

Two Score and Eighteen Years Ago:

Autumn of 1966.

Dr. Cyril Wecht

(March 30, 1931—May 13, 2024).

David R. Wrone.

November 22, 2024.

Two score and eighteen years ago, the autumn of 1966, Dr. Cyril Wecht published his first major article depicting the medical irregularities of the fraudulent investigation into President John F. Kennedy's assassination. As a rock that no hammer could break for the next 58 years, he maintained his critical scholarly dissent.

Since that autumn, he published extensively, lectured many times before a wide array of audiences, spoke before Congressional committees, commented on countless television and radio shows, appeared in a number of exceptional documentaries, assisted students who came burdened with questions, and gave unstintingly of his time to citizen inquiries.

In sum, Dr. Wecht has put into the public domain a steady stream of solid information depicting the deliberate failure of officials to conduct a proper autopsy on JFK. He coupled this with carefully drawn scientific conclusions about the medical dimension of the murder and its sustained official cover-up. He has done this to help all citizens achieve the end of revitalizing the nation's wellbeing and making the society a better place now and for distant generations. From the perspective of history, one could

reasonably say he is a man who marched for a freedom principled society to the fife and drum of George Washington and his ragged continentals.

Let me select three principles that run through his contributions to this most difficult and critical subject of our political system's integrity. While they obviously are not all that could be set forth, they are major ones. The first principle is his scholarship and his tough adherence to professional standards coupled with the ability to present them to the public. An example is in August, 1972, he "discovered" in the National Archives that missing from the autopsy artifacts of President Kennedy were the brain, tissue slides, and certain Kodachrome photos of the internal chest wounds, after having been specifically identified in an inventory dated April 26, 1965.

News of this illegal and surreptitious theft not only created a public sensation it also raised serious questions about the validity of official conclusions that a single assassin slew JFK. These stolen elements, we emphasize, carried the distinct potential to disprove or for that matter to affirm the Warren Commission's contentions that a sole assassin fired three shots from high above and behind the presidential limousine.

They might also confute the imperious official claims that deny a law of physics exists, refute the authority of time, assert that a bullet moving at

2000 feet per second can stop in mid-air for seconds and then spontaneously start again, and render material evidence invisible.

But federal officials fiercely follow a flag much different than the one most Americans proudly do and cling to the heinous deeds of degenerate professional conduct. They ceaselessly continued to attack Dr. Wecht on his singular revelation. The best example of persistent effort to impugn the work of this major critic, and thereby taint all who dissent, occurred on December 17, 1991, when former President Gerald Ford, a member of the Warren Commission, and Attorney David Belin, of the Commission counsels and later the Rockefeller Commission, wrote an Opinion page article in the Washington Post decrying the negative charges being levied against the quality of the Commission's medical component.

They boldly stated many physicians and medical experts had examined the autopsy records and had concurred with the Commission conclusions, only to be ignored by the media and film industry that instead focused upon the statements of only a single "odd man out" [meaning Dr. Wecht] who disagreed with the official medical findings.

Dr. Wecht responded with a scathing letter to the editor. He set down his outstanding credentials and noted the inventory had recorded all components of the autopsy materials, including those he had found missing

in 1972. Yet, he wrote, one half of the physicians Ford and Belin embraced as men of honor and possessed of professional expertise had examined the autopsy records but failed to note the missing materials. These touted experts never felt ethically or morally compelled to refer to this important loss in the news media; and, like Ford and Belin, for twenty years they have remained silent regarding the vital evidence.

In addition to his scholarship a second element in Dr. Wecht's career of dissent from officialdom's-imposed truth that I wish to note as a principle is his courage to present and defend that scholarship, often in the face of considerable opposition. A sterling example of this occurred on the afternoon of September 7, 1978, before the House Select Committee on Assassination's public hearing on the medical aspect of the official investigation, televised nationally. Numerous pathologists and physicians and scientists testified to the soundness of the Warren Commission's conclusions.

Near the close of the session Dr. Wecht rose in dissent, the only one who did. In a dynamic, clear, fact infused, and moving speech he ripped apart the single bullet thesis of the Commission and its jerry-rigged supporting evidence that enabled it to hold a sole rifleman killed JFK. He thereby established in solid, irrefutable fact the necessity for additional

gunmen to account for the wounds inflicted on the three bodies that day (Connally, JFK, and citizen Jim Tague). History will concur in my judgment that in his long career to pursue justice in this case, that this late summer afternoon disquisition must be regarded as one of Dr. Wecht's finest hours.

The last of the three principles running through his career that I wish to emphasize is his insistence that dissent be credible. So often confidence men, money makers, glory seekers, the misbegotten, and assorted charlatans have come forward to assert fake solutions to the crime. They meet ridicule in press and disdain in public, get crude dismissal from politicians and welcome from cowed intelligentsia relieved by the false belief the disgraceful and often bizarre claims show Earl Warren was right. In the end these irrational, sometimes conniving, folk damage the credibility of legitimate dissent from the official findings and to that degree act as part of the official cover-up.

An instance is Dr. Wecht's repugnance at the Roscoe White caper and its incredible initial embrace by many, including a few lesser critics. In 1963 White had been a Dallas police man. In 1971 he passed away. In 1990 his widow, Geneva, and son Ricky, held a news conference to claim Roscoe had been part of a trio with Jack Ruby and Lee Oswald who had killed JFK

and they gave some details based on Roscoe's 1960s letters and diaries that described his role. Clear and known facts proved it was a fraud. Further, the documents are written in felt tip pen, which was not invented until ten years later. They also mention chronological absurdities, saying for example "they" [the masterminds behind the assassination] wanted Roscoe for a Watergate task, a burglary that did not occur until seven years after he wrote the diaries.

In a September 26, 1990, letter to Harold Weisberg, a JFK critic, Dr. Wecht lamented the appearance of the hoax. "It damages," he wrote, "the credibility of the dissent." To which Weisberg wholeheartedly agreed.

Thus, in brief, Dr. Wecht's work can be seen as informed by scholarship, marked by a persistence in presenting the evidence, and characterized by insisting opposition to the official views be sensible and accurate as a necessary corollary to being effective.

To his contributions to the subject must be added the exceptional educational capstone of hosting and organizing these invaluable conferences by the Wecht Institute. But further was his unhesitating assistance to young responsible critics. One stellar example is his contribution to the prize winning video on the single bullet theory by Chip Selby, Reasonable Doubt.

In ancient Greece on occasions like this they would trot out a choir to sing him a chorus of praise. We, however, in 2024 must make do with our quiet and deep appreciation for his major and irreplaceable contribution to our knowledge of the assassination of JFK and its corrupt official investigation as well as for his remarkable steadfastness in the service of the commonweal these two score and eighteen years. In Shakespeare's apt phrase:

This was the noblest Roman of them all.  
His life was gentle and the elements  
So mixed in him that nature might stand up  
And say to all the world "This was a man."  
--Julius Caesar

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