

Film of book depository window studied

By BOB DUDNEY NOV 26 1978

DALLAS Times Herald Washington Bureau
WASHINGTON — Lee Harvey Oswald's presumed role as the lone assassin of President John F. Kennedy once again is being questioned by the existence of an amateur film said to reveal more than one figure in the Texas School Book Depository sniper's perch.
The footage, taken in Dealey Plaza by former Dallas engineer Charles Bronson, apparently records activity within the depository shortly before Oswald is believed to have fired three gunshots at Kennedy from a sixth floor window.

Bronson was watching the motorcade Nov. 22, 1963.

Although at least portions of the film have been examined by the FBI and found to be of no value, a number of assassination researchers who have seen the Bronson footage contend that it shows two persons moving around in the window about five minutes before the shooting.

Captured on the approximately 90 frames of 8mm Ektachrome color film, according to assassination researchers, are the two men — one of them wearing a reddish shirt — in an apparent

effort to move packing crates up to the window's ledge.

The Assassination Information Bureau, a private group studying the Dallas slaying, scheduled a news conference today to screen the film, which it believes has never been fully studied by the government.

"The implications are that there could have been more than one assassin involved or it might have been other individuals on the sixth floor framing up the evidence later used against Oswald," AIB Director Jeff Goldberg said.

But Robert Blakey, chief counsel for the House Select Committee on Assassinations, said he was unaware of the existence of such evidence, and expressed curiosity that Bronson had not come forward with the footage in the 15 years since Kennedy was killed.

The Warren Commission, which concluded that Oswald acted alone in the Kennedy murder, reviewed all available film and photographs taken at the assassination scene. But it could not conclusively determine Oswald's presence in the sixth floor window from the photographic evidence.

It is not clear whether the presence of others in the sixth floor window area minutes before the shooting would necessarily indicate conspiracy.

Investigators found boxes positioned in front of the window and presumed that Oswald has stacked them there. Bronson, who in 1963 was the chief engineer for Zarel Manufacturing Co. in Dallas, has since moved to Ada, Okla., where he apparently stored the film over the years.

Reached there Saturday, Bronson's wife declined to discuss the matter and said her husband would be unavailable for comment.

"I'm sorry, but it's all been set up this way," said the wife, who refused even to give her first name. "We had no idea anything was going to come out of this and I still don't think that it will, but I'm going to keep quiet."

The Bronson attorney in Dallas, John Sigalos, also declined to discuss the matter, claiming "contractual arrangements" prohibited it. He also declined to discuss what the contractual arrangement involved, but others said it involved the possible sale of rights to certain portions of the film.

The apparently new examination of Bronson's footage, taken with the 8mm standard lens camera, seemingly was sparked by the public release last spring of an FBI document that mentioned it.

The document, dated Nov. 25, 1963,

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mentioned that agent Milt Newsom of the Dallas office had reviewed the footage. Researchers studying the document had never heard of Bronson's purported evidence, and a subsequent interview with the former Dallas resident brought two rolls of the color film to light.

According to FBI sources, Newsom apparently examined one roll of the film and returned it to Bronson when it was found to have no evidentiary value. It is unclear whether the second roll was studied at that time. If not, an FBI official in Dallas said, it is possible that the footage of the depository building may not have been included in the total case file presented to the Warren Commission.

According to Goldberg, however, Bronson mailed the two rolls of film and another roll of 35mm still shots to the FBI himself, noting that he had included the depository building in his shots and that he felt certain he had photographed the assassin accidentally.

"The FBI saw it, or had it, they just blew it," Goldberg contended. "They

just didn't look at the segments involving the depository building, apparently."

Newsom, who is still an agent in the Dallas office, was declining comment about the matter but others knowledgeable about the matter said Newsom had no recollection of the film or of Bronson when queried about it for the first time last month.

FBI sources also said that the film apparently is somewhat blurred and was taken as Bronson was moving with the camera. "I can't imagine an 8mm camera with the regular lens being able to pick up anything on the sixth floor, much less being able to differentiate whether there was one or two people."

Two memoranda written by Newsom about the film, the last setting out its disposition as not of evidentiary value, are still contained in the FBI's records of the matter, an FBI official said.

Until Bronson was contacted by private assassination researchers, he apparently was unaware that the 90 frames now under review existed. He often has shown the film in his own home, but

the frames in question were said to be end-footage that seemed to come after the film was completed.

A high official of the Select Committee says he remembered only two instances in the two-year investigation of the slaying of such apparently new film evidence coming to light. One concerned a Dallas woman who supposedly turned some film over to the FBI, but which was supposedly lost by the bureau.

This footage was later found, he said.

Another involved a man who was subpoenaed after he demanded money for a portion of film that he had. He subsequently delivered the material to the committee.