

## MEMORANDUM

October 8, 1996

To:           Jeremy Gunn  
              cc - David Marwell, Doug Horne

From:         Joe Freeman

Subject:      Phone call with Howard Willens, re: autopsy photos and X-rays

I had placed two messages to Mr. Willens' home over the last several weeks. He returned my call today. I had called to ask him about two published reports in which it is alleged that he had been involved in an effort to persuade Robert Kennedy to allow the Warren Commission access to the autopsy photos and X-rays.<sup>1</sup> I read him the relevant passages verbatim and asked him if they were accurate. (The two sources are attached.) He replied that they were accurate, and that he had been engaged in "an effort to obtain some access" to the materials. He stated that he knew the Chief Justice had viewed the photos, but had "no present recollection" as to whether Chief Counsel Rankin had also viewed them. At the same time he allowed as how Rankin "might well have been present" when the Chief Justice viewed the materials. In response to a question, Mr. Willens also stated that the time-frame referenced in both secondary sources -- June of 1964 -- "sounds approximately right."

Mr. Willens had no recollection regarding Arlen Specter having seen a single unauthenticated autopsy photo during the Warren Commission's reenactment of the assassination in Dallas in late May of 1964.

---

<sup>1</sup> Gerald Posner, *Case Closed*, p. 407-408, and the August 17, 1992 issue of U.S. News and World Report, p. 40. Mr. Willens volunteered that he had not spoken to Posner, so it may be that Posner's later account is based on the U.S. News article.

Freeman e:\wp-docs\100896  
File 4.0.2 JFK Medical