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MEMORANDUM TO FILE

FROM: JAMES P. KELLY
DATE: AUGUST 16, 1977
RE: INTERVIEW WITH LELAND BENSON RE: KENNEDY AUTOPSY
CC: Clifford Fenton

Leland W. Benson, residing at 10028 Sinnott Drive, Bethesda, Maryland (301 530 4972) was interviewed this date at Bethesda Naval Hospital by the writer regarding his activities in connection with the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy performed at Bethesda Naval Hospital on November 22, 1973.

Benson was Supervising Histo-Pathology Technician at the time and supervised the processing of tissue from JFK's autopsy. He was not on duty after 4PM on the 22nd of November and did not return to duty at the Lab until Monday morning, November 25, 1963.

The normal procedure at that time was for the Pathologist performing the autopsy to forward sections of tissue from either autopsies or surgery to the Lab. In Autopsy, a routing slip was filled out with the numerical notation of how many sections of tissue were being forwarded to the lab and sent along with the sections up to Benson's Histo-Pathology Lab.

In Kennedy's case, Benson recalls that a routing slip was sent on Monday morning and the sections were processed into wax blocks which were then shaved into micro sections and stained by hand.

The finished slides were then given to a pathologist to read. All slides and gross tissue were returned to Dr. James Humes, the Pathologist who handled the Kennedy autopsy on November 22, 1963. Nothing was kept in the Lab and no record made of intake or processing.

Humes would make whatever notes were necessary.

Benson said Bethesda did an average of 300 autopsies a year.

The brain tissue was processed to the best of his recollection. Brains removed at autopsies are usually fixed in formalin and then kept in a chrome "bucket" of formalin. He said that he did not see Kennedy's brain at any time and does not know where it is today. He said that it is possible that the brain and tissues were sent to the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology at Walter Reed Hospital on 16th Street. Sometimes teaching slides are made and the brain is used as a teaching specimen.

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Benson said he was questioned in 1964 by representatives from the Warren Commission about his knowledge of the autopsy and NNMC procedures. He could not recall who questioned him.

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