

HSCA INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD LIPSEY, 1-18-78

[NOTE: This transcript was created by Debra Conway of JFK Lancer Productions and Publications.]

Q: We are interviewing Richard A. Lipsey. The day is Jan 18, 1978. The time is appx. 20 of 12:00. We are in Baton Rouge, Louisiana at Steinberg's Sporting Goods Store. The business [tape unclear] of Richard Lipsey.

LIPSEY: That is correct. Now let me ask you fellows a question. Before we start and the only thing that I question about this conversation is that -- and I don't even remember, I don't have a copy of it. Now, you know everything from getting the Honor Guard there and everything. And I did watch the autopsy, not all 100% of it but the majority of it. About a week or so later I remember signing a document that we that fell under some Federal Secrets Act, should not discuss any thing we felt was a secret nature particularly about the autopsy for 15 years. Now are you excluded from this?

Q: Well, it's our understanding...

LIPSEY: Not that I know anything that makes a hell of a lot of difference. We were just told not to discuss it and I don't remember if it is 15 years or 20 years. I definitely remember signing something of that nature.

Q: It's our position that we are pursuing this investigation pursuant to the mandate of Congress and that we hope you will wish to participate and give us the information in a voluntary manner.

LIPSEY: Fine. No question about it. As long as you feel that in your position with Congress that anything I may have signed would be null and voided as far as you are concerned.

Q: We are not in a position to give you legal advice as to what you should or should not do. It is our position that there will not be any harm coming to you for cooperating in our investigation because of what you tell us.

LIPSEY: I really don't think there is. I think the point of it was obviously until the investigation -- this was when the investigation hadn't even started -- was that really we didn't talk to reporters or anything until the investigation on the assassination of Pres. Kennedy was complete. I personally feel that was what it was. With that understanding, you know...

Q: If at any point you feel there is a particular item with a question of National Security, please consult with an attorney.

LIPSEY: I will. There's nothing that I can tell you that would have anything to do with National Security.

Q: Just for the record to clarify what the orders may have been, [tape unclear] were they orders to sign?

LIPSEY: I think it came through our Chief of Staff in our office. Military District of Washington. It came from our chief of staff, it was a Col. Holden. He got it from where ever. That's the best I can remember. Okay, let's go on from there.

Q: Preliminary we'd like you to state -- we know your name already --your date of birth, and then also to go back to 1963 and what your general duties were, not just on that day, but in general as an aide to Gen Wehle.

LIPSEY: Born on Oct 7, 1939 in Selma, Alabama, and I reside right here in Baton Rouge. I was at the time, I'd been in the service I was stationed at Ft. Polk, Louisiana. While I was there several hundred Lt.'s got interviewed for the job, well didn't get interviewed, there were several hundred there, I was one of several that was fortunate enough to get interviewed for the job of aide de camp to Gen Wehle who was at Ft. Polk. I was selected as his Jr. aide at that time, I was a 2nd Lt.. Shortly thereafter, in June, Gen Wehle was notified that he was being transferred to Washington as commander general of MBW.

[Somewhat condensed for clarity] And his senior aide, as most Generals do, take care of their aides, arranged for senior aide to attend command and general staff college in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. And he asked me if I'd like to accompany him to Washington, which I did. I was very grateful to get out of Ft. Polk. When I got to Washington Gen. Wehle was due two aides, a senior, in his position, his aide could have been a Colonel or up to Captain. Gen Wehle and I got along very well. I had so much respect for him, he was just a super human being. We worked so well together that he just didn't get another aide, I was it. I took the place of both aides. So I was Gen Wehle's aide while he was the Commanding Secretary General in Washington. And also at some special events I served as a social aide at the WH, military aide at night at some occasions. But the majority of my time was spent working day and night for Gen Wehle.

Our duties basically -- Gen W's duties, he was the senior military service in Washington, maybe not always in rank on some occasions, but he was the senior commanding General in Washington of a unit. And as such when all the services worked together -- like the Army, Navy, Airforce, Coast Guard, Marines -- worked together on projects, receptions, when dignitaries came to the US on special events, on funerals, on parades, whatever, our service was the senior service and Gen Wehle was always in command. That's how we happened to handle the funeral obviously when Kennedy got killed. All ceremonial aspects of military, anything the military has to do with Washington in regard to ceremony, all the services participate, is run by the Army and since Gen Wehle was the commanding officer and I was his aide, I was the detail man. Did a lot of his planning and helped him a lot. The funeral was our project from the time I was in Washington and he was killed.

I happened to be driving up to the Gen's house at 1:00 to pick him up to go back to the office and had the radio on. And heard the news flash the same as everybody else did. The Gen had his radio on in the house and we met at the door. I was coming in as he was coming out. We immediately went back to our office and got on the phone with the WH. Got on the phone with the Pentagon, got on the phone with everybody else and immediately put what needed to be done into progress.

We met the body at Andrews Airforce Base. We had everything organized by that afternoon. We had Marines organized with their little Honor Guard. We had the men from Ft. Meyer, the third old [?] guard, the guys like at Humphry's funeral, the ceremonial guard that watched the casket. The ceremonial troop in Washington had been arranged to meet the body at Andrews. Put it in a hearse. We had a decoy hearse because we knew there was a mob waiting at Bethesda Naval Hospital. So we got in a couple of these helicopters with our honor guard when they left and flew over to the hospital to get there before they did. And when they came in, one of the hearses went right up to the front door. All of the crowd, of course, rushed over there. The one with the body in it went around to the back where the morgue was and we unloaded it. We met them in the back and unloaded it right there to avoid the news media and the crowd and everything else.

Q: The body was brought in the rear?

LIPSEY: The body was brought in the back door, backed right up to the loading ramp right immediately next to the morgue. And we unloaded it there and then Jackie Kennedy and her family and everybody that was, you know, flown to Washington and come back with the body, they came in the hospital the front way and went upstairs to the Presidential Suite at the hospital. Gen. Wehle went up to the suite to start to talk to Mrs. Kennedy to make the funeral arrangements with her, tentative arrangements mind you, because this was still early. Seeing what they wanted done and getting more wheels into motion because we didn't know exactly to do. And Gen Wehle told me, "Don't leave this body!" "You don't leave it," and I didn't except when he came back down and went in and spelled me for a little while.

Q: I have a question. How did you go from when Air Force One landed? How did you go from Andrews to Bethesda itself?

LIPSEY: We accompanied General Wehle in a helicopter.

Q: In a helicopter. While the body was being driven?

LIPSEY: Right.

Q: And then you were there when...

LIPSEY: The body was in the procession and going through Washington but there were two hearses and one pulled right up to the front door and one went around with the body, went around to the back of the hospital.

Q: Were you present when the body was taken out of, to the rear?

LIPSEY: I was standing there at the airplane when it was loaded into the hearse and then I was standing right there. I helped then unload the casket myself when we were at the hospital. Right.

Q: And then you accompanied it from that point on?

LIPSEY: Then never left it.

Q: You stayed with the body?

LIPSEY: Right.

Q: Okay, I guess we can go on.

LIPSEY: It's up to you to start asking questions now.

Q: You just go on...

LIPSEY: Remember this is 14 years ago. I mean it's so little span of time and I've thought about it so often recounted it to friends all except for what I actually saw at the autopsy. We took the body to the morgue. The only other person that I can remember besides the doctors, and there were the team of doctors that worked on the body, the only other person that I can remember, beside the doctors was inside of the room was a 1st Lt. Sam Bird. I was a 1st Lt. Sam was head of the Old Guard, I really can't think of what they called them, the guys, two or three teams of fellows that were always responsible of the casket in a ceremony -- when a general died. Three of them march on each side of the casket, enlisted men and there is an officer in charge. At all the important funerals held while I was there, Sam was always the officer in charge. He was the guy that had been standing there all night long ready to pick up the casket or do whatever's necessary and move it around. He was in charge of the detail that guarded the casket, a formality-type thing. He was there, in and out of the room during the autopsy.

So, anyhow. They brought the body in, took it out. Laid it on the table. It was the first dead man I'd ever seen, and I'd never seen an autopsy, obviously, I'd never seen an autopsy before. So it was a pretty traumatic experience. I wouldn't really, quite frankly, I couldn't tell the General, "No, I not going in the room." So I went. I'd never realized seeing a dead man with rigor mortis -- it just didn't seem like you were looking at a dead person, it was just entirely a different thing. It didn't bother me at all. I remember that Sam went out during the ceremony and sent one of his men to get us some hamburgers, it was late at night since we hadn't eaten since that morning. We sat in there watching part of the autopsy eating hamburgers. So obviously there was the smell of formaldehyde in there. That's what bothered me. The smell was worse than the sight.

So, we watched the autopsy. Once again, my hours are a little fuzzy. The autopsy lasted approx. , if I'm not mistaken, approx. 3 - 4 hours. After that we stayed in the room. When the men from the funeral home came in, because, by this time when Gen Wehle had come back down, but he was in and out. He was still making a lot of arrangements, but he would come in occasionally for a couple of minutes to let me go out and take a little break. Then the men from the funeral home came in and we sat there while they more or less put him back together and made the cosmetic, made the different cosmetic changes that had to be made on the body.

By that time I had sent my car to the WH to get some clothes for Kennedy and they'd come back. They'd called the WH and told them.

Q: Who is "they?" The company that drove...?

LIPSEY: Gen Wehle got someone from the Kennedy family to call the WH to tell them what clothes. We sent our driver Gen had a permanent car and chauffeur. I sent my driver to the WH and got...

Q: Did he take anyone with him, maybe a presidential aide? Agent? Anyone else?

LIPSEY: I honestly couldn't tell you. I have no earthly idea. All I know is the got the clothes from the WH and I helped the funeral home. By that time, by then I think there were only two of them in the room. I helped them dress him, helped them pick up the body, [helped them] dress him. I helped them pick him up and laid him in the casket. And as far as I know I was the last to look at him -- standing there when they closed it. Then the story just goes on and on about the funeral. I don't know how really relevant that part can be. Just formal planning and carrying out the funeral.

Q: Getting back to the beginning stages of the autopsy, or even before the actual autopsy began, do you recall when the x-rays were taken, the x-rays and photos?

LIPSEY: Yeah, well as far as the exact x-rays were taken, no I don't recall. I do recall the comments from the doctors, you know, who started examining the body before they did anything, you know, looking at the body, looking at where the bullets had entered the back of the his head. It was obvious that one bullet entered the back of his head and exited on the right side of his face and pretty well blew away the right side of his head. And then the other two bullets had entered the lower part of his neck and the best of my knowledge, or the best of my memory, one had exited. The other bullet had entered from behind and hit his chest cavity and the bullet went down into the body. And during the autopsy, this is the only part that I can imagine would be of any-- really, what I've told you right there, of strictly confidential nature that was never written up anywhere. And I presume, am I right, that this tape and this conversation is strictly confidential? You know, it's not going to be published I guess is what I'm getting at?

Q: It's not going to be published during the term of this committee. During 1978.

LIPSEY: Okay, Well, is that as far as I can remember, and I'm pretty positive about it, they never found that third bullet. It did not exit the body. When they did the autopsy first they cut the top of

his head off and then they cut his chest open, you know, and they got all of his insides out, that was the only gory part, they took them out a piece at a time and laid them up on, I remember, a beautiful clean stainless steel rack with water pouring over it all the time. I imagine to keep it fresh or whatever. They did the whole autopsy then they came back and, you know, sliced up all the organs.

Q: For slides?

LIPSEY: I don't know what they were using them for. They were taking pictures of them, they, you know, and they were examining them. I don't know whether they were taking them for records or not. I don't think the doctors, to be perfectly frank, I don't think it ever entered the doctors' minds that they were taking pictures for a formal investigation. They were doing an autopsy, a complete autopsy, and whatever physical records that you maintain during an autopsy was what they were doing. I know they did a very thorough job because every time one to them would say something the other one would question it. I can remember they looked at this one organ and they passed it around and all three discussed it before they would go on to the most part. You know, it wasn't one guy doing his operating on the feet, one on the chest, and one on the head. They did everything together and re-examined everything together. I remember that distinctly. They looked like one of the most efficient teams doing anything that I've ever seen. But anyhow, like I say. I can remember lifting his chest cavity and then the top of his head off, and you know, all the internal organs out. And I can remember them discussing the third, third bullet. First, second and third bullet. The third bullet, the one they hadn't found. Their only logical explanation was that it hit him in the back of the head, hit his chest cavity and then, like bullets will do--I am sure you are familiar with that one, you could shoot somebody, no telling where the bullet is going to and up--probably hit his chest cavity and could have gone all the way down into his toe. You know, it could have just hit and gone right down into his leg or wherever. But I don't think, to the best of my knowledge, they ever found the third bullet.

Q: Did they find any other bullets?

LIPSEY: This is what I'm getting back to. I don't know that they found bullets or whether they found just particles of bullets. I don't think they know. I don't think they found any whole bullets. But that is just strictly speculation on my part. I remember they were bound and determined to find that bullet because it didn't have an exit mark. But I don't think they ever found the bullet. The one that hit his chest, the one that exited here -- [corrects himself] entered here; there was no exit hole. So the bullet was somewhere in his body, obviously.

Q: When you say "entered here" referring to?

LIPSEY: The lower back of the neck.

Q: Lower back.

LIPSEY: From the angle they were talking about it had to come from quite a height because they were looking and talking to each other the angle they were pointing that had hit him had to be a down angle. Also all of them, their entire discussion -- I never entered the discussion and neither did Sam Bird. We were sitting there watching and listening. And we weren't asked our opinion, for obvious reasons. We wouldn't have known what we were talking about. We never entered in any conversation with the docs or offered any information except when we were talking.

And I didn't personally think, personal opinion, from listening to the doctors, watching the autopsy, there was no question in their minds that the bullets came from the same direction that all three bullets came from the same place at the same time. They weren't different angles. They all had the same pattern to them.

Q: Okay, getting back to the bullets themselves, not the bullets themselves but the entrances, can you just go over again the entrances as you remember them?

LIPSEY: Alright, as I remember them there was one bullet that went in the back of the head that exited and blew away part of his face. And that was sort of high up, not high up but like this little crown on the back of your head right there, three or four inches above your neck. And then the other one entered at more or less the top of the neck, the other one entered more or less at the bottom of the neck.

Q: Okay, so that would be up where the crown, not the top of the head?

LIPSEY: Yeah, the rear crown.

Q: Where that point might be on the skull bone?

LIPSEY: Exactly.

Q: Then one approximately several inches lower?

LIPSEY: Well not several but two or three inches lower.

Q: Still in the head? Or what we would call...

LIPSEY: Closer to the neck.

Q: Closer to the neck? And than one in the neck?

LIPSEY: In the lower neck region.

Q: In the back?

LIPSEY: Yeah, the very -- right as the

Q: Let's go back over things. Sometimes visual aids you forget. Okay, and then according to the autopsy doctors they feel the one that entered in the skull, in the rear of the head, exited the right side of the head?

LIPSEY: The right front, you know, the face. Not the right top, the right front. The facial part of your face. In other words...

Q: Did that destroy his face at all? You say Presidents Kennedy, was his face distorted?

LIPSEY: Yeah, the right side. If you looked at him straight. If you looked at him from the left you couldn't see anything. If you looked at him from the right side it was just physically part of it blown away.

Q: So that would be right here?

LIPSEY: Yeah, behind the eye and everything.

Q: Behind the eye? Was it all hair region or was it part of the actual face?

LIPSEY: To the best of my recollection it was part of the hair region and part of the face region.

Q: Just to follow up this point, after the embalming had been done and the morticians finished preparing the body and you viewed President Kennedy at that time, after he was dressed, could you see any damage?

LIPSEY: They did a beautiful job. He looked great.

Q: So you really couldn't tell?

LIPSEY: Oh, you could tell, sure, if you got up close you could tell, yes.

Q: But he was presentable in the sense that you....

LIPSEY: He wasn't presentable in the sense that you would want to open the casket. But they did a super job.

Q: What I guess I'm getting at is half his face so completely blown away? Could you recognize him?

LIPSEY: No, not at all. Oh no, he was 100% recognizable. I mean, particularly after they finished. No, it wasn't that much damage at all.

Q: Now getting back, we just went over the three entrances and what the doctor's stated were entrances. To refresh your memory, the first doctor was Dr. Humes...is the chief pathologist...

LIPSEY: [Talking over questioner] I met the doctors when it first started except when I read their names -- I don't know them then; I don't know them now -- on a personal basis. Nor I never talked to them before, during or afterwards.

Q: You do recollect Commander Humes?

LIPSEY: Yes. Okay, the only thing I remember there at times was another, it wasn't a doctor. It could have been a doctor. I know there was an assistant or an aide doing things for them during different periods.

Q: Getting back to the entrances you just stated one exit you believed was on the right hand side of the head. Now what about the other entrances, what about the corresponding exits if there were any? Let's clarify that a little more. For starting, one...

LIPSEY: The bullet entered lower part of the head or upper part of the neck. [long pause] To the best of my knowledge, came out the front of the neck. But the one that I remember they spent so much time on, obviously, was the one they found did not come out. There was a bullet -- that's my vivid recollection cause that's all they talked about. For about two hours all they talked about was finding that bullet. To the rest of my recollection they found some particles but they never found the bullet -- pieces of it, trances of it. The best of my knowledge, this is one thing I definitely remember they just never found that whole bullet.

Q: What was it you observed that made you feel that exited -- the bullet that entered the rear portion of his head exited in the throat area?

LIPSEY: The throat area. Right. The lower throat area.

Q: What, were there markings there that indicated that the doctors came to that conclusion?

LIPSEY: I saw where, you know, they were working and also listening to their conclusions.

Q: And it's your recollection at that time was that the doctors definitely felt the bullets came from the one area, same area, same time?

LIPSEY: Yes, they talked about that. It never seemed to be any doubt in their mind the bullets were coming from different directions at all.

Q: It's been a long time but do you recall any reasons they gave?

LIPSEY: Because of the angle. I remember that's how they kept talking about the angles of the bullets because the angles that they entered the body. That's why, they, I remember, measuring and doing all kinds of things. They turned the body up at one point to determine where that bullet that entered back here that didn't have an exit mark. Where was that bullet? And so when it got to down to where they thought it hit his chest cavity, they opened him up and started looking in here. That's why I remember one thing, they took, after they had taken all his organs out, during the autopsy they had them sitting up there: "Now let's see if we can find the bullet." They cut all his organs apart. I don't know what they did with them, I don't remember but they put them in some kind of containers. I don't remember but they put them in containers.

Q: Okay. One of the tapes stopped. Mr. Lipsey is also taping this interview and his taped stopped. 12:07 starting again.

Q: Getting back again to the beginning of the autopsy I think we can follow through on and answer some questions. Do you recall what time the photographs were taken?

LIPSEY: I remember them, and there again, that's [tape skips] I remember them taking the photographs but I don't remember what time. I have no idea.

Q: Do you know what they did with the photographs?

LIPSEY: I wasn't concerned about them. Never entered my mind to even ask. I might point out at this time that Sam Bird, the other Lt. that I'm talking about. And I could kick myself 3 times for not doing it. We had a lot of documented records that had to do with the funeral itself. You know, planning it and the Old Guard, the presidents, and the kings and queens who all were there. Every step of the record. I've got a lot of those records at home, newspapers with my picture on the cover during the funeral and all that.

But I do remember, right after, this was all started Friday night and we buried him on Monday afternoon. I remember Tuesday night or Wednesday night, one night that week, sitting in Sam's apartment. He made a recording on the everything he had seen and done from the time Kennedy was assassinated until the time they buried him, for his own personal record. And I could kick myself for not doing the same thing. But I remember him doing that.

Q: This was on the Tuesday or Wednesday night?

LIPSEY: Tuesday, Wednesday night after the autopsy. The autopsy was Friday night. I remember we left after the autopsy. I was sitting there with Sam. the funeral people put Kennedy back together. That took almost as long as the autopsy. It was sometime in the very early hours of the morning. I've got that documented at home. I guess it was sometime between 3 and 4 in the morning. We finally finished and we put the body back into the hearse. And Jackie Kennedy came down and got into the hearse with the body herself. Still had on the pink suit -- she hadn't changed clothes.

We led it. Gen Wehle and myself were the first car. If I'm not mistaken, there was a police car in front of us. The hearse right behind us. Then a family car behind that. One or two other cars in the procession. We went back to the WH. We drove up, went into the WH, parked. We'd had all this arranged so it had to be very formalized now. Mrs. K and the hearse with the body stopped at

the entrance. We called, I'll never forget this, we called the Marine barracks which was across the river in Virginia twenty minutes before we left the hospital. It might have been 15 minutes, we called them and told them we wanted an honor guard to lead the body into the WH and to make a cordon as the Old Guard moved and carried it out of the WH. [seems very moved, voice tight with grief]

They woke those boys out of a dead sleep and they were at the WH before we were. They had a group of them marching in front of the hearse. Went very slow. We took the body out, took it in the white house. Into the East Room if I remember correctly. At that time they had a priest there. It was Bobby, Jackie, WH servants, one or two other people and Gen Wehle and myself. They had a little private service, a little Funeral service lasting 10 - 15 minutes. That picture ended up a double page spread. They ended up they had a photographer in there. No other news service allowed there. It must have been an official photograph. That ended up as a double page spread picture in a magazine. That doesn't have anything to do with what you're trying to find out.

Q: Do you remember whether Sam Bird discussed the details of the autopsy on the tape?

LIPSEY: No I don't I remember him making the tape. I remember asking me questions about who was there in order to authenticate. As far as I remember when I came into his room he had been making the tape. I was not present when he discussed the autopsy part on the tape. I'm not sure he put it on tape. But I know for a fact that he made a tape recording of his part in the whole thing. To that point, if he did put it on tape, about the autopsy and basically we saw the exact same thing, that tape would be a lot more valuable to you than what I am telling you today. It would be a lot more valuable.

Q: Is Sam Bird still alive today? Have you talked to him?

LIPSEY: I haven't talked to Sam since the day I left Washington. I left Washington in around this time in 1074.

Q: Was he still stationed there?

LIPSEY: Yeah. He was still stationed there when I left. I imagine he stayed there for his tour of duty. Matter of fact, Gen Wehle asked Sam -- Sam and I got to be very good friends. We lived right across from each other at Ft. Meters in the Officer's HQ. Sam had he had been a general's aide at his previous station. When I left Washington Gen W got me to ask Sam if he would replace me as Gen Wehle's aide. Sam felt he'd been a general's aide once and he felt he needed a tour of duty on his records instead of another general aide position just so he could seek rank faster. I don't know if he stayed in the Army or got out of the Army. He was a permanent type. To the best of my knowledge Sam Bird's probably still in the Army, if he's alive. And I certainly hope he is. He was a fine person.

Q: In the early stages of the autopsy before they formally began cutting, who was running things?

LIPSEY: I can't tell you. There were doctors in there. One doctor was obviously directing the procedures. I don't know which one it was.

Q: Was the doctor directing the procedures one of the participating in the autopsy?

LIPSEY: Yes.

Q: Did the autopsy surgeons discuss among themselves what type of autopsy they would do?

LIPSEY: Not during the autopsy, no.

Q: Do you remember any discussions prior to the autopsy?

LIPSEY: I wasn't with them prior to the autopsy. They were there when we got there

Q: From the time that you arrived, until they were into the autopsy, do you remember the doctors discussing the nature of the autopsy?

LIPSEY: I'm sure they must have. No. I'm not sure they must have. They must have discussed it among themselves. Whether they discussed with anybody else or the chief of surgery of the hospital. I'm sure they probably did. I don't know. I honestly don't know. I can't make any comment on that because I don't know.

Q: Did they have any discussions with anyone else during the autopsy?

LIPSEY: No. Not to my knowledge.

Q: Were you in the positions to be able to hear any conversations among the doctors?

LIPSEY: Yeah, I was, but truthfully, I paid attention to what I wanted to pay attention to. it was one of those deals where I was curious how many times he'd been shot, or where he'd been shot. Medical definitions of what type of wounds they were, and whatever, I tuned all that out probably. I didn't know what they were talking about and I just didn't care. I should have cared more-- I wish now I could have taped it, if possible.

No. I really don't know...I heard their conversations. I was interested in the parts I wanted to be interested in. It's been too long to recall the other parts of their conversations.

Q: I'd like to stop the tape in order to change sides. The time is 12:17.

Time is 12:18 beginning the tape again.

Q: Getting back to the question that he just asked you. In terms of feet, how close were you to the table where the autopsy was being performed? Were you right behind?

LIPSEY: When you walked in the autopsy room from the back door where they brought the body in, you turned left down a very little short hallway. Had the doors right there. When you walked in there was sort of a like a little spectator's gallery, on the right there were several chairs on the right with a railing in front. The table was in front of that. I would say I was about as far as from that jacket, maybe, from the doctors, approximately about 12-15 feet.

They did make a comment when they laid him on the table or anything that has nothing to do with anything. He was a beautiful physical specimen. He had not an ounce of fat his body anywhere, very muscular. Great looking physical shape. Obviously he looked like a dead person. but, he looked smaller, I saw him quite a bit and he looked much smaller. Just his physical condition was fantastic--not fat or any sloppiness anywhere.

Q: When the autopsy doctors first walked up to the table, did they did they thoroughly look over the body or did they concentrate on one area and begin to work there.

LIPSEY: The first thing they did was look over the body. I can remember that, you know, from head to toe, all sides. They just looked at the whole thing. And made, they discussed a lot of things. That's probably the part I tuned out. I do remember looking it over thoroughly. I do remember the body still was covered with blood. I remember them cleaning it off, taking, I remember a brush, a scrub brush, cleaning the body in certain areas before they started cutting. I remember after they finished, scrubbing it down again, you know, getting all the mess away and

everything. They scrubbed and cleaned it pretty good after all the preliminary looking they wanted to, before they physically touched the body, they had to clean the body before they started.

Q: Did the doctors in that preliminary examination find all the wounds you have described?

LIPSEY: I'm sure they must have. They were visible.

Q: To follow that up, the wounds that you describe, was that based on hearing the doctors calling out that this is a wound, this is a wound? Or was that based on your visible sight when you saw the body?

LIPSEY: Both. Because, I could see the body, I could see the rear. I could see obviously the side of the face. Although that's just when I walked in they took him out the casket -- I saw that. Beside the side wound, because when I went back and sat down, they laid him down to right. The way they laid him I was looking at the left side of his body as opposed to the right side of his body. I remember I could see the blood at the throat area, and in the neck area. As for as me getting down and looking at the exit hole in the front, all I could see was the blood. What I'm talking about is what I heard in conversation from them, from then on.

Q: To follow that up, as you should well know because I take it you do hunt a lot, locating wounds in hair is very difficult. The sighting. Did you visibly see the wounds in the back of the head, what you feel were the entrance wounds? Was based on what the doctors stated that we know their opinions...

[Lipsey is interrupting with "No...That's...No."]

LIPSEY: No. That's...No. I hope I'm not contradicting myself. But at this point, there again, like I said, it's been a long time. I feel that there was no really entrance wound --maybe I said that --in the rear of his head. There was a point where they determined the bullet entered the back of his head but I believe all of that part of his head was blown. I mean I think it just physically blew away that part of his head. You know, just like a strip right across there or may have been just in that area -- just blew it out..

Q: So you say the damage caused by the entrance and the exit of the bullet to the head caused one large hole?

LIPSEY: To the best of my recollection, yes it did. But one, the other one went in the back of the neck. Like a say, I saw the blood spots and what have you, but they weren't tremendous, not a blow-a-way like this. But, of course, what little I know about it, which isn't a hell of a lot, your bone is right there, so when it hit it, the bullet probably expanded, hit something solid and ripped. But here, it went in to tissue before it hit anything.

Q: Was there any discussion of the nature of the bullet which caused the head wound?

LIPSEY: No. To my recollection, no there wasn't.

Q: Was there any discussion that it would take a certain kind of bullet to cause that kind of damage?

LIPSEY: If it was done, it was probably, I'm thinking, it was probably done in the privacy of the doctors after the autopsy. I don't remember -- and I'm sure it must have been mentioned during the autopsy but I'm not going to say yes or no because I don't have any idea. I don't remember that at all.

Q: During the autopsy, did you discuss with anyone else in the room the nature of head wounds. Or the causes of them?

LIPSEY: No. Not really. Sam and I... We just talked about different things. We talked about Kennedy, talked about how many times he had been shot. I don't think we ever discussed anything in relation to what the doctors were saying about the wounds.

Q: Could you describe for us the nature of the damage to the front of the neck?

LIPSEY: No. I really couldn't. Because like I say, when we got it out, there was -- blood was all over the body. It was almost caked on. I remember they took a scrub brush and a pail. One of his arms, and if I've not mistaken, it was his left arm. You know, the way, I guess, after he died, finished the autopsy by that time and, rigor mortis had set in and one of his arms was slightly higher. Well, the guy's laying down and one of them was up a little bit. So when they started the autopsy I can remember, one of the doctors, when he was starting to clean the body up, got up on the table and physically got up on the table and put his knee down on his arm to hold it down - - to get it out of his way -- so he could scrub the rest of the body. So to say, to describe the hole to you, no. Because it was so messy and so much blood that I didn't, I never got close enough to get down and look at the wound itself.

Q Can you give us an rough estimate, compared it for example to the wound in the head and the wound in the back...

LIPSEY: It was much smaller, very much smaller.

Q: ...Than the head wound...

LIPSEY: Than the side head wound.

Q: What about the wound on the back?

LIPSEY: There again the wound in the back of the head, all I saw of that wound was when they turned him on his side. And saw the blood when they were cleaning him off, cutting, and doing the thing. I couldn't possibly describe to you the relation to the size. I don't remember and I doubt that I saw it close enough to describe it to you.

Q: Do you remember whether the doctors describing the wound in the neck as being caused by anything other than a bullet?

LIPSEY: No.

Q: Do you remember discussions on whether or not there was a tracheotomy incision?

LIPSEY: [Long Pause.] No. I guess anything I do remember something about that -- I remember it would have to come after reading about what went on in Dallas. I just don't remember discussing that.

Q: What have you read about Dallas? About that front neck wound?

LIPSEY: It's been so long. Like I say, I'm glad I hadn't. I'm glad I didn't go back over any articles and read because I don't even remember.

Q: You don't recall whether there was a tracheotomy in the front of the neck?

LIPSEY: Absolutely not.

Q: Well, you say you didn't you hear the doctors discuss that. Did you explicitly hear the doctors say that the wound in the front of the neck was caused by a bullet?

LIPSEY: If you want to get down to specifics: no. The only thing I do remember was when they kept talking about the entrance in the back of the neck and looking at the hole in the front of the neck. To the best of my knowledge they were convinced that a bullet came out the front of the neck. And that's how they were determining where to look for the other bullet -- by the angle it went in at the back and came out at the front. Where to look at the other one.

Q: Oh, the angle where it came in the head -- looking out the front of the neck -- using that angle...

LIPSEY: Right. Right. [Interrupting] To determine where to look for the other one, I presume from what they were looking at, both entrances looked to be the same.. In other words, both entrances -- the angles were the same were on both entrances, or the sizes of the holes probably was the same -- and in the front. I'm not going to stand here and make up a story, make it sound good, I just don't remember whether they discussed the size of a trach hole or it in relation to where a bullet might have exited.

Q: How much time would you say, relatively speaking, did the doctors spent on the 3 wounds you described? Did they spend more time on one or the other of the wounds?

LIPSEY: They spent more time looking for that other bullet than they did on anything else.

Q: You're describing the bullet that went in...

LIPSEY: ...on the lower part of the neck. I remember them saying it must of hit the chest cavity and ricocheted down somewhere into the body.

Q: Do you remember any discussion...

LIPSEY: And they spent a lot of time on that. Because I remember when they cut him open in the front, you know, they -- I remember -- "Let's look for this, let's look for this." They took all the organs out, they went through, they cut the organs up looking for bullets. And finally, to the best of my knowledge, and I remember this, I don't remember how much more they did after this, but I remember them saying: "That bullet could be anywhere." It could have gone right down to his heels or his toes. It could have ricocheted and traveled right down through right on down, you know, through his insides.

Q: Do you remember any discussion among the doctors that the bullet could have entered lower in the neck -- lower back part of the neck exited in the front of the neck?

LIPSEY: Yeah. I remember they were firmly convinced it did not.

Q: Okay. So you're convinced...

LIPSEY: That's why they spent so much time looking for it. They traced it through the back of his neck through, you know, when they did the autopsy, through the inside of his body and there was no where the bullet was then where it should have exited, it was not. And at the angle it was traveling, and from, you know, with the other things they saw visible in the chest area once they cut him open, you know, it had started down, but where was it?

Q: When they opened up the body from the front, did -- were they able to discern any part of the track of the bullet?

LIPSEY: I'm convinced they were in the upper part of his body -- yes -- because that's how they started following it. And then I think, that's when they started taking his organs out, you know, one at a time only. They took all of the insides out, I remember that, boy. They had four or five piles of

insides sitting on the table. And they thoroughly examined each one of those. They just had a big hollow chest and stomach cavity left -- or particularly chest cavity, when they got through. And, I'm very convinced, in my own mind, that they were very convinced that bullet was somewhere in him.

Because, from their conversations, they tracked this bullet as far as they could in a downward position before they couldn't tell where it went. That's when they started taking organs apart and looking where ever they could look without going ahead and just cutting him apart. And I think their decision finally was, we're just, you know, not going to completely dissect him to find this bullet. So they tracked the bullet down as far as it went. Obviously, by that point it wasn't that important.

Q: When they opened up the chest, when you say they saw part of the track of the bullet, did they take a photograph of that?

LIPSEY: Can't tell. I honestly do not know.

Q: Let me ask you this: Did they take all the photographs at the beginning or did they take some during the course of the autopsy?

LIPSEY: [Long pause] Once again, I don't know. I just don't know.

Q: Do you remember, you expressed, that you said the doctors considered the possibility that the bullet could be virtually anywhere in the body, including, I think the word you mentioned was "as far as the heel" Do you remember whether or not the doctors x-rayed...

LIPSEY: I remember one of the doctors said I've seen a guy shot -- something to the effect, "I've seen bullet wounds hit bone and ricocheted all over the body." And he says, "We may never find this bullet unless we take the whole body apart."

Q: Do you remember whether they x-rayed the lower extremities?

LIPSEY: No, I don't.

Q: Do you recall if they were using x-rays at the same time they were dissecting?

LIPSEY: No.

Q: Do you remember the doctors looking at the x-rays during the autopsy room?

LIPSEY: That I do. I remember looking at them. That must have been... You're jogging my memory now because I do remember them looking at x-rays at the beginning of the autopsy, so they must have taken some at the at very beginning because I remember them relating x-rays to things they were doing.

Q: Do you remember which portion of the X-rays...

LIPSEY: No, no, no, no. I plead dumbness on that, I just don't...But I remember now, them holding [mumbling] things, this long thing in series with lights. They'd examine part of an x-ray and go on from there. So, obviously, they must have taken x-rays right at the beginning. If they took any more during or after, I don't remember.

Q: Do you remember any of the autopsy doctors arriving at the autopsy later than the others?

LIPSEY: No, I don't.

Q: Do you remember any of the autopsy doctors probing any of the wounds?

LIPSEY: Not, no, I really can't say. They were doing everything so I don't... I can say they must have, I'm not going to say they did. I remember, the wounds, looking for the bullet, were their primary concern.

[Interruption by intercom]

Q: Do you remember any discussion when they were trying to find out where the bullet went -- of the possibility that the bullet had gone in the back and had fallen out of the body? In other words, a non-exited bullet remained in...

LIPSEY: [Interrupts] No. There was no possibility, there were no other holes it could have fallen out.

Q: That's what I mean -- Did they discuss...

LIPSEY: [Interrupts] ...to the rear. In other words...

Q: [Talking over Lipsey] That's what I mean. Fell out of the entrance.

LIPSEY: The bullet has penetrated. It went into his skin. There was evidence of it inside his body. It had penetrated the body. There was no way it could have fallen out.

Q: Was there any discussion because of external cardiac massage from the front when he was face up it could have fallen out?

LIPSEY: No. There was no discussion of that that I recall.

Q: Do you recall any phone calls anyone in the autopsy room made?

LIPSEY: In the room you mean?

Q: Anyone from the room or anyone from the room leaving the room to make a call?

LIPSEY: I made a call.

Q: From the room?

LIPSEY: No. Not from the room, but when the autopsy was over, before the men from the funeral home started their work, they took a break. Gen Wehle came in and asked if I wanted to go out for a while. Gen Wehle came into the room and I went out of the room and took 10 or 15 minutes. And called my parents and said, "Guess where I am or what I just did?" Woke them up, it was then after 2:00 in the morning. They said, "What?" "I just watched Kennedy's autopsy." Yes, we saw you on television this afternoon at Andrews Airforce Base and all that. I'll participate to a much greater extent at the funeral. Watch television -- you'll see me. Typical, you know, I guess, 21 year old's reaction. That was the sum total of my reaction to my parents. I didn't discuss anything about anything. Just, I've been watching the autopsy. If anybody else called...I don't know.

Q: Do you remember any messages being sent into the room by the Kennedy family or anybody with the Kennedy's?

LIPSEY: No.

Q: Do you remember Adm. Burkeley being in present at the autopsy?

LIPSEY: Everybody, to my knowledge, in that room besides Sam Bird and myself had on a medical gown. And so, if he was,

Q: [Interrupted] Just a minute. The time is now 12:38, Lipsey's tape ran out. [changing tape noises for a few minutes]

LIPSEY: If there was anybody -- 20 minutes to 1:00, I'm starting again. If there was anybody else in the room, Admiral or who, he was dressed as a doctor and not as an officer, that I can recollect. I don't remember if he was in the room or not. No, I don't.

Q: Do you know who Admiral Burkeley is or was at the time?

LIPSEY: I don't remember his name.

Q: Do you remember meeting the physician of the President?

LIPSEY: No. I don't think I ever did.

Q: Who else do you remember was in the room?

LIPSEY: I can remember, like I say, if he was a doctor or an orderly. Other people at particular times cleaned the body, moved the body. Certain things like that. Occasionally somebody would just come into the room, turn around and walk out, one of the hospital staff-type people. But I don't remember who it was. I don't remember, by name, anybody else in the room.

Q: Do you recall anyone else who seemed to be filling the role of you were, observer, but not actually involved in assisting the doctors in any capacity?

LIPSEY: You know that's hard because I seem to recollect one other person in there on occasion, but for the life of me, honestly, I just can't remember who it was. I really don't. Sam and I were sitting to try to be out of the doctor's way and everybody else's way. Immediately away from the table but right there in the chairs as you walk in on the right. I just don't remember the other people who came in around at that time.

Q: Were you in charge of security arrangements for the autopsy room?

LIPSEY: Specifically, no. I was charged by Gen Wehle to make sure that no body left -- that body didn't go anywhere without him or me. As far as specific security of the room on the outside, I remember they had guards all up and down that place. And Army people and all types of security people. And I don't know who physically was responsible for hospital security.

Q: Do you remember what orders, if any, on who could be admitted to the autopsy room?

LIPSEY: No, I probably wasn't around to be admitted. I had on my uniform and the Gen's recognition, and the Gen and I drove and everyone realized that he was in charge. He told me to stay with the body and from then on nobody ever asked me anything. But, there was a guard right outside the door. A policeman, a Washington policeman right outside the door.

Q: Do you remember anyone in effect taking attendance of who was present, circulating a list?

LIPSEY: No, I do not. Now I'm not going to say they didn't, but I don't remember.

Q: Getting back to the organs, you say they removed the organs the from the body and placed them up on the table -- a stainless steel table...

LIPSEY: [Interrupting] It was right over the body.

Q: Shelving.

LIPSEY: Just shelving right over the body. And I remember it had water draining over it continuously.

Q: Now you also mentioned they examined these closely and also cut them up to some degree. Did they return some of them organs or all the organs to the body at the termination of the autopsy or do you recollect...?

LIPSEY: To the best of my knowledge, they didn't return any thing to the body. They had these organs in separate containers. After they examined them. What they did -- I left for a while when Gen. Wehle came in to spell me -- and when I went back we started working on -- not we -- a few people started to cleaning him up, cosmetically fixing him up. I don't remember what happened to his organs.

Q: Specifically, do you recall the brain being a part of these organs?

LIPSEY: I remember them cutting the top of his head off. I remember taking, I could see them taking the s out. That was the only point in the autopsy that I got a little queasy. I remember they made a little circular cut and started taking the things out from inside of his head.

Q: Do you remember what they put the brain in?

LIPSEY: No, I don't.

Q: Do you remember them taking any metal fragments out of the president's body?

LIPSEY: Specifically, no, I don't.

Do you recall if they did take out any metal fragments, maybe you don't specifically remember where. Did they take any fragments at all?

LIPSEY: I would hope Sam could remember and put those down on his tape. I feel like they did, but I'm not going to sit here and say what part of the body they took them from or what they were. I feel like they had did have some bullet fragments. I remember them very carefully examining the area, around the part on the side of his head where it was kinda blown away. I remember just very extremely carefully examining that part of his head and looking for things. But I not going to tell you that they took a big piece or little piece out. Sorry, I just don't remember.

Q: I have a sketch here from the autopsy face sheet we'd like you to place, you can do it in pencil first and then in pen or just in pen, any wounds you recall.

LIPSEY: okay

Q: This sketch is a blank drawing of a body, a male body.

LIPSEY: Like I said, to the best of my knowledge somewhere in that area and in that area.

Q: Could you label them as of whether they are of entrance or of exit?

LIPSEY: Alright. [writing and speaking] Part blown away. Entrance and entrance. To the best of my...let's see it would be the right side of his face. That area in there. Once again, that area was kind of blown away.

Q: Is that area the same area?

LIPSEY: Same area. And there was a hole -- you're talking about at tracheotomy. As far as I remember they were talking about it being a bullet hole. [writing and speaking] Exit. Exit.

Q: Could you put the date and your signature?

Q: Do you recall anyone in the room taking notes?

LIPSEY: Not around us, no. I do recall the doctors had like a chart sheet, like a clipboard with papers on it, making notes as they went along.

Q: Do you remember the presence of any federal agents in the room?

LIPSEY: No, I don't.

Q: When did you finish your duties as?

LIPSEY: Excuse me, there was one other person. Like I say, I'm just trying to remember. To the best of my recollections everybody was dressed in a surgical gown around the table but there may have been one other person whether it was the admiral, chief surgeon, or a federal agent, there was another person around the table at times that wasn't doing anything, was observing. He could have been one of the doctors. I do remember another person. I couldn't tell you any more about it.

Q: When did your service as Gen Wehle's aide end?

LIPSEY: When I got out of the service, which was January of '74.

Q: Did you help make the arrangements for the re-interment of the President?

LIPSEY: January? Wait, I'm trying to get my dates straight. Yeah. It must have been January, '74. Right.

Q: Did you in a similar capacity participate in the re-interment of the president's body when they moved it?

LIPSEY: Yeah. I helped them pick up the President's body and laid it in the casket.

Q: No, I'm talking about the subsequent to the funeral in 1963. I'm talking about years later.

LIPSEY: Oh. This is the first time I've discussed this -- what I've discussed with you.

Q: No, you misunderstand the question. As you may recall, they hadn't finished the final resting place at Arlington National Cemetery.

LIPSEY: Oh, I'm sorry. At Arlington. When I left Washington he was still buried where the little gas light was on the side of the hill.

Q: So you do not recall him being moved into the permanent site which was very close to the original site? Did you participate in that?

LIPSEY: No, I do not.

Q: Do you know if Gen Wehle did?

LIPSEY: Obviously, he must have. Yes, because Gen Wehle was, if it was within the length -- span when he was still in the service and he was still there well over a year about there after I left.

Q: Was here there after...

LIPSEY: Gen Wehle was there whenever anything was done as a formal nature and I'm sure that was a very formal thing. Gen Wehle was always there.

Q: But you don't specifically recall when it occurred?

LIPSEY: No, I really don't.

Q: Is there anything else about the autopsy or the evidence which came from the autopsy or about the people who were present?

LIPSEY: The only thing .and there once again, I'm sorry, this is the best I can tell you.

SECTION 2

LIPSEY: And once again, and I'm sorry, the best I can tell you is my recollection after all these years and obviously some speculation on my part.

The only thing, and it's certainly not going to hold up under any court of law-type thing. But, I can remember when the Warren Commission was formed. Everybody's writing books about it. All the comments on how many times he was shot and the angles. I remember Walter Cronkite doing this big CBS thing on who shot him -- how many directions it came from. I can remember vividly in my mind on literally hundreds of occasions, saying these people are crazy. I watched the autopsy and I know for a fact he was shot three times. And the doctors were firmly convinced they all came out of the same gun because of the type of wounds or the entrances, whatever. I wish I could be more specific. I remember going back to the autopsy. I can remember specifically the next week, the next month. Over the period of the next year or so. Which was when I really remember what went on in the room. These people were crazy.

I can remember in my own mind, they're trying to read something into it that didn't happen. One book came out that he was shot from three different angles, another report came out he was only shot once, another that he was shot seven times. All kinds of...Everybody had their own versions of what happened, how many sounds they heard, and the angles of the fire they came from. I definitely remember the doctors commenting they were convinced that the shots came from the same direction and from the same type of weapon -- and it was three shots.

Q: Did they also feel --did the doctors state that three separate bullets had struck?

LIPSEY: This is one other thing, that to the best of my memory, today, and remembering what I thought about when all these reports came out absolutely, unequivocally yes, they were convinced that he had been shot three times.

Q: It's unclear to me from the sketch that you did where there are three bullets.

LIPSEY: One on the right side of his head, one on the upper point of his neck and one on the lower part of his neck.

Q: Well, on your sketch, you labeled two points as points of entrance.

LIPSEY: One point was just blown away. This point was just blown away. I just can't remember whether there was a point of entrance and then the blown away part or whether it -- he must have

been sitting like this and it hit like this and went in just blew that away or if it ripped the whole section away.

Q: Either of those two possibilities means one bullet to the head, I think.

LIPSEY: Right. One bullet to the head.

Q: Right.

LIPSEY: Then one bullet to the lower head.

Q: Oh. Then where did that bullet exit?

LIPSEY: That's the bullet that exited right here.

Q: The throat.

LIPSEY: Throat. Then the lower entrance that did not exit. If that's confusing, ask me again and we'll go over it. Do you understand it? What I'm talking about so far? One bullet, right on his head. The bullet was coming out like this --

Q: The question is, the bullet wound that you're referring to right hand side of his head,

LIPSEY: Right.

Q: Did that, did this wound, which you describe as a large blasting out, did that have a separate corresponding entry wound or did the doctors believe that was all of one wound?

LIPSEY: That was all part of one wound.

Q: Could it have been part of that lower wound on the head that you labeled?

LIPSEY: Oh no. Absolutely not.

Q: Because, earlier when I asked you about the blown away portion, I got the impression that when you were saying you weren't sure whether it entered and then blew away a portion or whether the entrance and exit were part of the same hole.

LIPSEY: You're right. I wasn't. This was distinctly a separate wound beside, in relation to these two.

Q: Did the doctors conclude [laughing] that was there a two separate wounds was there a track between the two of them?

LIPSEY: The doctors concluded, the conclusion of the doctors was there were three separate wounds.

Q: And three separate bullets.

LIPSEY: And three separate bullets. No question in my mind about that. Can I ask you a question at this point?

Q: You can ask us but we may not be able to answer it for you.

LIPSEY: I think it will be a very simple question that I think you could answer. There's gotta be something to do with it. Why don't they exhume the body and study the body?

Q: We'll that's a question we can't answer.

LIPSEY: You can't answer that? [Incredulous]

Q: That's a policy judgement.

LIPSEY: Okay, that 's a policy judgement. It's gotta clear up a lot of things. I just can't imagine why they just don't go shriiiitt [whistling sound] I remember the discussion when, Lyndon Johnson said, "This body," you know, "none of the details of the Warren Report and this body will not be touched for..." what was it? 15, 20 years? Whatever? I remember he came out in public and made that statement, but I don't remember. I'm just curious why they don't dig him up if it's so vitally concerned about it instead of wasting you guy's time?

Q: On this sketch could you add a further identification where you say "part blown away." That's my confusion.

LIPSEY: Okay. [writing and speaking out loud] Entrance of bullet #2 and entrance of bullet #3.

Q: When you say "wound #1, why don't you say...

Q: [All speaking at once] That, to you, represents entrance of bullet #1.

LIPSEY: That would represent...No. Not in sequence. The bullet #1 may have been this bullet and that may have been #2. I don't remember the sequence.

Q: Of course. But for the purpose of this paper, that could be the sequence.

LIPSEY: [writing and speaking out loud] Entrance and exit --

Q: Entrance and exit.

LIPSEY: Exit of bullet #1. This would be entrance of bullet #2. Entrance of bullet #3. Not in order.

Q: Just write "For identification."

LIPSEY: [writing and speaking out loud] For identification. This same area blown away as...

Q: Wound #1.

LIPSEY: [writing and speaking out loud] Wound #1. [then different notation] Exit point of wound #2.

Q: Now, let me ask you this to clear up, I think we stated this explicitly, but, the point on the sketch labeled as point on entrance wound #2, did you in fact see that hole?

LIPSEY: All I saw was when they turned him over on his side, we took him out of the boxed coffin that they brought him from the hospital, he was laying on his back, they laid him on the table. When I saw him is when they turned him on his side and I saw it from a distance of 20ft, 15ft I saw the big blood area. I did not get any closer look at the hole than that.

Q: But [tape missing a few words] of the doctor.

LIPSEY: [writing and speaking out loud] [writing and speaking out loud] And what I could see relatively from where I was sitting that's about the position of it. Yes.

Q: So essentially, the doctors said there were two bullet wounds to the head. Is that correct?

LIPSEY: Not really, not considering if you want to consider this a head or a neck wound. I consider it more of a neck wound and I believe in their discussions they discussed it more of a neck wound. I consider my wound #1 is the head wound. I consider this wound #2 on a Upper neck/lower part of your head

Q: Was it in the hair, hairline?

LIPSEY: Yes. It was in the hair, but the lower hairline.

Q: It was in the hair?

LIPSEY: Just a minute. Wait. I'm considering where my hairline is today. Like I say, it was just a blood smash area back there. It could have been in the part that you sort of shave right up there. But lower head still, but upper neck. But the third one definitely was the lower neck, upper vertebrae.

At this time we'll have to stop. The time is 1:00 and I'll insert another tape.

The time is 1:03 -- we're starting this tape.

LIPSEY: Are ya'll drawing conclusions after you've done your thing for a couple of years? Or are you going to bound it up and keep it for future reference.

Q: ...the committee will make it public.

LIPSEY: Are you, so...if, I can ask you this, you're concerned more, obviously, with just talking with me and other people about the autopsy and whatever, your investigation I presume, covers the whole realm of the assassination...

Q: We're investigating the assassination generally.

LIPSEY: Generally, conspiracy, whatever, you're investigating the whole thing. Obviously, I know nothing about that. I was just curious. I guess everybody in the whole world is curious since Oswald was killed, and then Ruby was killed. There's something rotten in Denmark, obviously, somewhere. I don't know that we will ever find out.

Q to Q: If you are preceding away from the issue -- away from the wounds...do you have any questions?

Q: Do you remember whether or not during the autopsy any skull fragments were brought into the room?

LIPSEY: No. I don't think there were. I think I might have remembered if they brought any other parts of the body in there. I don't, uh, not at all.

Q: Pertaining to a pre-autopsy, how did you determine where the autopsy would be, at Bethesda?

LIPSEY: We were told where to take the body to. We immediately got back to our offices about 1:00 that afternoon. General Wehle called the White House and spoke to our liaison officer or whoever it happened to be at that time. Gen Wehle. spoke to them at length. Then we would have little plan of a funeral, when you start planning funerals what needs to be in Washington. And then it was communicated to us it would be an autopsy performed. First they indicated to us the autopsy they would perform it in Dallas. And then somebody up the chain of command, like

the WH, or at some higher level than us, said no, not in Dallas. Would do it in Washington and then, where. And then it was decided it was to be done at Bethesda Naval Station.

[Talks about helicopter ride] to make a side comment, I remember never being so frightened in my life. We took off from Andrews airforce base in one of those --oh, I forget the number of it. You may or may not remember those banana-shaped helicopters, those long --they were shaped like a banana with a rotor on both ends, huge things, held about 30-40 people. They had the reputation of being not very safe. And can I remember they loaded that thing up and it was pitch black dark outside I just happen to remember because I flew in and out of Washington a lot and all those planes that used to land at National. Every 30 seconds there's a plane landing. I remember taking off in that damn thing and flying across Washington. Everything entered my mind imaginable. It was loaded. We had the honor guard in that thing with us. All the seats were taken up. We had two Lt.'s flying the thing who were younger than I was and I was young. I was scared to death.

[Interrupted by intercom.]

I can remember being frightened flying across there. Just in that damn thing, it's pitch black outside and wondering whose telling other planes there are helicopters flying over Washington. Then we went to land at the hospital. They had the helipad where helicopters land. In numbers, I don't know there looked to over several thousand people on the ground -- there was no place to land. I remember looking out the window and the police forcing the people back. There were lights on the ground. They got the crowd back far enough so we could set that helicopter down. If the wind had been blowing strongly one way or another or he had slipped one quarter of an inch, or that plane had tilted one eighth of an inch, exaggerating, of course, we'd cut off four thousand people's heads. That kid landed that helicopter right in the middle of this humongus crowd. I know he had been scared to death too. There was no room or margin for error when he set that helicopter down. Three feet one way or the other and he'd set that helicopter down in the crowd...I've flown all my life, storms, I've flown in tornadoes, in an airplane.

Q: Delta airlines. [evidently referring to a plaque or award from Delta Airlines in Lipsey's office.]

LIPSEY: Yeah, I fly in airplanes so doggoned much. They gave it to me for flying their airlines so darn much. I've been scared in airplanes. I guess everybody does. I just had visions landing that helicopter in all those people.

Q: I've got one last question. After the autopsy, you mentions materials were retained from the body physically. Evidence, photographs and x-rays

LIPSEY: Wehle never saw them, to my knowledge and I never saw them.

Q: So, you had no further -- never had custody.

LIPSEY: Never saw them. None whatsoever. Our obligation as far as the autopsy ended right there. I'm not sure we had any obligation for the autopsy except Gen Wehle was responsible for the funeral. Gen. Welhe, he wanted somebody there to make sure nobody carted that body off until he could get back there and till everything was taken to the WH. He said, "You stay here and watch it."

I'm sorry I couldn't be more help to you. It's been a long time. Like I said, the three entrance wounds and the only thing I remember vividly because of my listening to comments immediately after all these reports began coming out. Obviously, I really wasn't interested in the autopsy, quite frankly, I was more interested in looking at pictures of the man and at the time -- really planning the funeral. At the time I wanted to study. I wanted to be up there with Gen Wehle wondering what the plans were [rather] than sitting in that room. That's the best I can tell you.

Obviously, everything I've told you here. First of all, I've never discussed any part of the autopsy with anybody. You are the first I have discussed it with -- not even with my wife. And the thing, relating back to the thing, it had to do with National Security, more as I had a Top Secret rating -- because I was exposed to every Top Secret document in Washington. I briefed the President with Gen. Wehle and things. And, of course, that had more to do with, we signed those, we would not discuss... I feel like it was, it had more to do with relating to the president and his dealings, or at the time what his plans were, or any of the people he had talked to or confidentiality, or anything read that came from our office to his office. Still, I felt that if it should be told to anyone, it should be told to authorized persons such as yourself. For that reason, and Gen Wehle and I kind of agreed we would never discuss it among ourselves. It's never been discussed with anybody. And I certainly would not want my comments made public. I don't think they should be.

Q: Okay, you have the card that Andy gave you with the Committee address and telephone number and if you need to contact us you can call collect.

LIPSEY: I appreciate it. If I think of anything else, I'd certainly be glad to tell you. That's why I never got real excited and never called anybody to come see me because really, my part was dealing with ,it was meeting Kings and Queens and presidents that came, getting to meet them all. I've got them all written down -- 62 Kings and Queens, or pres. of foreign countries. And it was a heck of an exciting experience while we were there. We were in charge of, if you remember, the March on Washington in August of that year. That was an exciting time. We got to do so many exciting things. But more ours were functional exciting things. Of course, being the funeral, we started this thing on Friday at noon and didn't go to bed till Monday night. We went back to our rooms just to change clothes.

Q: I'll terminate the tape at this time. It's now 1:13.

end