

Dear Howard,

2/12/77

I'm glad you have the joke about not letting me know in your 2/2 letter to Dave Wrone.

I'm sure that with the passing of time what you wanted done was forgotten.

My experience with that photographer is that he is a very fine fellow, interested in doing the best possible job for us.

I know that when I asked for what I understood you to want before you got to Stevens Point I was not understood. I gave the photog or Dave the print you sent me to make what you wanted. I recall there also was a question of using the wrong exposure deliberately to bring out what is not clear.

While by now our local photographer I've used for such pictures in the past should have overcome the problems of the flood and be back in business, I do suggest that you write out in detail what you want as well as what you do not want and send it to Dave. Dave, remember, will not in all probability be with the photographer when he works but an explanation, especially if the man can ask the questions he has, could be helpful.

I'm sure you'll then get what you want as well as it can be done with the equipment they have.

If you plan any writing or speaking based on this picture it would, I think, be helpful if you did a hasty outline or put on paper what you want to say. I think this also would help guide the photographer.

Please believe me, for I stood with him for part of a day, he really is a good fellow and not at all opposed to but rather I believe all for the establishing of truth.

This is a little tricky because of the exposures. If this fellow understands clearly what you want, if he is not offended by what you wrote. I believe he'll do some experimenting. Can it be that making a composite would work better if this permitted different exposures?

I've checked my file. I do not have the print you sent me. I think I do have the slide that was made originally.

Thanks for the enclosures. I'll read them when I'm resting again. The accumulation of just a few days is a real burden. I've not yet refiled what I took to Detroit.

Best,

What a waste!

Feb. 2, 1977

David Wrone
Stevens Point, Wisc.

Dear Dave:

Thank you for sending along the slides and prints of 399 base, which arrived today. Normally, I am very happy to write thank you letters, but this is one I dread.

You see, it is quite apparent that a lot of time, work, and expense went into preparing those slides, with the many different exposures. There's just one problem--which is what makes me hate to write this letter.

You mentioned to me in an earlier letter that this is not the best picture of 399's base possible. Quite right, and, in fact much better ones are available. I even have a better one on a color slide. What makes this picture unique and, I think, valuable, is that it is the first to show 399's base right next to the fragments removed from Governor Connally's wrist and the Flake that fell off of 399 in 1967. To me, the picture makes it clear that the wrist fragments did not come from 399.

Thus, the major problem with your otherwise excellent copies of my slide is that they don't include the wrist fragments! Only a tiny sliver appears to the left of the picture, in the plastic case; the two major fragments have been cropped out.

A more conspiratorial mind might suggest deliberate destruction of evidence, doctoring of a vital photograph.

I wouldn't go that far, but, just out of curiosity...has the photographer ever been employed by the CIA?

At any rate, don't breath a word of this to Harold Weisberg. You know what he had to say when the Warren Commission cropped the Altgens picture.

Best wishes,

Howard Roffman

P.S. I believe you still have my B&W copy negative of the whole slide. You can still have meaningful prints made from that, as long as the base portion is not printed too darkly.