

Dr. Marion T. Jenkins: "...a great laceration of the right side of the head (temporal and occipital)..."

Dr. Charles J. Carrico: "...a large gaping wound, located in the right occipitoparietal area."

Dr. Robert N. McClelland: "...the right posterior portion of the skull had been extremely blasted."

Dr. William Kemp Clark: "...a large gaping wound in the right posterior part..."

And on page 87 Twyman reproduces Secret Service agent Clint Hill's memorandum which appeared in one of the Warren Commission volumes in which he reports on what he had seen in the morgue (at Bethesda). Hill states "I observed another wound on the right rear portion of the skull."

In Fetzer's book, "Assassination Science," Mantik draws on a statement by Secret Service agent Emory Roberts. The statement deals with Mantik's argument about what frame in the Zapruder film "a bloody halo (or explosion) is seen".

Agent Roberts (see Fetzer book page 291): "...I saw what appeared to be a small explosion on the right side of the President's head, saw blood, at which time the President fell further to his left..."

The list above is by no means complete but, as can be noted, reports at the actual scene of the assassination (Dallas), the Parkland Hill Hospital scene (Dallas) and finally the morgue (Washington, D.C.) provide no basis for the conclusion that the back (and not the right side) of JFK's head was "completely blown out" unless all of these witnesses are lying or unreliable.

This concludes my argument for the validity of film and photo evidence as opposed to any claims of forgery or alteration. As I've indicated above, there are many more grounds for opposing the claims of alteration but I offer the above as a refutation. I know that, in spite of what I have presented here, there will be many who will say it happened anyway. But here I am reminded of what the great Russian Cosmologist, Lev Landau, once wrote of his scientific colleagues: "Cosmologists are often in error, but never in doubt!".

☪

THE PITZER FILE

by

Daniel Marvin and Jerry D. Rose

LCDR William Bruce Pitzer was found dead in his Bethesda Naval Hospital TV Studio on Saturday, the 29th of October, 1966. The Navy investigated and ruled it suicide, yet the FBI's investigation of the incident found nothing to support that finding. Why should you be interested in the death some 31 years ago of one Naval officer? Why? Because there is a strong possibility that Pitzer was murdered and that his murder is inextricably linked to a well orchestrated, high-level cover-up of the JFK assassination conspiracy. Follow: In early August, 1965 Marvin was asked to "terminate" Pitzer by an agent of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), who described Pitzer as a "traitor" about to give state secrets to the "enemy." [1] He didn't accept that mission-he didn't kill Pitzer. But someone did, another of the same ilk, loving danger, motivated by a twisted sense of patriotic fervor, and trained to kill without question. Perhaps the same CIA agent passed on the order: Pitzer was to be silenced, terminated. He was shot in the head.

We doubt that it was someone from within the CIA that pulled the trigger. They seldom personally do the dirty jobs, the killing, or terrorizing. They bring in the likes of Marvin and nothing is put in writing. We'll likely never know who killed Pitzer, but we'll know where the order came from. Whoever it was who pulled the trigger, if he is alive today-he is in hiding and careful to trust few if any of those with whom he comes in contact. Retired Green Beret Major John Strait, said it right when he said to Marvin, "Dan, I don't like 'em. They (CIA) use us and then throw us away like a used condom."

Since the publication of his earlier article, Marvin has devoted a major part of his life to the attempt to develop all possible information about Pitzer's death. Without going into the many vicissitudes he has encountered (which he intends to recount in his book, The Pitzer

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File-the Truth about U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander William Bruce Pitzer-Victim of the JFK Assassination Conspiracy Cover-up), suffice it to say that he, like many other researchers, has been stonewalled not only by agencies of the U.S. government but by at least one person within the research community itself. In spite of these problems, Marvin has been able to obtain a thick file of investigative materials on Pitzer's death and, in this article, we want to share with the reader some of the results of perusing this file. Copies of all this research material may be obtained from the editorial office of The Fourth Decade.

This file represents investigations by three agencies: the Montgomery County (Maryland) autopsy of Pitzer on the night of his death; an investigation of the Navy; and another by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The autopsy and the Navy investigation are quite categorical in characterizing the death as a suicide; the FBI investigations raise some fundamental indications to the contrary.

Let us recap briefly the known circumstances of LCDR Pitzer's death. He was employed, as he had been in 1963, at the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda hospital in the television studio of the hospital. On the day of his death, a Saturday, he had gone to his office from his home in Takoma Park, Maryland, as he often did on a Saturday afternoon in order to "clean up his desk." At around 4:30 p.m., his wife called him and received no answer; when she called again and received no answer at 7:30 p.m., she called the Security Office of the hospital. Security officials entered the office and found the body of Pitzer, dressed in civilian clothes, a gun shot wound in his head and his body lying in a pool of blood, his head partly resting beneath the lower rung of an aluminum ladder and with a near by Smith & Wesson .38 caliber revolver. Forensic investigation established that he probably died some 3-5 hours earlier.

Pitzer's death certificate was signed John G. Ball, Deputy Medical Examiner of Montgomery County. [2] According to Ball's 11/15/66 interview by the FBI, [3] he was called to the scene at 8:50 p.m., arriving at 9:15 p.m, and conducted his examination of the head wound at 11:30 p.m.. He also made some remarkable statements to the FBI. For one, he said he observed "muzzle marks around the wound and powder burns," an observation contradicted by later reports. He also attempted to account for the strange location of Pitzer's body with his head under a ladder: "he concluded that Pitzer was

probably sitting in a chair and shot himself in the head with the pistol which was lying near the body and the pistol sort of spun him around and he kind of slid his head under the step-ladder." (See back cover illustration, this issue) Ball's "kind of " and "sort of " language suggests that he was making up a scenario in which not even he could believe. Pitzer's autopsy, completed at 8 a.m. the next day, refers to an "area of charring of the skin," surrounding the wound, but says specifically that "no powder burns surrounding the area are noted." [4]

Predictably, Pitzer's death on Bethesda property created an immediate and sustained investigative interest by the Navy. Captain James H. Stover, Commander of the Bethesda Naval Medical Center, among others, went to the scene of Pitzer's death and identified his remains. [5] The following Tuesday, November 2, Stover appointed a two-man Board of Investigation to study the death: Commander J. W. Guinn and Lt. Cmdr. Thomas G. Ferris, [6] although Guinn had viewed Pitzer's remains prior to his Arlington Cemetery burial, and identified them as those of Pitzer "based on years of association" with him. [7] The Board was directed to coordinate—even subordinate—its efforts to those of the Naval Investigation Service (NIS), a representative of which also arrived at the Pitzer death scene at 9:05 p.m. [8] The Board duly accepted an NIS request that it conduct no interviews until NIS investigation was completed. In its eventual report (reprinted in full here, except for the enclosures) on February 13, 1967, the Board admits that all investigative data came by way of its contacts with NIS, the Board being furnished a "pending report" of NIS on January 9, 1967. [9] Naturally we should have this report for examination. Although the Board says "no independent data developed by this Board is in conflict with the findings reported by NIS," this seems to be bureaucratic double-talk, since the Board apparently developed no "independent" data. At any rate, "it is the opinion of this Board of Investigation that LCDR William B. Pitzer death occurred from a self-inflicted gunshot wound."

A key element in the Navy's conclusion that Pitzer committed suicide was the supposed effect on him of an affair with another woman. As early as November 3, NIS had learned of this affair and was interviewing the woman in Pensacola, Florida. [10] It seems that, beginning in October, 1965 and extending to the week before his death, this woman met Pitzer on recurring business trips to Pensacola and Atlanta, where they stayed



U. S. NAVAL MEDICAL SCHOOL
NATIONAL NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER
BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20014

In reply refer to
NC43-34-MBD
5830
13 FEBRUARY 1967

FROM: BOARD OF INVESTIGATION
TO: COMMANDING OFFICER, NAVAL MEDICAL SCHOOL, NATIONAL NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER, BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20014

SUBJ: INFORMAL BOARD OF INVESTIGATION TO INQUIRE INTO THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE DEATH OF LIEUTENANT COMMANDER WILLIAM BRUCE PITZER, MSC USN, 416681/2301 ON 29 OCTOBER 1966

ENCL: (1) APPOINTING ORDER NC43-3-RCR 5830 SER: 445 DTD 3 NOV 1966
(2) COPY OF STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE DUTY OFFICER, NNMC
(3) COPY OF SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEW WITH MRS. JOYCE B. PITZER
(4) PHOTOGRAPH OF REMAINS
(5) STATEMENT OF R.L. BRAY, SUPERVISORY GUARD, NNMC
(6) AUTOPSY PROTOCOL (SF 503) OF 0800, 30 OCTOBER 1966; COPY OF
(7) COPY OF CERTIFICATE OF DEATH (NAV MED FORM N)
(8) COPY OF MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL EXAMINER'S CERTIFICATE OF DEATH
(9) COPY OF SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEW WITH
(10) COPY OF PSYCHIATRIST'S MEMORANDUM
(11) COPY OF LETTER FROM LCDR PITZER TO

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

1. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THIS BOARD OF INVESTIGATION WAS APPOINTED, THE BOARD WAS ADVISED THAT ASSISTANCE BY THE NAVAL INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE OFFICE HAD BEEN REQUESTED BY THE NATIONAL NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER TO DETERMINE THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE DEATH OF LCDR PITZER. MR. PITZER HAD BEEN GRANTED A FINAL TOP SECRET CLEARANCE AND THE SERVICES OF NIS WERE INDICATED TO PROTECT THE INTEREST OF NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE EVENT THE INVESTIGATION DISCLOSED POSSIBLE COMPROMISE. THE BOARD WAS ADVISED ALSO THAT, THROUGH NIS, ASSISTANCE BY THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION HAD BEEN REQUESTED TO PROVIDE FOR THE CONTINGENCY OF HOMICIDE. IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE INSTRUCTION CONTAINED IN SECTION 0213, MANUAL OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL, THE BOARD CONTACTED THE LOCAL FIELD REPRESENTATIVE OF NIS. THE NIS REPRESENTATIVE DID NOT SPECIFICALLY WITHHOLD CONSENT FOR THE BOARD TO CONDUCT AN INDIVIDUAL INVESTIGATION, BUT REQUESTED THAT THE BOARD INTERVIEW NO WITNESSES UNTIL THE NIS INVESTIGATION WAS COMPLETE, AND STATED THAT ALL PHYSICAL EVIDENCE HAD BEEN COLLECTED

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AND WAS RETAINED BY NIS. ON 15 NOVEMBER 1966, THIS BOARD OF INVESTIGATION SUBMITTED A PRELIMINARY REPORT SOLELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADVISING THE CONVENING AUTHORITY OF DELAY IN SUBMITTING ITS REPORT WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM AWAITING COMPLETION OF THE NIS INVESTIGATION. THROUGHOUT THE PROGRESS OF THE NIS INVESTIGATION THIS BOARD OF INVESTIGATION MAINTAINED FREQUENT CONTACT WITH THE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE. INFORMATION DEVELOPED BY NIS WAS ORALLY REPORTED TO THIS BOARD, AND ON 9 JANUARY 1967, THIS BOARD OF INVESTIGATION OBTAINED A COPY OF THE PENDING REPORT SUBMITTED BY NIS. INVESTIGATION DATA CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT WAS DEVELOPED BY THE NIS AND HAS BEEN OBTAINED BY THIS BOARD OF INVESTIGATION THROUGH REGULAR CONTACT WITH THE NIS REPRESENTATIVES AND BY A REVIEW OF THE PENDING REPORT SUBMITTED BY THE NIS. ON 9 FEBRUARY 1967, NIS, WASHINGTON, D.C. AUTHORIZED THIS BOARD OF INVESTIGATION TO REPRODUCE CERTAIN ENCLOSURES TO THIS REPORT WHICH ARE INCLUDED HEREIN AS ENCLOSURES (2), (3), (9), (10), AND (11). NO INDEPENDENT DATA DEVELOPED BY THIS BOARD IS IN CONFLICT WITH THE FINDINGS REPORTED BY NIS.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. THAT AT APPROXIMATELY 1950 ON 29 OCTOBER 1966, A BODY WAS DISCOVERED IN THE TELEVISION STUDIO, NAVAL MEDICAL SCHOOL, BUILDING 144, NATIONAL NAVAL MEDICAL CENTER, BETHESDA, MARYLAND, BY ENS J. M. QUARLES, MSC USNR, AND NNMIC SECURITY PATROL OFFICER, THOMAS E. BLUE (ENCLOSURE (2)).
2. THAT SPECIAL AGENT _____, NAVAL INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE, ARRIVED ON THE SCENE AT 2105, IN RESPONSE TO A TELEPHONE REQUEST FROM THE CHIEF OF THE DAY, NNMIC, HMC J. E. OSTRANDER.
3. THAT THE BODY WAS TENTATIVELY IDENTIFIED AT THE SCENE BY CAPT J. H. STOVER, MC USN, AND CDR JAMES G. HARMELING, MC USN, AS BEING THE REMAINS OF LCDR WILLIAM B. PITZER, MSC USN, 416681/2301. THAT ON 2 NOVEMBER 1966, CDR J. W. GUINN, MSC USN, VIEWED THE REMAINS PRIOR TO INTERMENT. BASED ON YEARS OF ASSOCIATION HE IDENTIFIED THE REMAINS OF LCDR WILLIAM BRUCE PITZER, MSC USN.
4. THAT SHORTLY BEFORE THE BODY WAS FOUND, MRS. PITZER HAD CONTACTED THIS COMMAND, STATING THAT SHE WAS CONCERNED BECAUSE HER

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HUSBAND WAS OVERDUE AT HOME. SINCE HIS PERSONAL AUTOMOBILE WAS ON THE PARKING LOT, THE SECURITY PERSONNEL ON DUTY ENTERED THE TV STUDIO IN FURTHERANCE OF THEIR EFFORTS TO LOCATE LCDR PITZER (ENCLOSURE (3)).

5. THAT LCDR ROBERT W. STEYN, MC USN, EXAMINED THE REMAINS AT 2010, ONLY AS NECESSARY TO PRONOUNCE DEATH.

6. THAT A S & W .38 CALIBER REVOLVER CONTAINING ONE SPENT CARTRIDGE, ONE LIVE ROUND, AND ONE LIVE BLANK ROUND WAS FOUND ON THE FLOOR NEAR THE BODY.

7. THAT A PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN OF THE REMAINS AND THE SURROUNDING AREA AS THEY APPEARED SHORTLY AFTER THE NIS INVESTIGATION WAS INSTITUTED (ENCLOSURE (4)).

8. THAT THE REVOLVER HAD BEEN DRAWN FROM THE NNMC SECURITY OFFICER TO BE USED AS A TRAINING AID BY LCDR PITZER, BUT THAT ONLY BLANK AMMUNITION HAD BEEN SUPPLIED WITH IT (ENCLOSURE (5)).

9. THAT AN AUTOPSY WAS PERFORMED ON 30 OCTOBER 1966, AT THE NAVAL HOSPITAL, BETHESDA, MARYLAND, WHICH DISCLOSED THE CAUSE OF DEATH TO BE A GUNSHOT WOUND IN THE HEAD (ENCLOSURE (6) AND (7)).

10. THAT JOHN G. BALL, M.D., MONTGOMERY COUNTY MEDICAL EXAMINER, EXAMINED LCDR PITZER'S REMAINS AT ABOUT 2330, 29 OCTOBER 1966, AND THAT ON 2 NOVEMBER 1966, DOCTOR BALL ADVISED NIS AGENTS IT WAS HIS PROFESSIONAL OPINION THAT THE CAUSE OF DEATH WAS SUICIDE BY GUNSHOT, THE BRAIN HAVING BEEN LACERATED BY A BULLET (ENCLOSURE (8)).

11. THAT ALTHOUGH A THOROUGH SEARCH OF LCDR PITZER'S PERSON, HIS OFFICE, INCLUDING A PERSONAL BRIEFCASE, AND HIS AUTOMOBILE FAILED TO REVEAL A SUICIDE NOTE, NEITHER WAS ANY EVIDENCE ADDUCED TO SUPPORT THE IDEA OF HOMICIDE.

12. THAT LCDR PITZER WAS EXPERIENCING PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL DIFFICULTIES FROM OVERWORK; THAT HE HAD BEEN DEEPLY CONCERNED WITH DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS INVOLVING HIS YOUNGER SON; AND THAT HE WAS EXPERIENCING MARITAL DIFFICULTY AND WAS INTIMATELY ASSOCIATED WITH ANOTHER WOMAN (ENCLOSURE (9), (10), AND (11)).

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OPINIONS

1. INVESTIGATION OF THIS INCIDENT REVEALED NO DIRECT REASON FOR SUICIDE AND NO APPARENT TENDENCY TOWARD SUICIDE, BUT THE INFORMATION DEVELOPED DURING THE INQUIRY PERHAPS JUSTIFIES AN INFERENCE THAT THE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING LCDR PITZER WERE MORE THAN HE WAS ABLE TO TOLERATE.

2. IT IS THE OPINION OF THIS BOARD OF INVESTIGATION THAT LCDR WILLIAM P. PITZER'S DEATH OCCURRED FROM A SELF-INFLICTED GUNSHOT WOUND IN HIS HEAD.


T. G. FERRIS
LCDR MSC USNR


J. W. GUINN
CDR MSC USN

in motel rooms and Pitzer spoke of his various dissatisfactions with his married life. After he last left her in Pensacola on October 22, the woman wrote him a "casual note" at his business address and then, on October 28, a somewhat complaining letter noting that she had not heard from him: "am I that easy to forget?" Then, on the fateful afternoon of Saturday the 29th at 2:45 p.m., Pitzer calls the woman from his office, is unable to reach her, and then pens a note acknowledging the "casual note", asking her not to write again but to wait to hear from him, but projecting a meeting with her in January, then closing with the provocative phrase, "until you hear from me or of me, I am always, Bill." This was enough to convince the woman that Pitzer was thus anticipating his suicide (he left no suicide note). The Navy seemingly agreed, the Board of Investigation citing as a possible factor that Pitzer was "experiencing marital difficulty and was intimately associated with another woman." [11]

Although the Navy investigators were quite sure that Pitzer's death was a suicide, Marvin has been able to obtain through FOIA 140 pages of FBI investigative material on the Pitzer death; [12] and this material sup-

ports a far different scenario of Pitzer's death. The FBI was initially brought into the case through a request from NIS for Bureau investigation "to provide for the contingency of homicide." [13] There are two basic kinds of material in this file: a) interviews with witnesses aimed at showing Pitzer's mental condition at the time of his death in an attempt to establish the plausibility of his committing suicide; and b) laboratory examinations of ballistics and finger print evidence from the scene. Most of this investigation was handled by the Baltimore office of the FBI.

On October 30, the Baltimore office contacted LCDR H. B. Lowsma, who had participated in the autopsy, and got his "preliminary opinion" that Pitzer died from a gun shot wound to the head, although he noted that the "gun not resting against head when shot fired and he could not estimate the distance away." [14] On the following Monday, November 1, the NIS forwarded to the FBI laboratory numerous pieces of physical evidence, including the weapon, one spent, three blank and one live cartridge; fourteen latent fingerprints lifted from chairs and beer cans at the scene; and a paraffin cast of the deceased's right hand. [15] We shall return shortly

to the startling results of the FBI laboratory's examinations.

As laboratory tests were proceeding, the Baltimore office conducted interviews of many witnesses who hopefully could shed light on Pitzer's motive for his presumed suicide. Many of these documents, as Marvin received them under his FOIA request to the FBI, were heavily redacted, but the unredacted portions tell us at least that part of the Pitzer "story" that the Bureau may have wanted to be told. In an early (October 30) interview with Pitzer's widow, Joyce Pitzer, which was a joint interview by the FBI and NIS, [16] Mrs. Pitzer reflected her disbelief that it would have been within Pitzer's nature to take his own life, an act which would be "completely opposed to subject's philosophy" and especially such an act in a Navy office because of his "sincere love for and loyalty to the U.S. Navy." Nor did she believe there were any severe problems in Pitzer's life that might have precipitated the act, citing only some "normal" problems with a teenage son and a mild case of prostate problems. She did cite one unusual recent behavior for him when, after attending the funerals of two of his Navy friends, he said "that's two this week. I wonder who the next will be," and had surprised her by expressing a wish for a military funeral. As we saw in the case of investigation of Pitzer's "affair," this was not the only Pitzer statement that may have anticipated his death—whether by suicide or otherwise.

The Bureau interviewed numerous people who had observed Pitzer in the hours and days immediately before his death. The picture painted by many of these persons is of a Pitzer who was "disturbed" but certainly not despondent to the point that a suicide was anticipated. Perhaps the most telling observation was that of a secretary in Pitzer's office who said that Pitzer "seemed to have something upsetting him for about a year," and described the "glum mood" in which he had entered the office in recent weeks. [17] Another colleague described Pitzer as being frequently "on edge" and "irascible" as Pitzer had been under "considerable stress." [18] Finally, an enlisted man in his office reported what he thought was unusual behavior during the week of his death, the enlisted man offering to return the Navy pistol which Pitzer had checked out (with blank ammunition) for training purposes. Pitzer said he would return it himself, an "out of character" act, since he always had enlisted men to do such "errands" for him. [19]

On the other hand, of the numerous people who observed Pitzer's behavior on the day of his death, only one witness reported anything unusual about his demeanor that day. If Pitzer was contemplating his death at that time, he was certainly behaving in a remarkably normal manner.

Both Mrs. Pitzer and a neighbor, Mrs. Estel, describe his involvement in an episode concerning a haircut for his teenage son Robert. [20] On the morning of October 29, Mrs. Estel came over to the Pitzer home as Robert was in the driveway washing the family car. She requested that Robert go with her to the golf course, at which point Pitzer took over the car washing and Robert went with Mrs. Estel to the golf course. Apparently a haircut for Robert was a family issue, since he was told to get one before returning home. When Pitzer left in the car around noon, for various errands including a haircut for himself, Mrs. Pitzer asked him to stop by the golf course and remind Robert to get his haircut. He did this and, according to Mrs. Estel, he stopped and spoke to Robert and the boy asked his father the time—which was 2:55 p.m.—interestingly enough, a few minutes after Pitzer's supposed call to his lover in Pensacola. Subsequently, after some resistance from Robert, Mrs. Estel delivered Robert to a location near Bethesda hospital at around 4:30; and he returned very shortly with his haircut and, because she was apparently asked the obvious question, she doubted that he would have had time to get the haircut and visit his father, at an hour very close to the estimated time of his death.

Several other witnesses saw Pitzer that afternoon, as he did things that seemingly he did normally on a Saturday afternoon. Three of these saw him at the Navy Exchange between 2 and 4 p.m. One of these, an employee of the Exchange, saw Pitzer "between 2 and 2:30 p.m.," and Pitzer asked her about her son; she saw Pitzer again (his location is redacted from the report) and waved to him "between 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m." [21] Pitzer "seemed very cheerful on the occasions that she saw him." A male employee of the Exchange made a similar observation, exchanging "hellos" with Pitzer at 3:30 p.m. [22] A seeming exception is another woman who saw Pitzer in the Exchange at about 3:50 purchasing cigarettes. [23] She said "Pitzer looked like a wild man," a characterization duly repeated in one FBI synopsis of the case. [24] Actually, this considerably inflates the import of the woman's observation. Her "wild man"

characterization refers to Pitzer's sloppy appearance (his casual clothing, his "messed up" hair), about which she "kidded" him, and not at all to his general demeanor: "in her brief conversation with Pitzer, there did not appear to be anything unusual with his attitude." The last observation was essentially that made by all observers of Pitzer in the hours immediately before his death.

We come finally to the most compelling evidence that Pitzer's death was not, in fact, a suicide. This concerns the various items of physical evidence in the case, including the post-mortem condition of the body. We have already remarked on the lack of powder burns on Pitzer's head, an unlikely result if Pitzer had held the pistol against his head, as one would ordinarily expect in a suicide. Other results of forensic tests at the FBI laboratory were no more encouraging to the suicide scenario. Given the trajectory of the fatal bullet—from the right to the left side of the head—Pitzer would have necessarily held the pistol in his right hand if he had fired it. At the time of the autopsy, a paraffin cast of Pitzer's right hand was prepared and this was submitted by the NIS to the FBI laboratory on November 1, 1966 with a request to "determine if this hand had held a gun that had been fired." [25] The shocking results came back on December 14, 1966: "examination of Q14, paraffin cast, reflected no substance characteristic of, or which could be associated with, gunpowder or gunpowder residue." [26] (Suicide) case closed?

A less conclusive but still important additional finding came from the FBI laboratory, involving finger prints in this instance. Also submitted to the laboratory on November 1 were "fourteen latent prints lifted from two chairs and three beer cans at the scene," and these were submitted along with Pitzer finger and palm prints with the question: "are these latent prints identical to deceased?" [27] On November 22, 1966 came back the response: "the latent prints are not identical with the finger and palm prints of victim Pitzer." [28] So whose prints were they, an intruder/murderer perhaps? On January 12, 1967 NIS submitted to the laboratory the finger print cards for eight persons; while their names are redacted, they were presumably people who had regular access to the location of the death scene, and may have left their prints there in an "innocent" context. [29] On January 25, the FBI reported back to NIS that "the latent prints in this case are not identical with any of the submitted inked fingerprints." [30] So there the record seems to rest: that none of these fingerprints

"lifted" from the scene were those of Pitzer or any other person who "should" have been there.

In this article, we believe we have shown that there is a high probability that William Bruce Pitzer died at the hand of "person or persons unknown." Given Pitzer's probable involvement with some aspect of the JFK autopsy, the determination of the identity of those persons—and even more that of those who ordered his murder—should be an item of the highest priority in the research community. As a first step, we should pursue through the Assassination Records Review Board the report(s) of the Naval Investigative Service Office on Pitzer's death; and unredacted versions of the highly redacted documents received by Marvin under his FOIA request.

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Notes

1. Daniel Marvin, "Bits and Pieces: A Green Beret on the Periphery of the Assassination," The Fourth Decade 2#4 May, 1995, pp. 14-18.
2. Medical Examiner's Certificate of Death for William Bruce Pitzer, Montgomery County, MD by John G. Ball, Deputy Medical Examiner, Serial #14438, October 30, 1966.
3. FBI interview 11/15/66 at Bethesda MD, File #BA 70-3287.
4. Autopsy Protocol, Autopsy #466-273 for William B. Pitzer, conducted 0800 hrs. 30 October 1966, p. 2.
5. U. S. Naval Medical School, National Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland NC 43-34-MBD 5830 from Board of Investigation to Commanding Officer, 13 February 1967, Report, p. 2. Here after cited as Board Report.
6. U. S. Naval Medical School, National Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland NC 43-3-rer-5830 from J. H. Stover, Commanding Officer to Commander John W. Guinn, 3 November 1966, appointment of Board of Investigation.
7. Board Report, p.2.
8. Board Report. p.2.
9. Board Report, p.2.
10. Enclosure 9 to Board Report. See also FBI interview by the Jacksonville office on January 13, 1967, File #70-1252.
11. Board Report, p.3.
12. Federal Bureau of Investigation FOIPA No. 405,7861 HQ-1182292, received August 2, 1997.
13. Board Report, p.1.

14. FBI Baltimore to Director, 10-30-66 File 70-14229.
15. Naval Investigative Service Office Washington to Director, FBI, 20-BE/DEA/js, 1 November 1966, forwarding items for laboratory examination. Here after cited as: laboratory reference.
16. Enclosure #3 to Board Report, NIS/FBI joint interview with Joyce B. Pitzer, 30 October 1966.
17. FBI interview 11/1/66 at Bethesda MD, File #70-3287.
18. FBI interview 10/31/66 at Bethesda MD, File #70-3287.
19. FBI interview 10/31/66 at Bethesda MD, File #BA 70-3287.
20. Enclosure #3 to Board Report (Joyce Pitzer); FBI interview 10/30/66 at Bethesda MD, File #70-3787.
21. FBI interview 11/1/66 at Bethesda MD, File #70-3287.
22. FBI interview 11/1/66 at Bethesda MD, File #70-3287.
23. FBI interview 10/31/66 at Bethesda MD, File #70-3287.
24. FBI to Naval Investigative Service Office, 1/31/67 BA 70-3287; Bureau File #70-44229.
25. Laboratory reference.
26. FBI to Naval Investigative Service Office, 12/14/66, 20 BE/DEA/js ser. 1956, p.1.
27. Laboratory reference.
28. FBI to Naval Investigative Service Office, 11/22/66, LC #73063, p.2.
29. Naval Investigative Service Office to FBI, 1/12/67, FBI #70-44 229.
30. FBI to Naval Investigative Service Office, 1/25/67, FBI #70-4229-7.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the editor: Two recent articles ("The Dealey Plaza Ambush: Appearance and Reality" by Carleton Sterling, November, 1997 and "From Houston Street to the Overpass" by M. A. Moyer and R.F. Gallagher, July 1997) both make reference to three spent cartridges or hulls having been located near the sixth-floor window of the TSBD, which led the Warren Commission to conclude that three shots were fired from the Mannlicher-Carcano 6.5 rifle by Lee Harvey Oswald.

Most of the books I have checked do not question whether this was actually the case. In fact, Anthony Summers states in his 1980 book CONSPIRACY (a considerably revised version will soon be available, entitled NOT IN YOUR LIFETIME) That "Nobody disputes the fact that three used cartridge cases were found near the famous sixth-floor window..." Josiah Thompson in SIX SECONDS IN DALLAS likewise states: "Three 6.5 Millimeter cartridge cases were found on the sixth floor of the Depository..." Similar statements have been made by Weisberg (WHITEWASH), Anson (THEY'VE KILLED THE PRESIDENT), Meagher (ACCESSORIES AFTER THE FACT), Blakey & Billings (FATAL HOUR, Hurt (REASONABLE DOUBT), Lane (RUSH TO JUDGMENT), Groden & Livingstone (HIGH TREASON), Posner (CASE CLOSED), and by the HSCA (THE FINAL ASSASSINATIONS REPORT).

Jim Marrs (CROSSFIRE) raises the question as to whether, in fact, three empty shells were found, which were actually picked up by Captain Fritz after assistant Sheriff Mooney located them, prior to being photographed (one photo shows two shells, while the other shows three.) Marrs states on p. 438 that "although the Warren Commission published a copy of the Dallas police evidence sheet showing three shell cases were taken from the Depository, in later years a copy of that same evidence sheet was found in the Texas Department of Public Safety files which showed only two cases were found. This is supported by the FBI receipt for assassination evidence from the Dallas police that indicates only two shell cases arrived in Washington just after the assassination. Reportedly Fritz held on to one of the cases for several days before forwarding it to the FBI." (This breach of evidence is dealt with in Walt Brown's book "THE PEOPLE V. LEE HARVEY OSWALD," including the fact that only two hulls were initialed, with the third hull having a dent on its lip).