

5747
11/13/64

The Kennedy X-Rays

As a physician and medical administrator, I was more than puzzled by the recent action concerning the "donation" by the Kennedy family of photographs and X-rays made by the U.S. Naval Hospital at Bethesda in the course of performing an autopsy on the late President Kennedy. Such records are customarily the property of the hospital or medical organization performing the indicated medical procedure and each hospital must retain the original of such records in its files except as it may be directed to do otherwise by court action. In this case, there is the additional complication that these records were the property of the United States Government and should have been available to the Warren Commission in its investigation.

I cannot see that there is any excuse for the release of these records by Naval authorities to the Kennedy family or for that family to place any restrictions on their use by the Federal Government. The records of medical procedures conducted at a hospital under no circumstances, Government or otherwise, belong to the family nor does any hospital administrator have the right to authorize such release.

John P. Nason, M.D.

Kensington