

September 3, 1976

Dear Roger,

Finished wading through the copy of Itak's confidential report to CBS on the Zapruder and other Kennedy-assassination-film material you generously made for me. What a dishonest piece of work is this pseudoscientific study, the latest in a continuing but ineffective effort in behalf of the government's official account of the assassination to gainsay the simple and clear message of the Zapruder film - Kennedy was struck by a bullet fired from a point in front of and to the right of his limousine; and the inescapable conclusion to which it leads - Kennedy was brought down in a conspiratorial ambush.

It was to be expected that Itak, a patriotic business enterprise serving important capitalist interests, would use its ultrasophisticated equipment and make technical calculations to support its customer's position in behalf of the government's account of the assassination. Dutifully, the report provides data to bolster the the Warren Commission's discredited single-bullet "theory" of the wounding of Kennedy and Connally, for which purpose it assumes as fact the false description of Kennedy's anterior neck wound as one of exit, in studied disregard of documented proof it was an entry wound.

Equally detestable is the tortured handling of the sequence of events in the presidential limousine immediately following the fatal shot to Kennedy's head apparent in still frame 313 derived from the original Zapruder film. Itak's gandy dancers noted there were "two forces acting on him (forward and backward)...from the ir effects, very different in magnitude and direction." The forward

movement was confined primarily to the head for a 1 frame interval, amounted to "approximately 2.3 inches;" was accompanied by a "cloud of matter, mist like in appearance...hanging in the air as late as frame 316," radiating in all directions" with the "major, or large particles...in a forward direction;" and was followed by a "losser movement" of "about 1.1 inches" in "his shoulder over about 2-3 frames." This fits the autopsy and Warren Commission[®] finding the fatal shot was fired from Kennedy's rear. Wecht should be pleased.

Kennedy's backward movement began, Itak found, by frame 314 in which "his head has reversed direction and is found slightly to the rear of its 313 position (about .3 of an inch). His shoulder and elbow continue forward after his head reversed direction and follow the backward movement of the head by 2 and 3 frames, respectively." Then Kennedy's body "appears to receive a second impulse backward between 315 and 316 as evidenced by...the significant change in backward velocity and acceleration between 315-316, and 314-315."

What accounts for the backward "impulse" which were carefully unremarked by the authors of the Warren Commission Report? For the first, Itak offers no explanation in the body of its report. For the second it has an original "heuristic hypothesis" pivoting on Mrs. Kennedy: on or after being "hit by the exploding matter from" her husband's head wound, "the ensuing action on her part was purely instinctive to duck down and shove backward in one continuous motion..." Heuristic, Webster explains, signifies "spec. valuable for stimulating or conducting empirical research but unproved or incapable of proof."

Therefore "The statement," Itak adds in a footnote, "that Mrs. Kennedy caused the President's backward motion is not intended to mean that she was the sole cause. In fact, calculations made from the theory of jet reaction suggest that this phenomenon could explain some of the movement."

And "Although it is beyond the scope of this report to deal with neurological reaction in a quantitative fashion, it appears plausible that this effect too could have influenced the backward motion." All bases are covered.

So the shameful business continues. After Alvarez and Hoch's melons and Lattimer's gelatin blocks and who knows what else, we have Itak's "integrating or registration printer," its computer digitation and stereo photogrammetric analytic equations, "the greatest single obstacle to the use" of which, as in pinball artistry, is "the presence of tilt and the effect of tilt;" and much more; all of which has useful application, no doubt, in espionage and counterintelligence, but has nothing positive to do with truth, and typifies capitalist prostitution of science and journalism.

I hope you will expose the entire shabby business in the book you are contemplating.

Optimistically,

