

Autopsy photographs and X-rays: Chronology

- 11/22-23/63 Turned over in their cassettes (undeveloped) to Kellerman of Secret Service
Turned over to the Kennedy family by the Secret Service
- 5/29/66 Page one story in Washington Post on Epstein book Inquest raises question of location of the wound in the back or back of the neck and of need for examination of the autopsy photos and x-rays
- 10/17/66 Liebler at UCLA calls for the autopsy x-rays to be made public and for the autopsy photographs to "be shown privately to an independent panel of pathologists." While the consensus of public opinion is that the x-rays and photographs were being held by the Kennedy family, "Liebler said he understood they are now at the Justice Department."
- 9/11/66 Epstein told Meagher, in telephone call, that the "autopsy photos are coming--will show Warren Commission are 'right.' Will just 'appear' (from RFK)--will be examined by forensic specialists --in January 1967."
- 11/2/66 NY Times, page 1, column 8: reports deposit of the photos and x-rays in Archives by the Kennedys. Fred Graham reports that the Justice Department "said that under an agreement with the family the 65 x-rays color slides and black and white negatives would be available to Federal law-enforcement agencies. However, for the next five years access by scholars and other unofficial investigators will be granted only with the consent of the family. A Justice Department spokesman said that two Navy physicians who participated in the autopsy had seen the pictures and x-rays today for the first time (Nov.1)..."

Graham writes further: "As had been reported previously, the photographs and x-rays were not seen by the full commission, but Chief Justice Warren had viewed them." "Access will be immediately granted to law-enforcement officials of all Federal investigative agencies...For the next five years access by scholars and other unofficial investigators will be granted only with the specific consent of the Kennedy family. After five years, the family will permit qualified pathologists and other medical experts to study the items."
- 11/3/66 NY Times, page 20: PHOTOS AND X-RAYS OF KENNEDY AUTOPSY WILL BE BARRED TO ALL PRIVATE PERSONS FOR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS, by Fred P. Graham, quotes Burke Marshall as source of the statement. Graham writes: "Mr. Marshall's statement was surprising in view of the announcement last night by a Government spokesman that under the agreement with the Kennedy family only nonofficial persons approved by Mr. Marshall would be permitted to see the articles during the first five years." Story says that under an agreement...only Federal investigative agents have the right during the first five years to see the material without Mr. Marshall's permission.
- 11/3/66 L.A. Times editorial states that Federal law-enforcement officials will be permitted immediate access; for the next five years, scholars and unofficial investigators will be permitted to examine the evidence with the consent of the Kennedy family. After 1971, pathologists and other medical specialists will be able to study the evidence.
- 11/4/66 LBJ at press conference (NY Times 11/5/66 gives transcript on p.10) states: "I think it's available to any official body now."

11/7/66

Ken Goodall phonecall to Meagher: Dr. Rhoads at the Archives said that for next five years, available (without permission from the Kennedy family) ONLY to officials representing a federal body established to look further into the assassination. Other federal agents can see them with permission of the family.

1/6/68

NY Times publishes text of the Agreement on access to JFK clothing and personal effects, and to the photos and x-rays. Access to be granted only to official Government investigative bodies and "private experts approved by the Kennedy family can see the material for the first five years."

Yet on 1/25/67 Burke Marshall wrote to Kupferman that:

"The wishes of the Kennedy family, as reflected in the agreement by which the material was given to the United States, are that there be no examination of the material for at least five years, except by a properly authorized federal government agency. Thereafter inspection will be limited to persons professionally qualified to evaluate medical evidence, for serious historical purposes."

Marxhall misrepresented the agreement to Kupferman; he could have granted permission to Helpern Wecht even Meagher as "private experts" to view the evidence.