

AUTOPSY PHOTOS PUT IN ARCHIVES BY THE KENNEDYS

Access to Negatives, Slides
and X-Rays of President's
Body Will Be Restricted

OPEN TO LAW AGENCIES

Justice Department Asked
Filing of Data—Doubts on
Warren Study a Reason

By FRED P. GRAHAM

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 1—The Justice Department disclosed tonight that photographs and X-rays taken of President Kennedy's body at the autopsy after his assassination were turned over to the National Archives yesterday by the Kennedy family.

The 65 X-rays, color slides and black and white negatives will be available to Federal law-enforcement officials. However, for the next five years access by scholars and other unofficial investigators will be granted only with the consent of the Kennedy family.

The material had been withheld by the family for reasons of taste. As had been previously reported, it was not seen by the full Warren Commission, although Chief Justice Earl Warren, who headed the commission, had viewed it.

The limitations on access to the material were included in a letter to the Archives signed by a lawyer for the executors of the Kennedy estate—Mrs. Kennedy and the President's brothers, Senators Robert F. Kennedy of New York and Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts.

Law Provides for Curbs

A Federal law regarding Presidential libraries provides that papers and other items may be deposited in the Archives subject to limitations and restrictions imposed by the donors.

This morning, Acting Attorney General Ramsey Clark officially turned over to the Archives all of the physical evi-

dence considered by the Warren Commission.

This had been in the hands of the Justice Department.

The X-rays and photographs were placed in the National Archives at the request of the Justice Department.

A Justice Department spokesman, who asked not to be identified, said tonight that the action was prompted in part by a number of recent books that expressed doubt about the Warren Commission's conclusions concerning the assassination.

Details on Restrictions

According to the spokesman, the items will be restricted as follows:

¶ Access will be immediately granted to law-enforcement officials of all Federal investigative agencies.

¶ No public display or release will be permitted.

¶ 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

Continued on Page 37, Column 1 permit qualified pathologists and other medical experts to study the items.

These limitations will remain in effect throughout the lifetimes of Mrs. Kennedy, the late President's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy, and the President's brothers and sisters and his two children.

Arlen Specter, who was a key Warren Commission lawyer and is now District Attorney of Philadelphia, has reported that the commission, in investigating the circumstances of the assassination, decided it was unnecessary for its members to review the photographs or X-rays.

Mr. Specter had interviewed Comdr. James J. Humes, an autopsy surgeon, and had asked if X-rays would assist him in further specifying the nature of President Kennedy's wounds. The published testimony, in Volume II, Page 371, shows the Navy surgeon replied:

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

Questioned by Warren

Asked by Mr. Specter about the other photographs, Commander Humes said these would show more accurately and in detail the character of the wounds, giving perhaps a more graphic picture.

Chief Justice Warren, who was presiding, then asked:

"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?"

Commander Humes replied: "To the best of my recollection, Mr. Chief Justice, it would not."

The commission concluded that President Kennedy and Gov. John B. Connally Jr. of Texas had been struck by the same bullet, which passed first through the President.

Some critics contended the bullet had not passed through the President's body and suggested that the pictures and X-Rays taken at the autopsy were being suppressed to conceal the truth. These critics implied that another bullet, perhaps fired by another assassin, had struck Governor Connally.

It has been widely reported that the Secret Service delivered all the undeveloped pictures and X-rays to the Kennedy family.

Today, Commander Humes and another of the three physicians who performed the autopsy, J. Thornton Boswell, went to the National Archives and authenticated the X-Rays and pictures as those taken during the autopsy. Both physicians are now stationed at the Bethesda Naval Hospital.

The third physician, Col. Pierre A. Finck, is on duty in Vietnam.

The radiologist who took the X-Rays, whose name was not given tonight, also authenticated the X-Rays.

Doctors' Testimony

According to the Justice Department spokesman, the two Navy doctors who authenticated the material today both said they saw nothing new in the X-Rays and pictures.

In their testimony before the Warren Commission, both said their examination of the President's body indicated that the bullet that struck him in the back of the neck passed out his throat.

This testimony was crucial to the commission's conclusion that a single bullet had struck the President and Governor Connally.

Asked if everything they saw today was corroborative, the doctors were said to have replied, "Yes."

The spokesman emphasized they were merely trying to authenticate the material and did not study it from a medical standpoint.

14 X-Rays in Group

The Justice Department said there were 14 X-rays, 25 black and white negatives and 26 four-by-five-inch color transparencies. The spokesman gave as one reason for the department's request for the data the desire to complete the historical record of the assassination.

He added that he was "sure that the questions which some of these books helped to raise in the eye of the public" helped lead to the Justice Department's action.

Questions about the pictures have been raised in recent books that dispute the Warren Commission's conclusions. The most widely publicized of these, "Inquest: The Warren Commission and the Establishment of

Truth," by Edward Jay Epstein, quoted from Federal Bureau of Investigation reports saying the bullet that struck the President in the back of the head did not go through.

Later, F.B.I. sources said these reports were in error. But Mr. Epstein and other critics continued to demand the pictures and X-rays as proof.

Another book, "Rush to Judgment," by Mark Lane, stressed the same theme.

Government Takes Evidence

In an earlier action today, acting Attorney General Ramsey Clark took title for the Federal Government to all the physical evidence considered by the Warren Commission.

Acting under a law of 1965 that authorized him to decide which articles should be preserved in the National Archives, Mr. Clark concluded that "the national interest requires the entire body of evidence considered by the commission" to be preserved intact.

In a poignant recount of the memorabilia of the assassination, he listed first "one 6.5 mm. Mannlicher-Carcano rifle, with telescopic sight, serial No. C2766, including sling and cartridge clip."

H.R. 9545:
see cards Weapon-Sale - 7 Sep 65 ff.

See also NYTimes
8 Sep 65, filed
Rifle: "The bill,
which now goes to
the Senate, also
authorizes the
Attorney General
to decide what
other items of
evidence should be
retained by the
Government."

*correction, NYTimes (Fred Graham), 3 Nov 66.

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NYTimes 2 Nov 66, this file.