

# New forensic medical revelations prove Kennedy murder was covered up

by Donald L. MacNay, M.D.

---

## **JFK: Conspiracy of Silence**

Charles A. Crenshaw, M.D. with Jens Hansen and J. Gary Shaw

Penguin Books, New York, 1992  
205 pages, paperbound, \$4.99

---

This book presents information that the author, Dr. Charles A. Crenshaw, withheld for 30 years, namely, that the evidence—in particular the medical evidence—from President John F. Kennedy's assassination proves that there was a conspiracy to murder him. Crenshaw was a surgical resident at Parkland Hospital in Dallas in 1963. He was on the scene on that fateful day when Kennedy was brought to the Parkland emergency room. In this book, Crenshaw integrates his information with the facts collected by investigator J. Gary Shaw to complete a picture, as he saw it, pointing to the conspiracy to murder JFK. Crenshaw also gives the facts surrounding the death of Lee Harvey Oswald.

Shaw offers a great deal of minutiae about the actions of people and what they saw surrounding the events of the murders. Crenshaw presents graphic medical details concerning the injuries of both the President and Oswald, the precise nature of their wounds, why they could not be saved, and evidence of coverup from the medical forensic record as he knew it firsthand.

Taken altogether, the facts assembled in this short book point to the role of the vice president of the United States and others, in varying degrees, in creating the coverup. Why has Crenshaw chosen to write this book today? He has buried his information about Kennedy's assassination for 30 years, for fear of repercussions to himself and possibly to other people at Parkland Hospital. In 1963, he was a 30-year-old resident surgeon and feared to speak up. His view today is: "They can't hurt me now, it's time I talked."

To begin with, the President's lethal wounds showed Crenshaw and his colleagues in the emergency room that clearly Kennedy had been wounded by shots from the front, and not from the back—that is, not from the sixth floor window of the Texas School Book Depository, as claimed

by the authorities and the Warren Commission.

The first part of *Conspiracy of Silence* presents the particulars from the scene of Kennedy's shooting and then integrates these with what was observed and what transpired at the hospital, beginning from the moment that the stricken Kennedy appeared at the emergency room doors. Crenshaw's account reports many facts that show that Kennedy was attacked from behind the fence on the grassy knoll on one side of the Dealey Plaza, as his motorcade proceeded. After the shots rang out, several people, including one policeman, ran toward the puff of smoke, toward the picket fence on the hillock. Each of these people was stopped by an armed security agent. Their accounts all converge on the fact that Kennedy received two bullet wounds from the front. Evidence from the emergency room clearly shows that Kennedy was struck by two bullets, both from the front—one in the neck and the other tearing out the entire right side of his cranium and brain. There was no question concerning from which direction the bullet came. The wound in the President's neck also clearly indicated shots from the front. It was a second point of entry, located in the lower neck, at the level of the second to third cricoid cartilage of the trachea (below the voice box).

Crenshaw notes here a fact that becomes relevant in the later coverup: The location of the bullet wound in the neck is the very level at which a tracheostomy, if necessary, is done. This procedure was performed on the President. Doctors had intubated him, for aeration, but it was not working satisfactorily and a tracheostomy was called for.

At the time, there were some questions raised concerning the quality of the President's care at Parkland Hospital. Painting a vivid picture for the lay reader, Crenshaw recounts everything the emergency room team did to stabilize Kennedy's condition, although he was already medically nonviable, because he had been brought in brain-dead. Although Kennedy's heart was still beating when he arrived at the hospital, it finally stopped in spite of all efforts.

## **Evidence tampered with**

A crucial point that Crenshaw makes is that it is a state responsibility to establish and maintain a continuity of evidence in all criminal cases. In medical emergencies, procedures exist that involve the office of the coroner, the patholo-

gist, and all others on the staff, to carefully preserve the evidence and materials along the way. However, in the case of the President, not only was this not done, but attempts to do so were also obstructed. Very shortly after Kennedy's death, the Secret Service took over, and their intervention broke the continuity of evidence. Crenshaw and his fellow medics witnessed how this was done at the direction of the only man who could have given such instructions—Lyndon Baines Johnson. Once Kennedy was pronounced dead, the Secret Service began to remove the body. The local pathologist insisted that the agents had no jurisdiction to take away the body, but he was brushed aside. According to Crenshaw, although the Secret Service men did not directly threaten the pathologist, any further remonstrance by him would have put his life in danger.

Another violation of standard emergency room medical and forensic procedures concerned the “discovery” of the “magic bullet” that allegedly killed the President. Crenshaw reports on the untoward appearance of Jack Ruby—the underworld figure, later to shoot accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald—at the hospital soon after Kennedy's body was taken away from the emergency room.

After seeing Ruby, Crenshaw recalls that he then was confronted with the news that someone had produced a bullet from beneath the mattress of the hospital gurney where Kennedy had lain, which was to become the “magic bullet.” Although there are no eyewitnesses, Crenshaw makes the assumption that Ruby placed the bullet under the mattress.

This dramatic incident was not the only one that night: A student nurse, in the normal course of her activities, happened to make a vital observation that set off a chain of events violating forensic procedures. When she passed by the Kennedy limousine, with a security agent standing beside it, she noticed that there was a bullet hole in the metal rim on the framework of the windshield. This was a hole resulting from a penetrating bullet, not from a fragment. Her observation disturbed the agent. He quickly got into the car and drove off. The car subsequently was taken to Washington, D.C., and then to Ohio, where it was stripped, redone, and repainted. All the evidence was gone.

## Head wounds altered

Perhaps the most dramatic instance of tampering with the evidence is the case of the alteration of JFK's corpse. Crenshaw notes that when the body was taken by force from Parkland Hospital by the Secret Service, it left in a casket. When it arrived in Washington, D.C., it was in a different casket and subsequently in a body bag. Later, pictures taken of the body at the post mortem examination at Bethesda Naval Hospital showed totally different head wounds from what Crenshaw and his colleagues saw in the emergency room at Parkland Hospital.

- First, the scalp had been turned to close the gaping hole in the back of the head, to make it appear that there had

been a posterior entry of the bullet. Those desiring a coverup would do this because, as forensic specialists and experienced surgeons know, the hole where a bullet enters is typically smaller than where it exits.

- Second, the anterior wound, at which location Crenshaw and colleagues did the tracheostomy, was also radically altered. At the Parkland emergency room, the surgeons had positioned the tracheostomy right at the site of the bullet entry hole. The body left the Texas emergency room with a small, neat, three-quarter-inch incision, but the post mortem pictures showed a jagged, three-inch hole!

Crenshaw points out that the team that did the post mortem at Bethesda Naval Hospital had not one forensic specialist on it, yet it supplied the report to the Warren Commission. The team was selected by the Johnson administration.

## ‘I want a deathbed confession’

The final section of Crenshaw's book concerns the treatment of Lee Harvey Oswald in the emergency room of Parkland Hospital. Oswald was still alive when he arrived at Parkland Hospital emergency room, but he did have severe wounds. The bullet did as much damage as a bullet could: It hit the spleen, the aorta, the venacava, and the liver. Massive interabdominal bleeding occurred. Oswald arrived exsanguinated with blood, in hemorrhagic shock from blood loss into the belly.

The medical team stabilized him, but it was too late. After about an hour in surgery, his heart stopped.

However, while Crenshaw was still involved in the surgery, a goon walked in, with a gun on his hip. The next thing Crenshaw knew, he got a telephone call. A booming voice demanded, “I want a deathbed confession.” It was Lyndon B. Johnson.

Nobody had yet even said Oswald was going to die! He had been stabilized. Why did the President override what would be normal procedure of legal responsibility in such a case—state procedures—and phone the physician directly in the emergency room? Johnson's need for a confession from Oswald, forced or otherwise, was obviously urgent.

Crenshaw asserts that the direct interference by Johnson to obtain a deathbed confession from Oswald showed clearly the interference by the federal government and proved its involvement in the coverup.

The knowledge of these facts surrounding the murders of Kennedy and Oswald burned within Crenshaw for nearly 30 years, and each day more evidence is coming out. Crenshaw and his co-author Gary Shaw will be joining other witnesses to the Nov. 22, 1963 events and the coverup, as well as investigators, at an “Assassination Symposium on John F. Kennedy” on Oct. 22-25 in Dallas. Speakers will also include David Lifton, author of *Best Evidence*, and Jim Marrs, author of *Crossfire*.

*Donald MacNay is a surgeon in northern Virginia.*