

Not to be used without Paul's okay

Livermore, California
20 April, 1968

To: Distribution
From: M.O. Moen
Subject: Interview with Charles Wyckoff, EG&G Inc. Boston, Mass.

Introduction-----

When EG&G, Inc. was asked to provide photo analysis support to CBS News* for its four-part special on the Warren Report, the assignment went to Charles Wyckoff. Mr. Wyckoff contributed to the presentation in three areas:

- 1) analysis of blurred frames in the Zapruder film which might correlate with the gun shots (part 1, transcript page 16 & 17)
- 2) measurement of the framing rates of cameras like that used by Zapruder to film the assassination (part 1, p.19)
- 3) discussion of "spalling" and presentation of film showing a bullet passing through a light bulb (part 2, p.6).

He was said to have contributed to an analysis of the head snap in Z 312-316 (part 2, p 7), but no evidence of such work is found in the transcript.

Background-----

The attached letter, dated 25 Aug 67, was my first attempt to contact Mr. Wyckoff. I had hoped to follow up his reply with further and more detailed inquiry, but the ensuing silence required a change of tactics.

When, in November '67, two men from EG&G's Boston office came to Livermore, I asked if either of them knew Wyckoff. They both said they did, and one of them, James Andrellos, claimed to know him very well. In response to my comment that CBS had made Wyckoff's competence subject to doubt, they assured me his professional credentials and integrity are in good order. These men did not know where the film had been obtained for analysis, but quoted Wyckoff as saying it was an excellent print--"very sharp and clear" (see follow-up below). They said "Charlie" was a very personable fellow and could not understand why he had not replied to my letter.

I gave them a copy of the letter (with some marginalia) to be hand-carried back to Boston. No reply was received.

Interview-----

The last week in January '68 I got word that Wyckoff was in Livermore consulting with the Scientific Photo group at LRL. I looked him up, and got a very short interview.

He apologized for not answering my letter saying he had received a deluge of mail, much of it from probable cranks, so he elected to answer none of it.

In regard to the head motion in Z 312-316, he said he had made

* Apparently at the suggestion of Dr. Luis Alvarez, Lawrence Radiation Laboratory, Berkeley, Calif. cf. "New Clues in JFK Assassination Photos" , the magnet, 11:7, p6.

no measurements of that motion and, Cronkite's statement notwithstanding, had not commented about it - either on camera or off. He said he had not been asked anything about head motion and conducted only those experiments he was specifically asked to do. His manner indicated that he felt badly used in this regard.

At this point he volunteered the fact that the sequence showing the bullet passing through the light bulb to demonstrate spalling out the back was a piece of stock film that he had on hand. He said he has a library of sequences showing bullets passing through a great many objects and they can be used to demonstrate any effect you may wish. A watermelon, for example, will show splatter at the point of entrance of a bullet. CBS knew about but was not interested in the watermelon film. They chose the light bulb.

I asked if he had met producer Leslie Midgley. He said yes he had -- that Midgley was occasionally in the room during the filming but participated very little.

Wyckoff said he was shown all of the film that CBS had shot of him (a great deal more than was shown) but he did not participate in the editing.

We, at this point, arranged to meet again later when we would have more time. But it didn't come off.

Follow-up -----

After Wyckoff went back to Boston, I talked with the Scientific Photo people to see if he had dropped any interesting items on them.

Dave Dixon, head of the group, recalled only that Wyckoff was unhappy about having been taken advantage of. He felt CBS had edited the program in such a way as to misrepresent his work and his conclusions.

Claud Ditmore, who worked most directly with Wyckoff, recalled that he was particularly upset about the fact that the government does not have the original film. He is concerned that the film will deteriorate in storage if proper precautions are not observed. Contrary to what I had been told earlier, Wyckoff told Ditmore that the copy from which he worked was a very poor one.

An interesting sidelight was picked up by Claud. It seems that some time ago Wyckoff was quoted in the press as saying that the first Russian space walk was a fraud. He maintains he said nothing of the sort but was overheard at a party and misquoted by a reporter. He is therefore very careful about what he says in regard to the Zapruder film that might be interpreted improperly. I went through the New York Times Index for 1965 but found no reference to this space walk incident.

Distribution:
Paul Hoch (2)
Hal Verb (2)
file

30 August 1967

Mr. Charles Wyckoff
EG&G Inc.
160 Brookline Ave.
Boston, Mass. 02215

Dear Mr. Wyckoff

Your analysis of the Zapruder film of President Kennedy's assassination is an important contribution to the continuing investigation of that event. The coverage that CBS gave your work was, of necessity I suppose, rather limited. Unfortunately it is just this -- limited coverage and inattention to detail-- that has provided fuel for the critics of the Warren Commission.

As a case in point, your work could have (and perhaps has) provided answers to the many arguments about the number and timing of the shots fired. But CBS in reporting it did not point out why so many frames, other than those specifically mentioned, also show severe blurring. One critic (Ramparts' September issue) has already cited this shortcoming to discredit the conclusions.

*Did the film he
used contain frames
207-212? (209-210
are badly blurred)*

The CBS report (and so far as I know, all of the prominent critics) ignored completely the other films that were used by the Warren Commission. The Warren Report contains frames from two other films -- Nix and Muchmore. A question left unanswered is whether those films show similar phenomena or could be expected to.

One of my more uncomfortable moments came when Cronkite followed your discussion of spalling with the comment: "That is one explanation from a physicist as to how a head could move backward after being struck from behind." I should think that it would indeed be of interest to pursue an analysis of the relative motion of camera, car, bullet, and victim to explain the apparent backward motion. (A physicist, using Warren Commission data, would find the momentum of the bullet at impact to be 5.38×10^5 gm-cm/sec. He would then argue about how much of that momentum was carried away by fragments of skull and bullet, and conclude that it was one hell of a jolt.) But CBS did not report any analysis you might have done on that point and resorted instead to a snow job.

Since the CBS treatment of your analysis left these and other points unsatisfactorily answered, I am wondering if a more thorough treatment might be available. In any case, I should like to hear your views on these points.

Sincerely,
Monroe O. Moen

275 Estates Street
Livermore, California

Why were cameras other than Zapruder's checked for speed?