

Interview of Carl W. Belcher

[If recorded, give date, time, and identities of those present.]

Please give us a brief overview of your career with the Federal government.

Please describe the responsibilities you had during the years from 1962 to 1967.

Who was your immediate supervisor when you were head of the General Crimes Section?

At any time during your Government service, were you involved in any work relating to the assassination of President Kennedy?

When did you first learn of the Department of Justice having any responsibility or function regarding materials from the autopsy of President Kennedy? Please describe that responsibility or function.

Do you recall being present on or about November 1, 1966, at an inventory of material relating to the autopsy of President Kennedy?

What were your responsibilities regarding that 1966 inventory?

Who charged you with those responsibilities? How (orally or in writing)? When did you receive this assignment?

Why were you chosen for this assignment? Did you have any particular experience with autopsy material or related subjects?

Did you receive any instructions concerning the inventory? What were they?

What was your understanding as to the purpose of this inventory? [What were you trying to accomplish?] Why was the inventory to be carried out at that particular time?

*deed of gift from Kennedy estate to National Archives on 10/29/66;  
opening of footlocker on 10/31/66*

Who decided that the inventory should be carried out? Who decided that the Department of Justice should be involved in the inventory? [Archivists can catalogue records, the medical personnel could review them -- why was DOJ involved?]

Who was in charge of the inventory process?

Within DOJ, who was in charge of the inventory process? To whom, if anyone, did you report regarding the inventory?

Before you participated in the inventory, were you aware that the footlocker containing the autopsy materials was opened on October 31, 1966? How did you become aware of this?

Before the inventory, did you discuss the autopsy materials with Frank Wozencraft [AAG present at opening of footlocker]? With Harold Reis [Executive Assistant to the AG]? Anyone else at DOJ? Anyone else at the National Archives?

Did you do anything to prepare for the inventory? What did you do?

Where did the inventory take place?

Who, besides yourself, was present? [refer witness to MD 49, first paragraph, if necessary]

*Humes, Boswell, Ebersole, Stringer;  
James Rhoads, Patricia Walkling (stenographer) Marion Johnson (National Archives)*

About how much time did the inventory take?

Please describe how the inventory was carried out -- who did what, etc.

Did the stenographer record what was said? [If "yes," did she record everything that was said, or only what was particularly dictated to her? Who did the dictating?]

Other than the stenographer, did others present take notes? Did you?

Was an audio recording made of the inventory?

What did you do during the inventory?

We have had all three of the autopsy doctors and the autopsy photographer, Mr. Stringer, review all of the autopsy photographs now in the possession of the National Archives. All four have testified under oath that they recall additional autopsy photographs that are not in the National Archives now. We're hoping to clarify this situation as best we can before that testimony becomes public, so that's the basis for these questions.

Did anyone at the inventory discuss whether any photographs or x-rays had been taken at the autopsy of President Kennedy that were not among the inventoried materials?

Did anyone at the inventory mention that any photographs or x-rays of the autopsy of President Kennedy appear to be missing from the inventoried materials?

*Give Belcher copy of Humes Deposition, call his attention to page 192, line 15 through page 193, line 5:* Has Dr. Humes' testimony refreshed your present recollection about whether missing autopsy photographs were discussed at the inventory?

*Give Belcher copy of Stringer Deposition, call his attention to page 143, line 15, through page 146, line 3:* Has Mr. Stringer's testimony refreshed your present recollection about whether missing autopsy photographs were discussed at the inventory?

Did anyone at the inventory discuss whether an autopsy protocol was missing from the inventoried materials?

Did anyone at the inventory discuss whether an autopsy protocol had been destroyed?

Afterwards, did you discuss the inventory or the autopsy materials with anyone at the Department of Justice? With whom did you have such discussions? Please describe these discussions.

After the inventory at the National Archives, what was the next thing you did in connection with this assignment?

*Give Belcher copy of MD 12*

Do you recall this document? Do you recall who prepared it?

When did you first receive a copy of this document?

What did you do when you received this copy?

After the inventory, did you speak with others who had been present at the inventory about the autopsy materials? [If hesitant, give Belcher copy of MD 49, directing his attention to third paragraph on page 1.]

With whom did you speak? When? Please describe the conversation.

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*Humes on November 4 -- see MD 49*

Did Dr. Humes discuss with you whether there was photographic material from the autopsy of President Kennedy that was not part of the inventory on November 1, 1966?  
Please describe that discussion.

*Call Belcher's attention to MD 49, page 4, first full paragraph:* To the best of your present recollection, what was your basis for writing that Captain Humes believed that all of the photographic items taken during the autopsy were present and inspected on November 1, 1966? Did Captain Humes tell you that on November 4?

*Give Belcher MD 13*

Do you recall seeing this document before?

Who prepared this document? [If hesitant, call Belcher's attention to MD 49, page 4, second full paragraph.]

Please compare signature pages of MD 12 and MD 13 -- do you see that three names have spaces for signatures on MD 12 that do not appear on MD 13? Why was this change made? Did you discuss this change with anyone in the Department of Justice? With anyone at the National Archives? Did anyone instruct you to make this change?

Please look at the sentence immediately above the signatures on MD 13 (the signed version). That statement does not appear in MD 12, does it? Why was this sentence inserted? Did you discuss this change with anyone in the Department of Justice? With anyone at the National Archives? Did anyone instruct you to make this change?

Were you present when Humes, Boswell, Ebersole, and Stringer signed MD 13?  
[If hesitant, call attention to MD 49, page 4, second full paragraph.]

Did they discuss possible changes or corrections to the document before they signed it?

And did they in fact make any changes or corrections?

At that time, was the accuracy of the sentence immediately above the signatures discussed?

*Call Belcher's attention to Stringer Deposition, page 214, line 2 through page 216, line 14*

Does Mr. Stringer's testimony refresh your recollection on whether the possibility of missing photographs was discussed before the inventory was signed?

After the signing of the inventory, did you discuss the inventory or the autopsy materials with anyone at DOJ? At the National Archives?

Why did you write your memorandum of Nov. 22, 1966 (MD 49)? Did anyone instruct you to write it? Did you discuss that memorandum with anyone at DOJ? Did anyone else receive a copy of it?