

COPY

Westchester Hotel Crt.
22, Tarrytown Road
White Plains, N.Y.

Miss Beverly Brunson
P. O. Box 296
Baxter Springs, Kansas 66713

March 24, 1968

Dear Miss Brunson:

First, let me apologize for not having written to you before now. Harold Weisberg has been sending me copies of some of your letters and memos for many weeks and I have just not had enough time to follow up on them.

I must congratulate you on your work. You have certainly detected many things which have escaped most researchers. Your work on the motorcycle escort has been very useful to me, especially your identification of the "missing" cop D.L. Jackson (if that is indeed who he was).

Please accept the comments I would like to make on your work as an attempt to aide you, rather than to criticize. I feel ~~that~~ there has been far too much criticism among the "critics" and not enough constructive assistance. Perhaps that is why they are called "critics" rather than researchers, which is the term I would prefer.

I am working with a big advantage in that I have access to several hundred photos including many movie and TV sequences taken that day in Dealey Plaza. I have reached one major conclusion about evidence of the assassination. That is, the most reliable witnesses of all were not the bystanders, the police, the secret service, the photographers (commercial & amateur) or the sheriffs; but rather the cameras there in Dealey Plaza.

Undoctored, clear photographs properly interpreted and correlated do not lie, nor do they forget, enlarge, distort or imagine. Witnesses do. Time and time again, key witnesses have been proven mistaken by photos. I am referring even to honest, truthful citizens who were not influenced by the Warren Commission, the FBI or the Dallas Police. God knows, the "influenced" witnesses are far worse.

The memory in moments of excitement stress, fear or terror plays tricks which do not plaque a camera. Time sometimes becomes compressed or expanded in ones memory. Two examples will serve to illustrate what I mean. Jean Hill, a very honest witness, who told what she remembered, whether the Commission liked it or not, says she crossed Elm Street just after Kennedy's car passed.

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As you have already detected, and described in your January 19, 1968 letter to Harold, Jean did not cross Elm for at least two full minutes and after most of the motorcade had gone by. This is proven by a whole series of photos including Wilma Bond's which show Jean's exact movements including her run up the steps.

The second example is Holland who was also an "anti Commission" witness remembering an almost immediate movement over to the parking lot area behind the fence. Photos show him almost two minutes after the shots were fired and after many people had rushed up the knoll, still standing, frozen on the overpass.

So, I accept first and foremost, camera evidence over witness testimony. However, photos can be misinterpreted. They can be cropped, altered and blurred as well. If an event or object is obscure in any one photo, I look for at least three photos of it from different camera angles before I accept it as fact. Fortunately, the large number of photographers and photos taken that day makes this possible for many events. I enclose my most recent monograph and exhibit 1B for your future reference. I also enclose exhibit H., a list of sources of photos.

Now for specific comments on your findings.

First, you are right about it being Haygood and not Hargis who was the cop parking his cycle at the north curb of Elm and running up to the corner where the fence joins the overpass. This is established by the Bond series primarily. Bond took a total of nine photos at the time of the shots. The first three were of JFK on Main and Houston and the last six while the motorcade was on Elm. The Life photos were actually #s 4, 7 and 9.

Hargis' movements are displayed in other photos. He did not run up to the stone wall as you surmise and as witnesses testimony might indicate. Here is a perfect example of the cameras being far more reliable than either Hargis' own memory or than the recollections of witnesses. Photos show that he rode up to the south curb of Elm almost directly across from the steps, dismounted, ran across Elm to the north curb, stood on the sidewalk for awhile, leaned against the lamp post near the Stemmons freeway sign looking around wondering what to do, then he ran back across Elm, jumped on his cycle and rode off. He was gone by the time Haygood ran up the knoll. All of the above took place in less than three minutes. The photos involved are: Weigman, Couch, Bond, Willis, J. Towner, Martin, Bothun, Altgens, Nix, Hughes, Bell Craven, Paschall, Rickerby, Cancellare, and Dillard. Some of these show where Hargis was and some show where he wasn't.

The same collection of photos prove that you and others are wrong about there being a motorcycle or any uniformed cop on the grassy knoll prior to Haygood's dash up to the fence-overpass corner. The ghostly image you see in Nix in Thompson's book is just that. The original Nix film at U.P.I. and the copy in the archives show no one in that position. Some of the other photos listed above show the same area at the same time from different angles. There is no cop and no cycle there at any time prior to Haygood's dash. There were movements of other people on the

knoll in the first two or three minutes, however. Hudson and his two companions on the steps, for example moved. One of these companions (still unidentified) ran up the steps and between the wall and fence. He probably went around behind the fence or the arcade. Hudson and the other man fell to the ground and remained there for several minutes.

Three people standing on the north curb of Elm near the Stemmons sign ran toward Hudson, the fence and the wall prior to Haygood's arrival. They ~~may~~ remain unidentified, as does Hudson's second companion. Charles Hester and his wife ran from the curb up to the center of the arcade steps and threw themselves on the steps. Weigman ran up the knoll and photographed them. Zapruder and Sitzman, his receptionist jumped off the pedestal and ran across the arcade to the east. Most of the people on the north curb ran east along the sidewalk. However, a negro couple carrying a baby ran the other way toward the Ft. Worth sign and under the overpass. Altgens ran across Elm and half way up the knoll then back down to the curb.

Cancellare, Craven and Atkins, photographers who jumped out of the camera cars with Weigman ran up on the knoll and photographed the Newmans lying on the ground. They all four ran down the street catching up with camera car number one and drove on to the hospital. Malcolm Couch jumped out of camera car three, ran up on the knoll between the wall and the fence and took pictures of the crowd along Elm about four to five minutes after the shots.

Now much of the above, proven by photos, conflicts directly with the statements of witnesses you quote; namely Altgens, Zapruder, Hargis, Mrs. Newman, Simmons, Winborn, Johnson, Holland and Bowers. Why would all of these witnesses lie about a cop riding up the knoll? They didn't lie. They thought they saw it or something like it. In Holland and Hargis' case, imagination about what they should have done or what they would like to have done, took over their memories. Holland certainly did not want to remember standing rooted to one spot for over two minutes. Hargis being a cop, looks even sillier leaning against a lamp post for nearly a minute during the crucial two or three minutes after the shots. He looks much better remembering running up the slope and looking behind the wall.

Bowers probably saw Haygood on his cycle passing out of sight behind the fence. Then he probably saw his helmet moving up the slope and assumed he was still on the cycle. Altgens' had a terrible memory for what happened. When I showed him the seven photos he took at the time of the shots and just before, he only remembered three of them. Of course he had never seen his own pictures except the three which were published.

He also said, "I look pretty silly, don't I", when he saw a succession of pictures of himself wandering around on the knoll, camera at his side, wondering what to do.

And so on, for each of the witnesses. We must remember, it was a time of confusion, excitement, and for some, horror and terror. Their memory of the two to three minutes following the shots is bound to be hazy and distorted.

You are right about Chaney and Jackson's relative positions. At first I believed that either Chaney or Jackson didn't make the turn at Houston and Elm because I couldn't find more than one of them in Altgens 1-6. Then I found Jackson's helmet over the top of JFK's car. Also I found both of them in Bell, Martin and Nix riding on down Elm. So Jackson did go on to the overpass at least.

Mrs. Hill did not see Jackson turning his cycle around. Unfortunately, I do not have nor have I found a photo of her when she crossed Elm so I don't know whether any cycle was near her. As you have pointed out, all three press buses have gone by before Jean Hill started across. She does show up in the Bell movie running up the steps. The frame you noticed in the Post from the Bell film comes late in that particular Bell sequence (Bell #7 on my list).

With regard to the three glowing objects, large glare and man in a dark hat and suit, in the same Bell frame, the film itself when examined in detail clearly shows the man in the dark suit is not a cop on a motorcycle and the film has not been altered. The bright spots are reflections and not film defects. You see them frequently in many of the movies taken that day by amateurs, they often appear in one frame and disappear in the next. Look on page 88 of "Six seconds in Dallas" and you will see all 4 motorcycle cops, including Jackson riding in normal position behind the Kennedy car.

I could not agree with you more that Jackson is an important missing witness. He was the closest observer and should have been called. However, as I have pointed out, the photos show that he rode on under the overpass.

With regard to the smoke Holland saw, see my monograph on the puff of smoke photos and how they match the place where Holland saw it as illustrated in "The Scavengers".

With respect to your comments about Thompson's book, it is replete with errors. We had a discussion of them at a recent forum in New York sponsored by the Kennedy Assassination Inquiry Committee. Vince Salandria and I served on a panel with Tink and pointed out his most serious mistakes. These were: Ignoring or missing completely the first shot striking Kennedy prior to Zapruder frame 205. Misinterpreting the second shot striking Kennedy at Z226 and claiming it was the first shot. Ignoring and giving an impossible explanation for the shot that missed. An implausible explanation of how bullet 399 got into the place where it was found which completely overlooks Ray Marcus' detailed proof that it was planted.

There are many, many others too numerous to mention.

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Again, I hope you will accept my comments in the constructive sense intended, and please give me any you may have on my monograph and exhibits. I want to make sure I find and correct errors as they become apparent.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dick Sprague". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Richard E. Sprague

RES/mw

enclosure: Monograph - Edition 5 and 4
Exhibit 1B - Edition 3
Exhibit H

cc: Mr. Harold Weisberg