

# Will JFK X-Rays End

By NORMAND POIRIER

Will the 6 X-rays and photographs taken during the assassinated President Kennedy's autopsy help to settle the continuing controversy over the Warren Commission's findings?

The Kennedys turned the pictures—described as “very bloody and gruesome”—over to the National Archives yesterday with great reluctance.

A Justice Dept. spokesman said it took “weeks of discussion” to persuade Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy and Sens. Robert and Edward that the photos should be in the hands of the government.

The spokesman said the action was prompted partly by mounting criticism—in books and magazine articles—of the Warren Commission's report.

The Kennedy family put stringent restrictions on who might see the exhibits for at least the next five years, but qualified scholars and unofficial investigators may examine them if the Kennedys grant permission.

But the X-rays and pictures are available now to federal law-enforcement agencies.

Critics of the Commission report claim there is conflicting evidence about where Kennedy was struck by the assassin's bullets and suggest that the original autopsy report by Naval doctors was altered to conform with the commission's finding that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone assassin.

Only the autopsy X-rays and photographs, they maintain, could settle the controversy.

After five years, qualified pathologists and medical experts may examine the material with the family's permission.

Nor did the Kennedys' action resolve the mystery concerning the whereabouts of the X-rays and photos since the autopsy. Critics have charged that they disappeared mysteriously after they were handed to the Secret Service.

A Justice Dept. spokesman said last night he didn't know how the Kennedys obtained the photos from Bethesda, Md.

Naval Hospital where the autopsy was performed. But the transfer of the 65 pictures took place Monday and two Navy doctors who conducted the postmortem examination confirmed at the National Archives building in Washington that the photos were those taken during the autopsy.

Yesterday was the first time the two doctors actually saw the pictures and X-rays, the Justice Dept. said.

Of the seven members of the Warren Commission, only Chief Justice Warren had seen the 14 X-rays, 2' black and white negatives, and 26 four-by-five inch color slides.

Cmdr. James J. Humes, one of three doctors who performed the autopsy, was asked before the Commission if the pictures would help him in describing the President's wounds. He replied:

“I do not believe, sir, that the availability of the pictures would materially assist the commission.”

Chief Justice Warren asked him: “If we had the pictures here and you could look them over again would it cause you

to change any of the testimony you have given here?”

“To the best of my recollection, Mr. Chief Justice, it would not,” Humes said.

The Justice Dept. said yesterday that the two Navy physicians who participated in the autopsy saw the pictures and X-rays yesterday for the first time and said the material corroborated their testimony to the Warren Commission.

Said Cmdr. J. Thornton Boswell, who assisted Humes in the

## Debate?

autopsy: “These photos are nothing more than supportive evidence for information we presented to the Warren Commission. All they would do would be to document what we discussed. They were medical-legal photographs taken for presentation in court at the Oswald trial. Oswald was still alive at the time of the autopsy”.

### Many Queries

A Justice Dept. spokesman said the department had been asked by the Kennedys not to announce the acquisition but had done so in answer to many queries. Asked if the Kennedys had other material pertinent to the assassination, he said: “We know of nothing they are holding back.”

In a related move, the Justice Dept. also seized thousands of items of physical evidence related to Oswald and the Commission's investigation.

Among them: the Mannlicher-Carcano rifle that killed Kennedy, a .38 Smith and Wesson pistol owned by Oswald, and hundreds of items found in his rooms including pamphlets on the Soviet Union and Communist theory, press clippings of his pro-Castro activities, his undesirable discharge from the Marine Corps, and his letter promising to pay the State Dept. \$435.71 for bringing him back from Russia.

The Kennedys' letter turning over the photos also gave the government title to the clothes Kennedy was wearing when he was slain. The clothes were already in the government's possession. Public display of the garments is prohibited, but scholars are permitted to examine them.

**WEATHER**

Fog, drizzle, clearing, followed by rain, 60s.

**Tomorrow: Cloudy, 50s.**

SUNSET: 4:52 P.M.  
SUNRISE  
TOMORROW:  
6:28 A.M.

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# The JFK X-Rays

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