

Magrie- afterthought

1/4/69

I hear Ray snatched a copy of the film "Farewell America" that Lemarra had given Newcomb. Great! I hope he regards this as more than a souvenir, as I presume one with Ray's mind and attitudes would. When you speak to him, I'd like very much to have a copy to study and to have technical people go over the Z parts of. Also, if he hasn't already done so, we should have slides made immediately, and of the area before and after 2313, close study should be made. Careful examination of the slides will show that the glib talk by the uninformed seeking sensation rather than fact is quite wrong about the backward motion being simultaneously to the back and left. They are discontinuous, with the body actually pivoting. Some of the experts I want to consult about the wounds, which are fairly visible in stills, and seem unnatural to me. There is no blood, for example, on the back of the neck, none on the collar, which I seem to recall is visible (shirt). If he can and will do this, I want to be able to go over this with Wecht and Nichols as soon as possible. There is a tentative date with Wecht in N.C. 1/17.

Also, of course, the later frames show part of the knoll. Perhaps in some way the earlier frames may be the most significant, for I have the Commission evidence of a shot as early as 163! Their experts initially said he had to have been shot before 210. I have this in some detail in POST MORTEM. When one of the experts refused to be bamboozled, they just didn't call him as a witness. I'd like very much to be able to go over this stuff with him.

I also hope that with slides and, if possible, transparencies in addition (used on an offset-table to make overlays also) Ray will continue his own brilliant work at 237. I am confident I can have several people do a very good job of tracings, artists, that is. Fred is willing, a bit wild, but worst of all, basically cowardly. In any event, he cannot be asked to do this.

If you examine the Z footage, I early learned one of the best ways of seeing what is there (for me, at least) is in reverse. This seems to capture the eye in a different way. Also, slow-motion. In making slides, it is important not to crop. The proportions will give more frame than is normal in 35. If the copying is done with the bottom of the 16 frame at the bottom of the 25 frame, there may be, as there is copying the 8mm, a little excess at the top of the 35mm frame. This is quite significant in that the President is at the bottom of Z's frames, thus you get a comparison between consecutive frames.

Should Ray have done what I've been told, I hope he will do as I ask. This gives us an opportunity we haven't had before, because, under the wrong influences, Garrison failed to go further than his headline. Sciambra is the only one in the office who really understands the Z film. He and I went over it very carefully in the archives early last year. How I long to go over it this with Nichols and Wecht and to have my artist make tracings! All three can qualify as experts. Nichols and Wecht are both, in addition, forensic experts, and Nichols, aside from his considerable rifle experience and ballistics work, has crime-lab experience, too. I am little worried about a suit by LIFE, for I've already published their pictures, without threat, and I've regularly aired them on TV. I've also interviewed S, by the way. He is a real Judenrat! Born to it! Then perfectly shaped to it by life. What a novel he would make!

Dawn is breaking, and I must get to other work. I've heard the weather forecast. They do not expect it to get out of the teens today. How does that sound in Southern California?

Sincerely,