lay an AR-15 .223 automatic rifle, with a muzzle velocity so powerful that should a bullet strike a man's chest it would blow his head off. [l, p. 134]

*when?
Latter*

*Scap 16,
top*

Two criteria were now satisfied. The head wound pathology of JFK indicated an explosive fragmentation typical of the 3000'/sec. plus associated with the .223 round. The trajectory was from up to down and left to right. A line drawn through the entry and exit points of JFK's skull led backward to the left rear seat of the follow-up car occupied by George Hickey. *This depends on how JFK died in a fact that*

Here, in my sad judgment, is what happened:

I accept the evidence that Lee Harvey Oswald was trying to kill the President. Don't ask me why. Who knows what goes on in the mind of a man like that? *How could they get into the mind of a man like that? hit what pavement? why did they miss all the other people?*

I think Oswald's first shot missed the presidential car, hit the pavement, and broke up, spraying fragments of metal. It is a matter of record that five metal fragments were picked up later in the car. There is pictorial evidence of their hitting the windshield and also denting a piece of chromework near the rearview mirror.

Such a fragment, hitting the President in the back of the head, was that 6.5mm piece of metal the 1968 Panel doctors found lodged between skin and bone. It would sting, as a shot from a BB gun would sting, and after having been hit by it the President could have made the exclamation Roy Kellermans said he made, "My God, I am hit!"

Oswald's second shot was the so-called miracle bullet which pierced the President's back and throat and passed through Governor Connally. Unlikely as it may seem, that high-velocity bullet would be easily capable of doing exactly what the Warren Report accepted as actuality. *Brain + wrong - could not be duplicated*

I think that was the full extent of the damage Oswald inflicted upon the President, and for it alone he could have been booked only

for attempted murder. Governor Connally recovered from his wounds. I think the President could have, too, although possibly his voice might have been impaired.

As to the source of the fatal shot, we must go to a Mr. Holland's testimony. He was standing on the triple underpass looking down at the motorcade. "After the first shot, the Secret Service man raised up in the seat with a machine gun (AR-15/16) and then dropped back down in the seat" [9, p. 32].

In still another taped interview in December of 1966, Mr. Holland elaborated on the action of the secret service man:

Interviewer: After the second time he was hit, what did the Secret Service man do?

Holland: Well, I noticed that the Secret Service man stood up in the car, in the President's car.

Interviewer: When did he stand up in the car?

Holland: Just about the time the President was shot the second time. He jumped up in the seat and was standing on the seat. Now I actually thought when they started up, I actually thought he was shot, too, because he fell backwards just like he was shot, but it jerked him down when he started off.

Interviewer: What did he do when he stood up?

Holland: He pointed this machine gun right towards that grassy knoll behind that picket fence. [9, p. 33]

This was in line with the President's head.

I realize Mr. Holland said he saw that man in the presidential car, and that later it was determined that nobody actually had stood up in the presidential car. But I think it certainly within the realm of understandable human error that what Holland saw was not in the

*How can you believe all these things
and this did happen in a car*

*Could be both 1+2
and photo show him
with the gun*

*Not as much
right from
along*

Do we? How? Not from Holland 25

presidential, but in the follow-up car. We now know a Secret Service man actually had an automatic rifle "at ready" during the time of the shooting. God knows that most of the scores of witnesses who saw what happened during the minutes of panic during the tragedy came up with different stories of it later. In my mind I am satisfied that Mr. Holland saw what he said he saw. He just had the cars mixed up. Holland's view from the overpass was excellent for viewing the inside of the security car [8, p. 61].

Why didn't the hundreds of spectators in Dealy Plaza that day see the Secret Service man with the automatic weapon? I don't find it hard to accept. There were ten men in and on the follow-up car--two standing on the right, two in the front seat, two in the jump seats, and two in the back seat. The Secret Service men in the back seat were shielded from view, much as a quarterback is shielded by his blockers when he drops back to pass.

Did Oswald get off a third shot? If he did, it could have gone wild, and the sound of it could have blended with the sound of the shot (the fatal one) fired accidentally by a Secret Service man from the follow-up car. It is a ballistically unshakable fact that the fatal shot came from a position behind and to the left of the President.

Several witnesses standing within the Texas School Book Depository at the time of the assassination have said they heard only two shots [8, pp. 135-136]. Policemen later found three spent cartridges on the sixth floor of the building. It is my opinion that one of these fired cases remained in Oswald's rifle after he fired at General Edwin Walker on April 10, 1963 [15, p. 134].

30 caliber bullet used

I believe the true cause of the President's death was known within a few minutes, and that an important decision from one or more high-ranking government officials dictated the events that followed.

The President's brother, the late Robert Kennedy, was the take-charge sort of man who might have made the decision to withhold the fact that our country's Chief Executive had been killed accidentally by one of his own bodyguards. *This is irrational, without any basis*

Perhaps it wasn't so much a deliberate decision to cover up, but merely a numbed, heartbroken acceptance to continue a cover-up that had already set in. After all, Oswald was certainly trying to kill the President. How would the country take the truth?

Many incidents that transpired in the wake of the assassination fall neatly into place to support my conclusions.

A glaring inconsistency is the way in which the President's body was removed, firmly, quickly and illegally, from Dallas, and flown across the country to a military hospital where all phases of the pathological examination were conducted under strict governmental supervision.

By Texas law, an autopsy of the deceased should have been made in Dallas. Two Dallas officials told members of the President's staff the body could not be removed from the city until an autopsy was performed. Over their protests, the President's body was moved into an ambulance and taken to the airport.

The force the Secret Service used was far greater than anyone at first realized. They actually had their hands on their guns. They (most likely Roy Kellerman) said to Dr. Earl Rose, "Either move or we run it [the coffin] over you" [7, p. 9]. Concerned that local offi-

cials might try to keep the plane from leaving, one Secret Service man asked the pilot of Air Force 1 to take off immediately. (He was told the take-off would be delayed until Vice President Johnson was sworn in.)

A statement attributed to Chief Justice Earl Warren has plagued me since the early days of the assassination investigation. I heard it on a radio newscast. Others interested in the assassination have told me they, too, heard it, and some of them tell me they saw the remark repeated in the newspapers, although they can't remember where.

I cannot quote the remark verbatim, but I remember the substance of it. After being briefed on various aspects of the assassination, Justice Warren was quoted as having said, as closely as I can recall the phrasing, "The initial [or did he use the word cursory] findings of this case are so earth-shaking that it will be decades before the American people can be told." The item was not repeated in subsequent newscasts. *This is not what he said + he was only referring to government say do as relating to protecting personal privacy*

I ran across an intriguing post-assassination item in LBJ: The Way He Was, a book written about the late Vice President and President by Frank Cormier of the Associated Press, a long-time White House correspondent.

In the book, Mr. Cormier recounted a visit LBJ had made to Texas shortly after he had become President, a trip which included a Christmas Eve visit with his old friend A. W. Moursund, a Johnson City lawyer, at Round Mountain Ranch, for some deer hunting. A group of reporters tagged along.

With Mr. Moursund driving and LBJ happily pointing out white-tailed deer in rough growth along the trail, the President became

annoyed by the close-following vehicle in which his guard of Secret Service men rode. He had Mr. Moursund stop the car, and an agent came hurrying forward to ask what the trouble was.

"Dammit," the President snapped at him, "I don't want you tail-gatin' me! Now you keep that wagon back outta sight or I'm gonna shoot out your tires!" *What relevance?*

President Johnson, Mr. Cormier continued, demonstrated genuine, if somewhat sporadic, affection for some agents, but could also be perversely cruel towards his bodyguards.

"In an off-the-record talk at the White House, a few weeks earlier," Mr. Cormier wrote, "Johnson had shocked me by exploding: 'If I ever get killed, it won't be because of an assassin. It'll be some Secret Service agent who trips himself up and his gun goes off. They're worse than trigger-happy Texas sheriffs.'" *It must be a bluff.*

Other incidents involving accidental discharges were brought to my attention. One incident involved Henry Kissinger. Once, while boarding Air Force 2, one of the Secret Service bodyguards dropped his UZI SMG (submachine gun). The weapon discharged and went through one or two bulkheads, narrowly missing Dr. Kissinger. He has been apprehensive about agents getting too close to him ever since. *Source?*

Still another occurred while President Reagan was leaving a Washington church. An agent on roof duty accidentally discharged his scope-equipped high powered rifle. We know now that such things do, indeed, occur. *Source? (Reagan does not utter a word)*

But reports such as these, and reports of destroyed notes, destroyed pathological examination pictures of President Kennedy's wounds, and pictures, X-rays and other bits of evidence still kept

from public view in the National Archives, would have to be classified as vague bits of evidence which could be used to support many different assassination theories.

Since 1969 I have been unable to turn up evidence that shakes any part of my conclusion.

But one such possible piece of evidence does exist. In the pathological examination and the first autopsy performed on President Kennedy, metal particles--fragments of cores and/or jackets of bullets--were removed from his brain. A test sample was also cut out of the "miracle bullet" which had passed through both Kennedy and Connally. All these particles were later subjected by the FBI to neutron activation analysis, a high-precision procedure in which the chemical make-up of an unknown element or compound of elements can be determined.

The neutron activation analysis results are guarded, hidden from public view, and even their whereabouts kept secret. As far as I have been able to learn, the man or men who made these tests were not asked to contribute their knowledge of them to the Warren Report. Certainly I can find no record of such testimony, in the Warren Report or elsewhere. *public since 1975, Garrison since 1979*

If an investigator could view the results he could determine in an instant an important part of the story which really unfolded at Dealy Plaza in Dallas in 1963. *had a small specimen questioned*

If all the bullet fragments recovered were analyzed, and if the analysis of all match up perfectly, then the evidence becomes overwhelming that Lee Harvey Oswald's rifle was the only weapon involved in the assassination.

But if any one of those results differs from the others, then a

second type of bullet, fired by somebody else, from a different position and with a different type of firearm, was without a doubt one of the bullets which killed President Kennedy.

In order to be fair to Secret Agent George W. Hickey, Jr., Ralph Reppert attempted to contact him. On March 21, 1977, a letter was sent to him through the Secret Service [28]. It was never answered. On May 1, 1977, the first part of a two-part series ("The Kennedy Assassination: A Different View") was published. The second on May 8 [29]. I was not prepared for what happened.

II. Post-Publication

President's Select Committee on Assassinations

I received many calls after May 1, mostly from individuals curious about the assassination story. After the second article on May 8, 1977, I was overwhelmed with requests for additional information. A condensation appeared in the International Herald Tribune, published in Paris [31]. Telephone tape recordings were made by radio stations as far north as Montreal and Toronto, Canada, south to Orlando and Miami, Florida. For the first time in years the Sundpapers ran out of extra copies. Eventually, the Sunday Sun was awarded the Don Fietel Memorial Award for best magazine story of the year [2].

A new investigation of both the JFK and Dr. Martin Luther King shootings was begun by the "President's Select Committee on Assassinations." At the same time, the managing editor of the Maryland State Medical Journal, Blaine Taylor, asked me to write an article on the so-called pristine bullet. This projectile, C.E. 399, was supposed to have entered JFK high on the back or low on the neck [4, p. 4]. It exited between the third and fourth tracheal rings. My article, titled "Was the Magic Bullet Really Magic?" [26] was in response to Dr. John Nichols' article, "The Wounding of Governor John Connally of Texas on November 22, 1963." Dr. Nichols was Associate Professor of Pathology in the Department of Pathology and Oncology of the University of Kansas Medical Center. Figure 3 of his article is erroneous [26, p. 83]. I located three pictures in the National Archives [16, p. 84]. They were all taken the same day from different angles. They show clearly that Governor Connally was not sitting directly in front

not really + not a serious fear
enough to project with it
 of and level with JFK. He was in fact seated to the left of Kennedy and lower, on a folding jump seat. The rear seat of the presidential limousine had a motorized device capable of raising the seat ten inches. *that's fact* *project seat* It was in this raised position on that day [26, p. 84]. This solved the problem of position, putting Governor Connally in line to receive the bullet after it penetrated JFK. *How about elevation of gun? not possible* The pathology of Governor Connally's wounds indicated that the bullet was in a period of yaw *allegedly existing* *with the rifle* after penetrating JFK, the base being flattened [25, Fig. 10], causing the ovoid or elliptical wound in Governor Connally's back. Dr. Nichols solved one problem—the matter of penetration. Test firing bullets from the same batch from a similar rifle (Carcano Mod 91/38 - Cal. 6.5mm) showed it would penetrate 47 inches of laminated Ponderosa pine [25, Fig. 11]. *not complete like with fire* Also supportive is the fact that the bullet traveled in a straight line. *not true* Finally, an x-ray showed that the bullet was "pristine" except for many surface scratches. *not in 37?* My deductions, sketches, and the entire Maryland State Medical Journal article [26] were presented to Mr. Jack Moriarity of the Select Assassination Committee. They (or ones similar) were presented in "The Final Assassination Report" [6, F-144, 145, and 139]. At this time the examining physician felt the neck/back wound was painful and serious, but not fatal.

For the final and "fatal" head wound, starting from the fatal entrance wound in the scalp-skull, and exit wound, I discovered that *to not be possible* edge sections of these wounds were made by Dr. Humes. The jacketing material would identify the bullets. Oswald's 160 grain Carcano had a gilding jacket made out of 90 percent Cu, 9 percent Zn, the remaining 1 percent being impurities. The AR 15/M-16 bullet had a mild steel

*No interest in anything else, let me say to my regret in fact
on the subject matter*

jacket plated with about 99 percent Cu. However, all these sections and/or test results have vanished [10, p. 28].

I had requested a meeting with Congressman Long. After learning my theory and examining my qualifications and background, he arranged a meeting for us with Mr. Gary Cornwell, Deputy Chief Counsel of the Assassination Committee [16, p. 1]. Then the congressman's aide, Mr. Gary Radner, escorted us to Cornwell's office. Mr. Cornwell appeared to take copious notes. I laid out my deductions, placing major emphasis on the importance of the results of tests involving the missing edge sections. About a week later Radner called. Cornwell had just informed him these all-important pieces of evidence had vanished.

Congressman Long also stated he would examine the file on George Hickey. No results of this request were ever made evident to me or anyone else.

In a May 17, 1978 letter to Congressman Long, Mr. G. Robert Blakey, head of the assassination committee, conceded that the edge sections were given to Mrs. Kennedy *not so* and then turned back to the U.S. government. There is no evidence the FBI ever received them [12]. There is no evidence that Robert Blakey or any of his assistants ever attempted to obtain this information. However, it did remove them from the Freedom of Information Act [26, p. 59]. It should be pointed out that this evidence is still available. In another one of those strange quirks of fate, a Baltimore investigator by the name of Harold A. Rose had been hired as an investigator for the assassination committee. Rose is married to Sandra O'Connor, Baltimore County's States Attorney [13, p. 1]. Not only was he well aware of my conclusions, but a mutual friend of ours tried to arrange a meeting, either

overt or clandestine. It never occurred. Mr. Rose was in an extremely critical position; it was his duty to interview "people in the secret service" [13, p. 2]. In spite of the fact that he tracked down members of the Secret Service and other people in Seattle; Portland, Oregon; San Francisco; and at former President Nixon's estate in San Clemente, California [13, p. 3], I could not find any indication that he had visited Cheverly, a small Washington suburb. The agent I suspect of accidentally firing the shot which caused the massive head wound lives in Cheverly.

One thing had become clear. Evidence that would identify the bullet that inflicted the fatal head wound was missing or altered. This situation did not change at the meeting of the Select Committee on Assassinations.

I attended the meeting concerning ballistics and pathology. The first contradictory piece of information came from Michael Baden, M.D. At that time he was Deputy Chief Medical Examiner for the City of New York and Associate Professor of Forensic Medicine, New York University School of Medicine. In addition, he was a contributing writer in the textbook Medicolegal Investigation of Death, by Drs. Fisher and Spitz [14, p. vii]. A check of the Table of Contents indicated that Dr. Baden's expertise lies in the field of drug abuse [14, p. vi].

It seemed peculiar that neither Dr. Russell S. Fisher, Maryland's prestigious Chief Medical Examiner, nor Dr. Russel Morgan, Chief of Radiology at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, had been subpoenaed. Both had served on the "1968 Panel." Both had described the metallic object adjacent to the wound of entry in the skull as "a fragment embedded in the outer table of the skull measuring 6.5mm in diameter,

somewhat ovoid in character."

I was sitting no more than twelve feet from Dr. Baden when I heard him describe this metallic object as "a smear." Why was this object downgraded from a definite three dimensional metallic object to a two dimensional metallic smear? The answer: It would be impossible to explain the origin of the solid, ovoid, metallic particle since it could not have come from the fatal bullet. However, a smear could possibly have arisen from the long heavy bullet, depressing that part of the skull as it entered.

This session produced more glaring discrepancies. This long heavy bullet was supposed to have broken into two large pieces (WCC 567 and 569) and many fragments. These large fragments would have exited his skull in two different paths. One fragment cracked the windshield about 10° to the left of the rear view mirror. The other dented the chrome strip above and almost in the middle of the windshield [8, p. 113]. However, even though these pieces had divergent paths, only one wound path and one point of exit was found in the skull [4, p. 5].

It would be relatively simple to determine if these two pieces, C.E. 567 and 569, had transited President Kennedy's skull. Since these fragments had lost so much velocity in penetrating JFK's skull, there should have been traces of cranial tissues and hair some place in the myriad of cracks and crevasses. The cranial tissues would consist of brain cells, blood, bone, scalp, sera, and hair. Of these, blood would likely be the most important. Even a minute amount of blood could have been detected if the proper tests had been completed; it is almost impossible to completely remove all traces of blood.

Although the brain is only 2 percent of the body weight, it receives 16 percent of the body's blood. Therefore, if these pieces transited JFK's brain, they most probably would still contain traceable blood. On January 15, 1982, I called Mr. Court~~ney~~^{landt} Cunningham, the retired chief of the Fire Arms Identification Unit for the F.B.I. Mr. Cunningham personally removed the pieces and flakes of bullets from the assassinated president's blue Lincoln. I asked him if there were any traces of blood or cranial tissue on these jagged pieces. His reply was, "That's a good question." He did say these pieces should have been forwarded to the crime lab for blood analysis. If tests were performed to confirm the presence of blood, the results were never made public. *Not done, Frizor*

I told him that I had personally examined these two pieces at the National Archives. I was not permitted to handle the pieces, so one of the employees of the Archives held them while I examined all the folds and fissures through both a 10 and 30 power hand-held glass. I could find no evidence of any cranial tissue. There was no record anywhere that any tissue of any type was found.

However, something highly unusual was observed; part of what was the rear section of the broken bullet had the jacket peeled backward 180° and folded almost flat. One edge of this folded section literally had a razor edge. This strange "razor edge" would most likely have been caused by an impact with a solid object such as a sidewalk, not by traveling through the skull and cranial tissue. It is my contention that this bullet had struck the pavement to the right and rear of the presidential limousine. It then broke up into two large fragments and many small ones. Some of these smaller ones missed the

limousine by going over the windshield. It was most likely one of these that nicked bystander John Thomas Tague on the cheek [8, p. 230]. I believe it was another one of these fragments that struck President Kennedy in the back of the head [15, p. 219], causing him to cry out. The fatal bullet entered his skull right above it about two seconds later.

I spoke personally to Dr. Baden during a recess, told him my opinion, and even gave him some literature. On Wednesday, August 1, 1979 the headlines of the New York Daily News caught my attention. Mayor Koch of New York had just fired the Chief Medical Examiner for incompetence [16, p. 1]. The Examiner: Dr. Michael Baden [16, p. 3].

The correct origin of this 6.5 mm metallic object embedded in the outer table of the President's skull was the determining factor in my deductions. It became necessary to research other possibilities concerning the origin of this "object." Dr. John Lattimer had stated that this fragment had "sheared off" the body of the projectile as it entered the skull. If this was so, it should have been sheared off by the top section of the skull, which would have acted as a "chisel edge"—not the bottom. I recalled my meeting with Dr. Alfred Olivier at Edgewood Arsenal. I had examined the 10 inert human skulls shot by him. None had exhibited any metal being "sheared off" as the long, heavy 6.5mm projectile penetrated the skull. Was this possible? I referred to my textbook, Medicolegal Investigation of Death. A study of chapter 10, part 1, "Gunshot Wounds," by Dr. Werner Spitz, did not indicate at any time that any significant piece of metal was ever sheared off at the site of the bullet entry point. I then called Dr. Russel S. Fisher, Baltimore's Chief Medical Examiner; he was unavail-

*It was
impossible
to believe
it was
possible*

able, so I was referred to his associate, Dr. Thomas S. Smith. Dr. Smith stated he had never seen a fragment shear off from a hard military jacket and be deposited on the outer table of a skull. He recommended that I call Dr. Fisher again. I then called Dr. Rudiger Brietnecker, a forensic pathologist. After describing the metallic object and location, he suggested that it might be the result of a ricochet. He had never seen a fragment shear off from a high velocity, jacketed hunting, soft or hollow point bullet. Attempting to solve the baffling problem of this mysterious object, I nearly overlooked the obvious. On February 12, 1982 I called what was formerly the Wound Pathology Laboratory at Edgewood Arsenal. I did this on the outside chance that Dr. Alfred Olivier might possibly still be there. I was told he had retired and now lived in Ohio; I was directed to Larry Sturdevan in the Bio-Physics Laboratory. I asked Mr. Sturdevan the same question I asked everyone else. "Have you ever seen a piece of a hard, military, jacketed bullet shear off, leaving a piece of the jacket on the outer table of a human skull?" His answer was, "Ordinarily I wouldn't expect it--never seen it; seen a number of skulls." He also explained that he personally had never fired experimental shots into a skull, human or otherwise. However, he had witnessed this procedure a number of times. He then added that "I wouldn't expect any pieces on the outside of the skull." Shortly after my conversation with Larry Sturdevan, I called the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington, D.C. I hoped to contact Colonel (Dr.) Pierre Finck, a military forensic pathologist. He was in the autopsy room as an observer when Capt. (Dr.) Humes autopsied President Kennedy. As an expert in wound pathology of small arms

FULL

~~field~~-jacketed military projectiles, his opinion on the origin of the "metallic object" would have been invaluable. Unfortunately for me, he had retired. He now lives in Geneva, Switzerland at an unknown address. I did talk to Robert L. Thompson, M.D. Dr. Thompson is Instructor of Forensic Medicine in the Graduate School at George Washington University. His expertise concerned the terminal ballistic behavior of the M-16 bullet. He had never observed the hard jacket of this type bullet to "shear off" and wouldn't expect the jacket from any military bullet to perform in this manner. I therefore concluded the metallic object could not have been the result of a piece of jacket torn from the 160 gr. Carcano bullet. It had to have been a fragment from a ricochet. The origin of this fragment became a source of embarrassment to the Select Committee when, in March of 1978, Dr. McDonnel of Los Angeles discovered still another smaller metallic fragment medial to the spherical metallic fragment and fracture between the galéa and the outer cranial table [23, p. 131]. A more detailed report was submitted by Dr. McDonnel on August 4, 1978. He attempted to explain the presence of this tiny missile fragment by suggesting that this separation "commenced on initial impact, allowing the tiny above-described missile fragment to be displaced medially within this space created by explosion" [23, p. 132].

More mysterious fragments were discovered by Dr. David O. Davis. He is not only a professor of radiology, but also Chairman of the Department of Radiology, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. He discovered that a fragment pattern located superiorly to the region of the parietal bone was actually in the scalp. These fragments could not possibly have resulted from the internal fragmen-

tation of bullet. The scalp was protected by the parietal bone. Dr. Davis conceded that it was not possible to totally explain these fragments [23, p. 224].

In a taped interview on September 16, 1977, the Forensic Pathology Panel indicated that much conflict and confusion concerning these fragments existed among the panel. When the discussion turned to the cranial wound, Dr. Loquvam at first politely announced that this discussion did not belong in the record [23, p. 255-1]. However, when Dr. Humes became puzzled by the large size of the fragment on the outer table of the skull, and when Dr. Davis expressed concern about "part of that casing comes off," Dr. Loquvam said, "You guys are nuts. You guys are nuts writing this stuff. It doesn't belong in that damn record." He even wanted to turn the recorder off [23, p. 255]. Gary Cornwell, Deputy Chief Counsel, was officiating. Knowing all about the possibility that President Kennedy was killed by an AR-15 fired accidentally by a secret service bodyguard, he remained silent.

By omitting other pertinent information, such as the vertical relationship of the neck/back and skull wound, we discover that the skull wound perforates the President's skull from front to back at a 45° angle to the midline, from left to right, and up to down [24, p. 36]. A study of Frame 312 of the Zapruder film indicates that President Kennedy's head was 25° past profile, tilted away by about 15°, and nodding forward by about 11° [24, pp. 38 and 42]. This position, carefully measured by the Select Committee, created two more problems. The first, with head in this position, the bullet fired by Oswald would have very nearly paralleled the midline of Kennedy's skull.

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This would not even be close to the 45° true pathway determined by their own calculations. The second problem was the position of Kennedy's body. The Zapruder film shows Kennedy to be on the extreme right of the rear limousine seat. A shot nearly paralleling the mid-line of his skull would have resulted in the fragments striking the secret service agent in the right front seat. The Select Committee solved this problem ^{WITH A PENCIL} simply by moving him to the left. A comparison of the two vertical views of the limousine [24, pp. 55 and 61] shows to what extent the Select Committee went to prove a false premise.

Concerning the origin of the skull shot, more contradictory information became available from agents in the entourage. Special Agent Winston G. Lawson [5, vol. iv, p. 353], who was riding in the lead car, said:

him? Listen
 Saw an agent standing up with an auto rifle in his hand—first thing that flashed through my mind—this was the only weapon I had seen—was that he had fired because this was ~~the~~ only weapon I had seen up to that time.
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S.A. Lawson's testimony was most important. Riding in the lead car, it was his ^{not so} duty to keep the President under surveillance at all times.

S.A. Glenn Bennet, seated to the right of George Hickey, said, "I saw the boss's head explode--I reached for the automatic rifle but saw that Agent Hickey had it." However, in C.E. #1024 in the Warren Report, Agent Hickey said, "I cocked and locked the automatic rifle after the last shot was fired." S. M. Holland, looking down from the overpass, saw Hickey with the gun in his hand and saw him fall over backwards at the time of the last shot. Two secret service agents and a civilian bystander placed the AR-15 in Hickey's hands at the moment

Dunkin was first of 20 agents to see what *at 31*
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the head wound occurred.

Another strange coincidence occurred just after the Select Committee was terminated. I had previously, during the summer of 1977, put together a slide presentation of the shooting. After a luncheon lecture at the Merchants Club in Baltimore, a Mr. William Mullin introduced himself. His business card indicated that he was president of Cooper-MacDonald. His business address: National Marine Bank Building, Room 102, 33 S. Gay Street, Baltimore, MD 21202. Mr. Mullin had some surprising information. It seems that Cooper-MacDonald had purchased the patent rights of the AR-15/M-16 from Armalite, a company in Egerstown, Maryland. These rights were then licensed to Colt Industries, and the AR-15 became the lethal M-16, our present military rifle. It was Bill Mullin's job to not only test but to sell the weapon. Terminal ballistics tests were actually performed by shooting Vietnamese cadavers. Mullin had seen the slide blow-ups of Zapruder film Frame 313. This showed the incredible explosive effect of the bullet striking JFK's head. Mullin then remarked, "That was no 6.5 Carcano bullet." He also stated that the President's head wound was typical of the 50 grain, 3000'/sec .223 M-16 bullet. Bill had more surprising information. He had personally demonstrated the effectiveness of the weapon to the Secret Service. As a direct result of his efforts, S.A. George Hickey was armed with an AR-15 in Dallas. He then asked me if I knew the difference between the early AR-15, such as Hickey was armed with, and the current model. I had seen reports on this weapon. Early models had a rifling twist of one turn in fourteen inches. This relatively slow twist increased the lethal effect by reducing stability, causing the bullet to tumble

after impact. Another difference was mentioned. The Secret Service weapons had a trigger pull of five and one-half pounds. This pull was judged to be too light for military use and was later increased to around eight pounds.

At the February 14, 1978 meeting of the Select Assassination Committee I saw a huge blow-up of an AP (anterior-posterior) x-ray of President Kennedy's head and neck that had never been shown before. This x-ray clearly showed the cervical vertebrae from C-1 to C-8 [19, p. 1]. I was startled; the sixth or seventh cervical vertebra was clearly displaced in three directions [23, p. 98]. From the frontal aspect, it was displaced to Kennedy's left and downward [17, p. 1]. From the lateral aspect [18] it (C-7) was displaced forward and downward. However, Dr. Nichols' models do not represent the actual position that President Kennedy was in when struck by this bullet. I did discover from the ballistic study of Frame 312 of the Zapruder film that his head was lowered down and to the left [21]. This would place the anterior tubercles of the transverse process somewhat higher, and the posterior, lower. This, without any yaw or pitch of the projectile, would result in a significant shifting or transfer of the seventh cervical vertebra. A corresponding shock would travel up the spine with the possibility of direct transfer through the odontoid process to the brainstem. Drs. John K. Lattimer, Edward B. Schlesinger, and H. Houston Merritt were of the opinion that this perforating neck wound was serious enough to be fatal [20, p. 280]. Dr. Lattimer is a ^{O.R.C.} Otolaryngologist, while Drs. Schlesinger and Merritt are neurosurgeon and neurologist, respectively, at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York. The three made a

detailed study of the Zapruder film. They were particularly intrigued with the motion of President Kennedy's hands. Where almost everyone had concluded that the President's hands were reaching for his throat, they had arrived at the conclusion that this was a result of the cervical spine reflex at the level of cervical vertebra number six/seven. This particular reflex is called Thorburn's position [15, pp. 99 and 100]. The position results from injury to cervical vertebra C-6. This indicated the position occupied by limbs in case of "complete transverse destruction of spinal cord immediately below the level of origin of the fifth cervical vertebrae" [20, p. 285]. Another major factor contributing to the lethality of this wound was Addison's disease. Kennedy's adrenals were found to be "tiny nodules of brownish tissue rather than having the general appearance, size, and dimension of a rather large, fried oyster of greatly flattened pyramidal shape" [15, p. 223]. Cortisone therapy was administered to him to make up for the loss of adrenal function. This therapy drastically reduces resistance to infection and healing ability [15, p. 245]. Bacteria-laden air from his esophagus and trachea most certainly would have followed the wound path; resulting infection would most likely have been fatal.

This reduced healing ability and the severely traumatized spinal cord have caused me to reevaluate my original conclusion. The high velocity 223 bullet, accidentally fired from George Hickey's AR-15, struck a man already doomed [15, p. 246]. At best, if he had survived, John F. Kennedy would have been a vegetative quadriplegic.

none of mine -
in 1982

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18. Lateral aspect of above.
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Howard CH Donahue

February 24, 1981

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It was after this session that I talked to Richard Fenton, Chief Investigator for the JFK assassination. Although the policy of the SAC was to operate in secret and receive information only, he told me that "All the occupants of the security car had been interviewed." Please note the use of the word 'interviewed'. The implication is, that this discussion took place NOT UNDER OATH. But did it? Why was this all important evidence done in a closed session instead of in public? Mr. Fenton was (is) well aware of my theory. At no time did he ever tell me I was wrong. I asked if this interview would be made public--his answer was that he didn't know. This interview was not made public.

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On receiving the information that there was a 95% probability that a 4th shot was fired, I attempted to call Congressman Sawyer's office in Washington. However, since this startling new development took place during the X-mas holidays, I was given Congressman Sawyer's office phone number in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was out, but I talked to his assistant about my ballistic deduction that JFK had accidentally been shot by a secret service agent. She was silent for a moment and said, "That's quite possible."

I also attempted to contact Congressman Richardson Pryor but was unsuccessful.

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