

NATIONAL
ENQUIRER

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Confidential

March 2nd, 1984

Dear Harold

Sorry to have been so long in replying to your request for detail on the MIT story. But here goes! (See attached memo.)

I do hope 1984 is treating you and Mrs W well. I intend to have a look at your beloved Orioles one day during the Spring training season and will give them a hearty British cheer on your behalf!

With very best wishes,

*Yours,
David*

JL and DW-

I have permission to let each of you have a copy ~~copy~~ on the understanding that you will keep it confidential.

He told me today that when the Enquirer lost interest after the anniversary Gary ^{ack} phoned and asked if that was the case and if so, might they turn it over to the Readers Digest, which has happened.

HW 3/9/84

Memo to Harold Weisberg

From David Wright

3.2.84

You'll recall that the story starts with our Blue Ribbon Panel meeting in Washington's Dupont Plaza Hotel on Oct 12. It was there that Garry Mack and Bill White produced their enlargements of a section of the Moorman picture, clearly showing what appeared to be a man standing behind the wall at the top of the grassy knoll and apparently holding a rifle.

I was so excited by its implications that when I returned to Lantana a couple of days later I sought out the Editor and suggested that what I'd see in Washington was important enough to justify flying Mack and White to Florida to make the same presentation to senior editorial staff.

This they did the next week -- and the reaction was much the same as they received from our group in Washington: extremely favorable.

The next step, it was decided, was to have the picture digitally enhanced, whatever the financial cost. But it was also agreed that for credibility reasons, this had to be done by a leading university rather than a commercial company. In the end, the results would have to be verified by an expert, and they would only be accepted as valid if they came from the top people in the field.

more...

2.

For the next several days I set about trying to find a University lab that would take on the task. The reactions ranged from the astonishing -- plain lack of interest -- to the predictable: "Sorry - we can't get involved in anything like that because we're too involved with defence contracts." One so-called expert even insisted that it was impossible to improve any photograph that originated as a polaroid shot.

Finally I spoke to Professor William Schreiber, professor of electrical engineering in the Image Processing Group at MIT. Over the phone he expressed doubt whether he could help, but when I persisted, he agreed to see me and the picture for a maximum of five minutes next Monday morning. (10/24/83)

Once again Mack and White boarded a plane, this time for Boston. On Monday morning we were in Schreiber's office. Also there was Eli Isreali, an executive of Scitex Corp. Soon after we arrived, Schreiber called in one of his assistants, Professor Jae Lim.

They were shown only the black and white pictures -- no slides. But it was obvious that their interest was captured immediately. The five minutes Schreiber had insisted would be all he could manage stretched out to over an hour. By the time we left, Schreiber had suggested to Israeli that he should do the digitization at Scitex and to Dr Lim that he should take over the enhancement from there. Both agreed.

3.

Next morning (Tues 10.25), Mack, White and I drove out to the Scitex lab in a Boston suburb. Isreali's people digitized the picture and produced a tape. Before we left, Isreali "played" with the tape, showing the digitized picture on a TV screen. There ^{already} seemed to be an improvement in quality.

We then returned to MIT, ^{and} handed the tape over to Schreiber who said he would be giving it to Prof Lim to work on. Members of Lim's class were extremely interested in working on it, he added. I arranged to call Lim at 2pm on Wed 10.26.

Instead of calling, I went to MIT at 2pm the next day. Lim came back to his office around 3pm, said he and his team had been working all night on the picture had done "all conventional techniques" and had produced an image that "looks distinctly better."

He led me out of his office across the hall and through two steel doors controlled by computers, until we reached a room with a television set. On a split screen were two images -- the original Mack and White picture, and his enhanced picture. They were very similar except that the enhanced version was much more distinct.

Lim appeared pleased with his work, and sd to me: "It looks like a man to me, but I'm not prepared to say so on the record."

I enquired what he considered to be the next step, and he sd: "Now I must talk to MIT before I go any further." He mentioned the school's defence contracts, etc, but appeared very buoyant and enthusiastic.

4.

If MIT agreed, he went on, he planned to work out a completely new computer program to try to improve the image further. He and his students were prepared to work through the weekend to get it done.

And he sd proudly: "If we can't do it, no one can."

Elated, I left for my hotel, having agreed to call him again at 2pm on Thursday.

When I phoned the next day, the situation had obviously changed drastically. Lim's first words were that he wasn't prepared to do any more work on the picture, that he'd consulted MIT and his peers and after getting their advice had ~~decided~~ decided to drop the whole thing.

Dismayed, I pressed him for further explanation, without success.

Finally I asked him whether, if I found another expert to do the work, ~~and then~~ the second expert could call him to compare notes.

At this Lim became ~~noticeably~~ discernibly upset and blurted out: "No .. no. As far as we are concerned, we haven't done anything at all.

"I've never seen the picture ... I'm out of it.

"I really don't want to get involved."

After putting down the phone, I quickly rang Professor Schreiber. He knew of Lim's decision and seemed mildly disappointed.

~~When I asked him~~ When I asked him if he'd seen the digitized version, he suddenly sd: "I convinced myself that I saw a SECOND face (behind the wall) on the right of the gunman, deeper in the shadows. No one else could see it."

5.

Referring to the original "gunman", he added: "It looked like a face to me. And my secretary ~~was~~ thought it was a face. But I don't think you'll get a scientific disposition that it was a face."

He revealed that he had suggested to Lim that he quantify the percentage of chance of the figure ~~being~~ being a man, but Lim had refused.

I had asked Lim earlier if I could have a photo of his enhancement. He refused. Now I asked Schreiber if we could keep the digitized tape. No, we couldn't.

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