

KENNEDY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

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Name Mrs. Evelyn Lincoln

Date July 5, 1978 Time 10:00 a.m.

Address 4770 Willard Avenue
Chevy Chase, Maryland

Place Hearing Room Offices of
SCA

Unlisted phone number: 654-5370

Interview: Mrs. Lincoln was briefed generally by the Committee's Chief Counsel, G. Robert Blakey, regarding the purpose of the interview and he suggested he would be available if Mrs. Lincoln needed him during the interview. Thereupon he departed the hearing room.

Mrs. Lincoln recalled a visit to her office in the National Archives by Dr. George Burkley and Mr. Robert Bouck to bring some materials. She recalls the men bringing in a group of materials (possibly in one or more cardboard boxes) and laying them down on the floor in front of her desk. She recalls there being a long flat box with a number of manila envelopes on top of it with a number of different sizes of little boxes on top of the envelopes.

Mrs. Lincoln recalled that she didn't have a lot of notice that the materials were coming, saying she received a call from Dr. Burkley saying he would be over with some materials. She believes he arrived with one or two men. She recalls lifting up the box with all the materials in it and carrying them into the back security room and laying them on top of

Interviewer Signature _____
Typed Signature Donald A. Purdy, Jr.

Date transcribed 7-7-78

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one of the file cabinet safes. Shortly thereafter, probably within a day, Mrs. Lincoln and her assistants obtained a "flat trunk" from the Archives staff and put the materials into the trunk and put the trunk into the Security Room. She said she has a specific recollection of lifting all the materials up and placing them into the trunk at the same time.

Mrs. Lincoln's assistants at the time were George Dalton and Joe Giordano. She also said that "Boots" Miller (first name George) worked for her for a while but she wasn't sure if he was working at that time. Mrs. Lincoln was shown the receipt that Dr. Burkley gave her for the items and said it seemed to be accurate in terms of the day, April 26, 1965, and in terms of the general amount and types of containers she received. However, while Dr. Burkley told her in advance or at the time of transfer that the materials were related to the autopsy of the President, she did not know exactly what the materials were, nor did she open any of the containers to see if the receipt Dr. Burkley gave her corresponded to the materials she received. Mrs. Lincoln said she was very close to Dr. Burkley and took his word that all the materials were present.

Mrs. Lincoln said she was telephoned by Bobby Kennedy approximately a month or less after this transfer and told that he was sending Angie Novello, his secretary, over to the Archives

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to move the trunk which Dr. Burkley had brought. They apparently wanted the materials moved to another part of the Archives, presumably to some location where Robert Kennedy was storing other materials.

Shortly thereafter, Angie Novello came to Mrs. Lincoln's office on the fourth floor of the Archives with Herman Kahn and one or more of his deputies to take the trunk. Mrs. Lincoln said she had Ms. Novello sign a receipt for the materials (which was Mrs. Lincoln's custom whenever Angie Novello came to the Archives to obtain materials, even when at the behest of Robert Kennedy). Mrs. Lincoln is certain that she prepared the release for Ms. Novello's signature and kept the release among her materials. She does not know what happened to the receipt but assumes it is with the other receipts that Angie Novello signed, possibly under the name "Bobby Kennedy."

Mrs. Lincoln added that following the assassination of Robert Kennedy, she began to wonder what happened to the materials and what would happen to them and other materials that had been subject to Robert Kennedy's authority, either direct or indirect. Mrs. Lincoln called Ken O'Donnell and told him about her concern that Robert Kennedy had a number of items in the Archives that might get lost in the shuffle. It was Mrs. Lincoln's understanding that Mr. O'Donnell called Edward Kennedy and told him about this matter. Mr. O'Donnell called Mrs.

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Lincoln back and said, "Everything is under control."

Mrs. Lincoln said she never saw nor heard about the autopsy materials again, not even when Burke Marshall handled the transfer of the materials from the Kennedy family to the National Archives on October 31, 1966. Mrs. Lincoln said she was also totally unaware until the day of this interview that the autopsy surgeons had examined the autopsy photographs and X-rays on November 1, 1966 in a room on the second floor of the National Archives.

Mrs. Lincoln left the Archives in late 1966 or early 1967. She said the time of the transfer corresponded roughly to a time when she was working on President Kennedy's handwritten notes. After she left the Archives, she went to Frank Dutton's office where she worked for three or four months.

Mrs. Lincoln said that the day after the funeral of President Kennedy she moved out of the White House and into the Executive Office Building where she worked for six months in General Taylor's office, remaining on the White House payroll until approximately August or September, 1964. Mrs. Lincoln then went on the Kennedy Foundation payroll, an organization which was operated out of New York by her superior, Steve Smith. She also recalled working for Eunice Shriver in 1967 on an abortion conference. She said she has no knowledge whatsoever of the transfer of the materials in October 1966, believing that those knowledgeable would have been Bobby Kennedy,

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Burke Marshall, and Herman Kahn.

Mrs. Lincoln also mentioned what she thought was a curious incident in Dallas prior to the assassination. She said that she was with Dr. Burkley (then physician to the President) when they left Love Field for the beginning of the motorcade; she said they were somewhat surprised at being "shoved" back in the motorcade into a bus. She said they usually rode in an automobile a few cars behind the car carrying the President. Mrs. Lincoln also noted that William Manchester occupied an office next to hers in the Archives during the relevant time period. She said she worked closely with him because Jackie Kennedy suggested she help him in any way she could.

I then questioned Mrs. Lincoln in more detail concerning the trunk containing the autopsy materials and the disposition of the trunk. Mrs. Lincoln said the trunk was about two and a half feet by one foot high and she had a vague recollection that it was grey. She said she received the trunk from Archives personnel and received two keys for it. During the time between receiving the autopsy materials and putting them in the trunk she kept the materials in the Security Room on a file cabinet. Mrs. Lincoln said she had no intention of looking inside the various containers because she was very upset about the assassination of the President and was upset at the prospect of having to handle the autopsy materials. She said, however, she was very careful with them and noted that they fit

neatly into the trunk. It is her present recollection that Dr. Burkley brought the receipt listing in detail the items she received. She is certain she didn't write any such receipt or have one typed. She also didn't remember reading the receipt very closely. When shown the receipt she had a general sense that the number of boxes referred to corresponded, at least roughly, to the materials she received and viewed in front of her desk and later moved to the file cabinet and later to the trunk itself. She acknowledged that she signed a brief note written at the bottom of the receipt Dr. Burkley gave her acknowledging that she received the materials. She said she did not recall ever seeing the documents which accompanied the autopsy materials.

Mrs. Lincoln said that when she received these materials she felt certain she would not have released these materials to anyone without the personal permission of Bobby Kennedy, and said she wouldn't have even allowed Dr. Burkley to have the materials back without getting permission from Bobby Kennedy. Mrs. Lincoln noted that she was very close to Dr. Burkley and felt he was a very trustworthy man. She said she last had dinner with him in 1972 at Duke Zeibert's, during which they discussed the missing autopsy materials.

Mrs. Lincoln recalls that Robert Kennedy came to the Archives about four or five times during the period 1965 to 1966. She said he sometimes took certain papers that he would

either request when he arrived or ask for in advance. She did not make Robert Kennedy sign a receipt when she gave him the materials. She noted that he sometimes borrowed official documents like treaties but always returned them.

Mrs. Lincoln noted that when she gave the materials to Ms. Novello she gave her both keys to the trunk. Until she gave the keys to Ms. Novello she had kept them locked in her desk and kept the trunk locked in the security room each night. She says to her knowledge the trunk was never opened during the time it was in her office spaces. It was Mrs. Lincoln's sense that Angie Novello knew where Robert Kennedy kept things in the Archives and said it was most likely in an area under Mr. Kahn's supervision and control.

Mrs. Lincoln did not recall putting autopsy X-rays into a file cabinet. Specific reference was made to George Dalton's comment that he believed that Mrs. Lincoln had put the X-rays into the file cabinet, at least briefly. Mrs. Lincoln was fairly certain that this had not happened, recalling that she was very intent on putting the materials into something and this was why they obtained the trunk so quickly.

Mrs. Lincoln does not believe the transfer of the autopsy materials took very long. She recalls Dr. Burkley wearing a dark blue overcoat during the meeting and believes he did not take it off. She believes the transfer occurred during the morning. She has no recollection of ever seeing a broken

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casket handle, noting it might have been in a box which she didn't open.

Mrs. Lincoln said she was not aware of the review of the autopsy materials by the autopsy surgeons on November 1, 1966. In fact, she said this was the first she ever heard of it. She said she was still at the Archives at the time but had no knowledge of this. Mrs. Lincoln says she has no idea what happened to the missing autopsy materials, but believes the Kennedys had a "sense of history" about these materials. She said she has no idea who might have come into possession of them or what would have been done with them.

Mrs. Lincoln said she was at Bethesda Naval Hospital at the time of the autopsy of the President and was in the room on the sixteenth or seventeenth floor where the family waited for the conclusion of the autopsy. It was Mrs. Lincoln's sense that Robert Kennedy and Dr. Burkley were down in the area of the autopsy room, at least during part of the autopsy. She then said it was possible they were just off in another room. She believed Robert Kennedy was reasonably calm (and emphasized that he was "always" under control). Mrs. Lincoln only had a general sense that the autopsy took a long time, and doesn't remember any discussions about whether or not the autopsy be partial or complete. She believes Dr. Burkley was actually involved in the supervision of the autopsy, however.

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Mrs. Lincoln left Bethesda at about 3:00 in the morning because Jackie Kennedy told her to go home and rest. She said the only discussion she recalls going on at Bethesda concerned what a fine man the President was. She said she spent most of the evening talking with Ben Bradley.

Mrs. Lincoln suggested that if anyone communicated with the autopsy surgeons, other than Dr. Burkley, it might have been Ken O'Donnell. However, she said she has no information to suggest this was the case.

Mrs. Lincoln said that when the time came for her to turn the materials over to Ms. Novello, she did not have to call someone to say they were coming. Apparently, Ms. Novello had to get some kind of clearance to get by the guard on the main floor. It was actually Mrs. Lincoln's recollection that Angie Novello would have had to obtain clearance to go up to Evelyn Lincoln's office, but conceded it was possible that the only security was on the main floor. It was also Mrs. Lincoln's impression that Ms. Novello had gone by Mr. Kahn's office, particularly in light of the fact that he was with her when she came to Mrs. Lincoln's office.

Mrs. Lincoln said she would be available at any time if we needed her assistance.

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