

3/23/68

Dear Fred,

Your note saying you have found that Willis #5 was taken exactly at Zap 205 arrived yesterday.

I have difficulty agreeing simply because Willis can be seen walking away and taking his camera down at Zap 202.

How did you determine 205?

The SS man you refer to is Clint Hill.

What is there irrefutable (meaning aside from such things as normal crowd reactions and movements to prove that "something startled the crowd between Zap 185-205". I believe this is probable. Aside from proof of visible reaction, how can we compute reaction time, that is, if the reaction is visible at 2200, at what Z was the cause of the reaction.

The SS Driver is Greer. How do you establish that he "veers slightly to his left".

If any use is to be made of this information, these are some of the things we must know. Before any use is made, we, of course, must be certain.

With Garrison, there is an additional problem. He has little time and is often over-tired. He has never made the detailed study of the film that is required to understand it and has never seen it in the form that is most comprehensible, the slides. It is vital not to give him partial information or data that he can readily misconstrue (which he does rather readily).

I would very much appreciate a copy of what you wrote him that was sent with Rose. They have been using me on this and I think it essential to know what he has been told and what he might infer from it that was not intended. They have subpoenaed the Z film and there probably will be negotiations with LIFE that I'll be consulted on. I have already taken one of his men to the Archives and demonstrated the slides, how to use them, explained the film as it was being projected, etc., and other things.

My recollection is that when I was out there you had decided that the basic film had not been altered. Now I understand from the incomplete information I have that you have switched back. Is this true? If so, on what basis. Any major alteration seems to be entirely impossible without a vast conspiracy, for the copies were immediate: three in Dallas, one in Chicago, before the original reached New York. The first copy was dispatched to Washington the night of 11/22/63. Of course, copies were made from each of these original copies, and here there was more opportunity, but there then remained the original and the original copies to establish the doctoring, a great risk. In short, both LIFE and the government had to be part of it, and at a very early time LIFE did use the important frames. It would be tragic if Garrison were to make a serious mistake in commenting on the Z film. It is partly for this reason that I have been anxious to know everything he is fed on it. The other fellows can tell you that as a result of my recent work there I have asked them to funnel everything not directly related to the Shaw trial through me so I can coordinate with other data and with the data from others working—and see that the proper staff member also knows. The chaos and disorganization there are unimaginable. Mostly only Jim knows what comes in and often he does not know enough about what is behind it. I have prevented some but not enough errors. If you understand what he did with the sewer business you have an idea of the gross error that is possible. This we must at all costs avoid or do what we can to avoid.

I doubt if Steve Burton was there long enough to get the flavor of this, to make it understandable to you. If you have any doubts, discuss it with Jim Lawrence or Art Kevin. Please excuse haste. Best to you all, and thanks.

You can positively this
exactly by viewing where
S. Service man's head is (the
man standing on running board
next to driver) in both films.

Something startled the crowd
between 2ap 185-205, that
we know.

The S. S. driver veers slightly
to his left here ... most probably
is his instinctive reaction away
from source of danger.

Jed

Harold -

Had already worked
out when in Zap. movie
Willis took #5. Ignoring
any alterations in these
two films ... here is my
finding

Willis #5 had to be taken
exactly at ZAP 205

Betzner photo as shown in
file had to be taken Zap.

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