

11/21/69

Dear Dick,

While the repair on my copying machine is being made for the umptenth time, I make hasty response to your 11/17 to Gary.

On Fred: if it is gold plated, still do not trust it. Where he sees accurately, he interprets weirdly. As to his personality, you see only part, but is that part not enough? The big danger is that he'll go off half-cocked, the only way he ever does, and we'll all suffer all over again.

291- look at the printed slides in the book. Note the height and other positions of the body/head. It is clear enough in the volume. This does not tell us which it is. It tells only that something happened at that point. On the alleged editing of frames: first ask yourself if they would have done the unnecessary, then ask what was accomplished by it. If no purpose was served, they didn't do it. Except for the very early and very late frames, I consider this impossible save for the one place I exposed long ago. The copy has some early ones missing. This is quite visible, but that is not the same as the official versions having missing frames. I base this on my original study of the slides and the backgrounds in each.

Mary told me she found editing in the Archives copy. She also promised me a copy of the memo she was going to do and I haven't seen it. I am unpersuaded. If life did not get the original, an impossible thing was undertaken: the whole thing was laboriously copied by hand. The copying masks out the between-sprocket-hole material, which is present in the slides. Fred began trying to persuade me each and every frame was done over.

Roffman's copy of the Atlgens negative is better than mine. I agree with his belief a man can be seen dimly in the background, through the open window. I cannot attribute special significance to it, but a dim figure I do believe I see there.

Thompson's book is being reissued for \$1.00, so perhaps you can afford it.

On the back wound: I can now assure you that my original placing was precisely accurate, but I cannot now cite my new evidence of this.

I am hoping to get slides of the 290 Area. I will then have tracings. In fact, Howard said he would do this. He is busy. I'll have an artist do it well, somehow or another.

Best regards,

Franklin

Selmon

17 Nov. 69

Dear Gary:

Sorry for delay in answering your letter of 25 Oct. As you know from my correspondence with Harold, I am swamped with things to do.

Enclosed is latest letter to Harold.

Foley picture: Enclosed are three slides, which you may keep. ~~XMASER~~ Since making them I learned from Newcomb that the picture is worthless. It was taken not on the morning of the assassination, but on the 24th of Nov., the day of the SS re-enactment. It's evident if you compare some things visible in the Foley picture with the same things in the SS re-enactment pictures. Notably the wires that stretch across the water pool on the west side of Houston St. and the "No Parking" signs over the parking meters.

I had written to Newcomb about the picture, for I knew that he had been excited about it, and I was curious chiefly to know what motive might have impelled the photographer to take a picture of the building when it had no importance whatever at the time. I was grateful for the information that Fred passed, but somewhat miffed by the tone of his reply. It was contemptuous to an unwarranted degree, as though I was supposed to know all the things that he knew. I would have taken it with a grain of salt if it were not Newcomb himself who initially contributed to the stir of interest in this picture.

Fred seems to have a fantastic lot of good stuff that he is holding for his own. That rankles me, too. He'll present us with an analysis in the form of a Tait accomli and we will not have a chance to view things except in light of what he says about them.

William Brock: I do not have your memo on info received from Brock, but would like it.

Time of back wound: what you say about JFK not showing visible response to this if he received the throat wound first is exactly what I wrote to Harold in a letter of a month or so ago. Harold thinks he sees relevant movement around 2291 or so, but I have not studied this closely and would like to see Archives slides before I would say. I would guess that response from this wound (after receiving throat wound) would be only a slight movement of the shoulders-- that's what I'd look for, anyway. But events were in such a state of crisis, that it's hard to say what would happen. Without carefully checking Harold's assertion, my present state of knowledge is that evidence of the back hit is not visible in Z.

If there is discrepancy between location of wound on JFK flesh and location of holes in shirt and coat, then it would result from JFK being hit in the back when his arms were up, i.e., when his coat was bunched up in the back.

I believe back hit was not the first hit on JFK. I base this mainly on Glen Bennett who said he saw bullet hit JFK in the back. ~~Xissis~~ Willis #5 indicates Bennett not looking in JFK's direction at 2202. If looking at JFK's back, Bennett would see bullet strike (impact causes puffing or ruffling of clothes), but he would not see the hole after impact. I think Bennett an extremely important witness; naturally, he was never called to testify.

Anterior neck: Absence of metal on JFK tie and shirt front is not ruinous to either argument--exit or entry. The presence of metal traces would be indicative of entry, but the absence of traces has no bearing either way. The reason is that a bullet does not necessarily have to leave copper traces of itself on fibers. Besides, Frazier's examination of the slits did not extend to spectro analysis-- all he did was X-ray the slits, and I doubt whether slight traces of metal would show, even if they were there. The amounts would be minuscule. I don't care, anyway, for I do not think the question is relevant. If metal traces were evident, I would consider it almost conclusive for entrance, but absence of metal traces has no evidentiary value, either positive or negative.

I admit puzzlement about the slits, but see no means whereby they can have been caused by a flying missile-- no matter what the composition of the missile, and no matter what the direction. An entrance of a bullet would certainly have produced holes, not slits. An exit of a missile-- whether bone or metal-- ~~would~~ might produce slits only if the missile itself were long, irregular in shape, and traveling "sideways". That can't be the case here, because such a missile would have produced a correspondingly long and irregular wound in JFK's neck.

Nothing makes sense except that the slits are hand-made. Frazier says they are tears; that inclines me to think that the fibers were torn and not cut with an instrument. Another possibility is that there were indeed bullet entrance holes in the shirt which were extended by means of tearing so as to distort their character and obscure their evidentiary value.

Head debris near canhole cover: Hoffman says this is visible in Zapruder as the camera pans in that direction. I can't confirm that observation, for all I have is the copy from Fred. The archive slides should show it clearly, if it is there.

Archives Zapruder: Knowledge that this contains the same splices as Lewcomb's copy is very exciting. Fred only told me that interesting discoveries were made, but (as usual) never mentioned what the discoveries were. He described Mary Ferrell's visit to the archives, but did not mention that it was she who went.

This means, of course, either that LFB did not buy the original but a doctored copy, or that they have the original and are issuing the doctored copy. I suspect the former.

How I wonder what is the purpose of the doctoring.

Slides of movie frames: If you have movies for which you want individual frames on slides, you can send them to me, if you want. I can make these cheaply with the facilities that I have here at Queen's. The quality is excellent. I can enlarge 8mm movie frames to 20mm (on slides)--i.e. the image of the 8mm movie frame is 20mm on the slide. Color is good, too. I have done it with some sequences in the DCI film and Fred's Zapruder. I can make 50 slides for \$3.50.

Lifton: I understand how you feel. I have had so little contact with him lately that I consider myself out of touch with him. Just as well, for it appears that there is nothing that he can do for me.

Dal-Tex window: Roffman's reference is to the open window on the second floor, just to the left (looking at the picture) of the man on the fire escape-- the window that Weisberg indicates in W 2. In versions of Mitgens 3 that I have seen I note in that window only what appears to be the bare left arm of a man with a dark complexion. And I'm not even sure of that. Roffman will send his copy of the picture (made directly from the original negative) and I'll check his observations. Also I'll get it on slides. If what Roffman says is correct, I'll make blow-ups of that area.

The photo made from the original negative is available from A for \$7.50, more than I can afford right now, but in time I shall probably buy a copy of my own.

Betzner pictures: Betzner's conditions for letting you have the picture area appalling, but better than nothing, I guess.

It's nearing 22 November, so perhaps Life will again throw us a few photographic crumbs. Those greedy bastard.

I have not yet sent copies of my memo to the people you mention, but I shall soon.

Forget about sending me Thompson's book. ~~I~~ I'll work this out some other way. My own cop. has been cut up so badly that I suppose I can justify buying another. I wish that I had had access to my photo facility before I put that book to the knife.

I have made slides for Harold and extend the same offer to you, if you can use me more cheaply than you can use other means.

So long.

Still,

*Dick*

cc. Weisberg

11/19/69

Dear Dick,

I pressed for time. A letter of much interest from Howard today, read to my by my wife as we drive to work. Among the important things is his finding confirmation for my anterior neck theory in Baker's testimony. I presume he sent you copy. Also, he has more on panel that you and I alone are to have.

The real purpose of this hasty note is to tell you I've seen a copy of Curry's book. If you cannot get a copy, I can get it sent to you from Dallas. I've not had time to read a word. Please do not spread this, only in part because it can be wrong. On pp. 21-2 there is a picture-legend pair where there is the picture of a large fragment described as "from the arm of Governor Connally". This is another "the end" is true. This is a Dallas PD picture. Other things will interest you, but this I had to call to your attention immediately. That fragment is more than half the size of a .38 slug.

Other important things will have to wait.

Best,