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BEFORE THE
ASSASSINATION RECORDS REVIEW BOARD

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In Re: :
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PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY :
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- - - - -X

College Park, Maryland

Thursday, June 5, 1997

The deposition of SAUNDRA KAY SPENCER, called for examination by counsel for the Board in the above-entitled matter, pursuant to notice, at Archives II, 6381 Adelphi Road, College Park, Maryland, convened at 10:00 a.m., before Robert H. Haines, a notary public in and for the State of Maryland, where were present on behalf of the parties:

APPEARANCES:

On Behalf of the Assassination Records
Review Board:

T. JEREMY GUNN, ESQ.
General Counsel
Assassination Records Review Board
600 E Street, N.W., Second Floor
Washington, D.C. 20530
(202) 724-0088

ALSO PRESENT:

DAVID G. MARWELL
Executive Director

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C O N T E N T S

WITNESS

Saundra Kay Spencer

EXAMINATION

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. GUNN: Would you swear the witness, please.

Whereupon,

SAUNDRA KAY SPENCER

was called as a witness, and, having been first duly sworn,
was examined and testified as follows:

EXAMINATION

BY MR. GUNN:

Q Would you state your full name for the record, please.

A Sandra Kay Spencer.

Q Ms. Spencer, were you employed in November of 1963?

A Yes, I was.

Q What position did you have in November of 1963?

A I was 1st Class with United States Navy.

Q Where did you work at that time?

A I worked at the Photographic Center in a special unit
for the Naval Aide to the President for Photography.

Q When you say the "Photographic Center," what do you
mean?

A That is a Class A lab, which was the central photo

lab for the Navy. It's located at Anacostia.

Q Has this been also known as the Naval Photographic Center?

A Yes.

Q I would like to come back to your position in 1963, but if we could go a little bit earlier and then we will come back to it later.

Did you have any formal training in photography?

A Yes, I entered the basic photography school out of recruit training in '57. I also had special color school, Rochester Institute of Technology and Quality Control, Class B school, which is the advanced photography school, a cinematography school, a school in camera systems in recon repair and camera repair.

Q Did you take all of those courses during the time that you were in the Navy?

A Yes.

Q Were all of those courses taken prior to 1963?

A No. The A and the B school, and the color school was taken prior.

Q While you were in the Navy, did you do any work other than in the area of photography?

A No, it was all photographic related -- oh, I take that back. I did go for a tour at recruit training for women at Bainbridge, Maryland, where I was chief drill instructor and swimming instructor.

Q Would it be fair to say that for approximately six year between 1957 and 1963, that your principal area of work was in photography?

A Yes.

Q Had you had any experience in photography prior to the time that you joined the Navy?

A Yes, since the time I was about 11 years old, dad insisted we have family hobbies, and photography was one of them, so I learned photography. Then, in my senior year of high school, the photographer that was scheduled to do our annuals passed away, and so I took over the photographic shooting and everything for our school annual.

Q Prior to 1963, had you had any experience with photography of autopsies or of cadavers?

A Yes. While I was stationed at a Class D lab at Pensacola, Florida, at the Naval Air Station there, we were responsible for photographing the autopsy of student pilots for the Navy that didn't quite make it, and we provided 2 and a quarter slides for the BUMED*.

Q Did you take the photographs yourself?

A Yes.

Q Did you also develop the photographs?

A Yes.

Q Approximately, how many persons did you take photographs of who were deceased?

A Probably around 10, 12 during the two years I was on the shooting --

Q I would like to go now to the Naval Photographic Center in 1963. Could you describe in just a very general way the structure of the NPC?

A Okay. NPC was a three-story building that was originally built by Eastman Kodak during World War II, and it held -- on the top floor was the library and the color lab primarily.

The second floor was black and white division and some of the office spaces for support. The third or the bottom floor dealt primarily with motion picture production and TV production. They have a sound stage.

Also on the third floor was the art and animation divisions.

Q Was there a White House lab or a White House section in the NPC building?

A Yes. It was located within the color division. It was a single room, probably I would say about 15 feet by 15 foot with an adjoining 8 by 10 room, and that was further broken down into two color print rooms, a black and white print room with sink, two dryers, and the adjoining room was where we had the Calumet color processor. It was a small unit and it all had the C-22 process in it plus the color print process.

Q Was that the area that you worked in?

A Yes.

Q Do you know why the White House lab was located within the color lab?

A Most of the work primarily was color at that time,

so it was just close proximity, we could draw our chemistry and stuff from the main lines of the color lab.

The black and white we did was a lot of fine development, because they didn't like to use flash at the White House, so a lot of it was available. We did the ultra-fine development on it, so that was not regularly done downstairs in the black and white division, and we had a limited amount of black and white that we actually produced.

Q Do you know of any other lab that typically handled White House photography in 1963?

A They had two or three photographers that were with the motion picture crews, but they worked directly for one person. Chief Knudsen would usually direct them and what they did was aside from anything that we did. They did not have a special unit.

Q Do you know of any other lab that developed still photography in addition to the lab where you worked?

A To my knowledge, no.

Q What was your position in the White House lab in November of '63?

A I was Petty Officer in Charge.

Q Did you have any supervisor who was also within the White House lab ?

A Chief Knudsen was our liaison and supervisor from the White House, but we fell also under the Office in Charge of the color lab, but they pretty much left us alone, did our own thing. They gave us a cipher lock on our room and said do try to stay awake.

Q When you say "they" left you alone, you are referring to the color lab itself?

A The color lab and the Officer in Charge. They would ask periodically if we needed any support or anything, and if we needed anything we just asked them and we usually got what we needed.

Q How many people worked under you in the White House lab in November of '63?

A It averaged four to five at various times, which people would come and go as they transferred in and out, because they were assigned to the Photographic Center, and they were then detailed to us.

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Q During the time that you worked in the White House lab, did you ever develop color transparencies?

A No.

Q Did you have the capability of developing color transparencies in the White House lab?

A No.

Q Did the color division, separate from the White House lab, have any capability of developing color transparencies?

A Yes, they did.

Q Did you ever work yourself developing color transparencies in the color lab at NPC?

A Yes.

Q When and what kinds of occasions did you do that?

A When I returned, after I had gone to camera repair school, after I had left the Photographic Center the first time, I went to camera repair school, and then I returned, and at that time, they had placed a lot of mechanized equipment in, so I started working over there and stuff. It was you don't have any hands-on, but you load the reels and put them in the baskets, and it travels through until it bumps into the doors.

Q Was there a capacity to develop positive color transparencies by November of 1963?

A Yes.

Q Do you know what kinds of film were capable of being developed, color transparencies in November of '63?

A It was the Ektachrome was used. Anything that was like Kodachrome was sent out to Kodak directly.

Q So Kodachrome would be sent to Kodak, but Ektachrome could be developed?

A Ektachrome could be in-house, and we were working with E-3, E-4s right around that time.

Q You mentioned earlier a person by the name of Knudsen. How often did you see Mr. Knudsen?

A Not that often. When he needed a back-up photographer, we would go over. Usually, most of his film come by courier to us or we would go out to Andrews to pick up from the courier planes, and he would call us on the telephone, usually daily, and we would again courier or take his proof prints over and drop them off, and we would just get them back by courier circled with what he wanted.

Q Do you remember who the supervisor of the color lab was in November of '63?

A Oh, I can picture his face, but I can't reach his name. It was a Lieutenant --

Q Does the name Vince Madonia ring a bell?

A Yes, that's him.

Q How often would you interact with Mr. Madonia around 1963?

A Oh, I have seen him on a daily basis.

Q Now I would like to go to November 22nd of 1963, and ask you what you were doing when you first heard about the assassination of President Kennedy.

A I was sitting and color correcting a photo of John-John in President Kennedy's office, and it came over the radio speaker. It came over and announced that the President had been shot.

Q After you heard that, what did you do?

A We just continued to work until we got word that they wanted to go ahead and close the NPC down and move all except our personnel out of the immediate areas.

In that time, just about all of D.C. went into a period of mourning, and I think they released most people at the agencies and stuff, the ones directly related to the President, I think were held on call until we actually found out what was going on.

Q When you say they moved all the personnel out of NPC except "our area," do you mean the White House area or the color lab area?

A They moved regular color lab crews secured, and we stayed.

Q So approximately, how many people stayed when the rest of NPC closed down?

A There was about three of us up there.

Q Do you remember the names of any of the other people who stayed?

A Carol Bonito was the only one I can identify. There was a 2nd Class that had come aboard just recently, but I didn't remember. The only thing I remember is Kurt on his name.

Q Ms. Spencer, I am going to hand you a document that has been marked Exhibit No. MD 144, which appears on its face

to be an Enlisted Distribution and Verification Report.

It appears to be dated between June of '63 and October of '63. Could you first look at the document and see whether you are familiar with that type of document?

A The first time I had seen a document like this is when you had sent me the photocopies of it.

Q I would like you to turn, if you would, to the seventh page where the first name at the top of the page is Ashton Thomas Larr*. Do you see that page?

A Yes.

Q Do you see the name Carol Bonito --

A Yes.

Q -- down approximately six names or so?

A Yes.

Q Is this the Carol Bonito that you were referring to just a moment ago?

A Yes.

Q Could you look through this list -- and take as much time as you need -- to see if you are able to identify any other names of personnel who were in the White House lab on the days

after November 22nd of '63?

A Look at the 2nd Class, the gentleman I was talking about was a 2nd Class. No, I don't see his name on there.

Q Okay. Let me show you one name and see if looks familiar to you. This is on the fourth page. The first name at the top of the page appears to be Somers, S-o-m-e-r, Joseph M. You do see your name immediately under there?

A Right.

Q Do you see the name Stover?

A Yes. Somers was in the color lab side.

Q But not in the White House area?

A No.

Q Is that right?

A Richard Stover, Smoky Stover was there. Strickland was a chief. He was down in the black and white division. Usually, in the color lab, we had a high number of 1st and 2nd Class and a few Airmen and 3rd Class, but they -- Leo Marshall was the Chief in Charge of the color lab.

Q Ms. Spencer, did you have any work after November 22nd, 1963, that was related to the death of President Kennedy?

A Yes. We were requested to develop 4 by 5 color negatives and make prints of an autopsy that was -- we were told it was shot at Bethesda after the President's body was brought back from Dallas.

Q I would like to come to that in a minute. Prior to that, did you have any other work or responsibilities related to the death of President Kennedy?

A We were trying to put together the prayer cards. Mrs. Kennedy had selected a black and white photograph, and so we needed a number of them. What we did was take four prints, 4 by 5 prints, and do the vignetting on those, and then it was copied to a master negative, and we took it downstairs and put it on the automatic black and white printers to print out the required numbers.

Then, we brought them back and we did not cut them here. We brought them to the White House. They took them to the printers and evidently they were printed and cut there.

Q Did you bring with you today some examples of those prints that you made?

A Yes, I brought just two of a half-sheet.

MR. GUNN: What I would like to do is mark those as Exhibit No. 146, MD 146, and they will go into the record as part of that.

[Exhibit No. MD 146 was marked
for identification.]

BY MR. GUNN:

Q Do you remember approximately how many of these prints you made?

A I think the count was supposed to be around 10,000, but I am sure we went over.

Q What is your best recollection as to when you started working on the prints?

A It was after the President's body had been brought back because Mrs. Kennedy personally selected the print. Chief Knudsen told us which one, and then we went ahead and pulled it, and started the process of producing the --

Q President Kennedy's body arrived at approximately 6:00 p.m. in Washington, D.C. Does that help you determine approximately the time when you began work on the black and white prints?

A No.

Q Do you remember whether it was on the evening of November 22nd?

A It seems to me like we had gotten word the following day, which would have been a Saturday.

Q So on Friday, November 22nd, 1963, did you do any work related to either the funeral of President Kennedy or to autopsy photographs that you mentioned?

A No, we were primarily in a standby position.

Q Approximately, how long did it take for you to work on the black and white prints?

A It took most of the day and stuff. It seemed to me it was late, maybe 2 o'clock in the morning, by the time we got them over to the White House after we got the indication of which ones we needed to print.

Q So this would be, then, you worked on them on Saturday, November 23rd, until approximately 2 o'clock in the morning on Sunday, November 24th, is that --

A I can't remember the day. All I remember is that it was after the President's body had been taken up to the

Rotunda, because as we went to the White House, the lines were forming for the Rotunda.

Q Just to make sure that I understand this correctly, that you took prints over to the White House, the black and white prints, and at that time, you noticed lines that were forming to go the Rotunda on Capitol Hill?

A Yes.

Q And at the time that you took the prints to the White House, do you remember whether the body was at the White House or whether it was at Capitol Hill?

A It had to be up at the Rotunda at that time.

Q Now, a few minutes ago you mentioned some work related to the autopsy photographs of President Kennedy. When did you first receive information that you would be doing some work on that issue?

A We received a call from the quarterdeck, and they said an agent was there, and we were supposed to perform, you know, do the photographic work for him. When he came up, they logged him in and brought him up.

He had in his hand 4 by 5 film holders, so I am

estimating -- he was a large man -- so he probably had four or five film holders.

Q Now, when you say he called from the quarterdeck, where was the quarterdeck?

A The quarterdeck is on the first floor of NPC.

Q Do you remember approximately when the telephone call happened, which day of the week?

A No, I don't.

Q Do you remember what you were doing at the time that you heard about the telephone call from the quarterdeck?

A No, I don't. It seemed like it was in the morning.

Q Were you working on the developing of the black and white prints, did it interrupt that, or was it before or after?

A No, it was after.

Q So it was after you had finished the prints. Had you done any other work between the time that you worked on the black and white prints and that you received a call from the quarterdeck?

A We were finishing up job orders that we had, that had been requested from the White House.

Q Do you remember the name of the agent who came with the film?

A No, I don't. The only thing I remember, I think he said he was with the FBI.

Q Do you remember we spoke earlier, you and I spoke on the telephone in December of 1996?

A Yes.

Q At that time you mentioned the name of an agent. Do you remember the name that you used at that time?

A No, I don't, because I really couldn't verify that that was the agent, so I just -- he is an agent.

Q In December of 1996, you spontaneously said to us that you recalled the name was Fox, but that you weren't certain. Does that ring a bell?

A Yes.

Q When Mr. Fox or the person came to the White House lab, approximately, how many other people were working in the lab at that time?

A Two others.

Q Do you remember who they were? Was one Ms. Bonito,

for example?

A Yes, and the 2nd Class. The day crew was on. We had two, usually two 2nd Class that worked the evening shift.

Q Now, when you say that the agent had 4 by 5 film holders, what do you mean by that?

A It was they either used a 4 by 5 press camera or a view camera, and a film holder is a two-sided container that holds two sheets of film, insert it in the camera, pull the dark slide, do your photograph, reinsert the dark slide, put the holder over, and you are ready -- and pull the dark slide, and you are ready for a second shot.

So there is two sheets of film in each of the holders.

Q When you refer to a press camera or a view camera, are those also known as large format cameras?

A Large format camera.

Q Now, if I recall correctly, you said that your recollection was that he had four or five of these duplex film holders, is that correct?

A Correct.

Q Did the agent speak to you directly or did he speak

with somebody else?

A To me directly.

Q What did he ask you to do?

A He said he needed the film processed and a print of each of them.

Q What did you then do?

A We took them and then checked our chemistry, brought it up to temperature, and processed the negatives. We put the negatives in the drying cabinet, and when they were completed, we brought them out.

We went into the dark room and made a test print on them, which we processed and color corrected, and made the final print, at which time we took all scraps and anything related to that job, and put it in an envelope and gave it to the agent, returned his film holders to him.

Q Did you keep any material at all related to the development of those photographs?

A Absolutely not. The agent was very specific that he wanted everything, any test scraps or anything that we might use.

Q What type of film did you develop?

A Okay. It was a color negative C-22 process.

Q Could you describe for me briefly what a C-22 process is?

A It is a standard color -- well, it was a standard color negative at the time, and it's a three-layer image, reverse image of each of the three basic primary colors with a reddish yellow masking material that is incorporated into the negative to prevent bleedover of the various layers.

Q Did you develop those negatives in the White House lab or did you go into the color lab to develop them?

A They were in the White House section in the Calumet Unit in the small off-room. We had the color negative processing capability plus the print processing.

Q When you developed the first test print, what kind of paper did you put that onto?

A It's the standard color print material.

Q Now, you brought with you today a photograph of President Kennedy that you said it was your understanding was taken approximately two weeks before the assassination, is that

correct?

A Yes, the Black Watch performed at the White House, and these were brought to us, so I would estimate this print was probably made about a week to 10 days prior to the printing of the autopsy material, so the chemical content within the paper should be fairly close to what the autopsy chemical content was.

MR. GUNN: What I would like to do is to mark the print that you brought with you as MD No. 147.

[Exhibit No. MD 147 was marked
for identification.]

BY MR. GUNN:

Q Now, for MD 147, if I am understanding you correctly, that the paper that Exhibit 147 was developed on is the same material as you used for the test prints, is that correct?

A Yes, the Photographic Center, when we ordered our paper, we ordered an entire run, and they cut it to the various sizes that we needed, so that we could make a 4 by 5, an 8 by 10, or a 16 by 20, all from the same color pack, and make them totally match, so that that paper should be the same batch that

was used.

Q When you said you made a test print, how many test prints did you make of each negative?

A The general rule was for us to make a test print of each, but I am not sure that we tested all of them, because, you know, they were all the same subject matter. It was general practice, though, to go ahead and prepare one test print of each.

Q Do you know whether more than one test print was made of any of the negatives?

A No.

Q That is, there were no prints --

A No, there were no -- just one test print was made of each.

Q After the color correction, how many prints were made of each negative?

A One.

Q So would it be fair to say that, at maximum, there were two prints made of each negative?

A That is correct.

Q And were the final prints also developed on the same paper as Exhibit No. 147?

A Correct.

Q And so you would expect that on the original test print, as well as the original color-corrected print, there would be the same type of markings that are on the back of Exhibit No. 147?

A Yes, it should have the same watermarks and markings plus the same border pattern.

Q When you say the "same watermarks," what do you mean?

A On the back of all Kodak paper, they print their Kodak label, and it changes from year to year, but it just says Kodak paper.

Q So on the Exhibit No. 147, it appears that there is either a delta figure, or appears a delta figure, and then Kodak paper, is that what you are referring to?

A Yes.

Q Do you know the difference between a negative and an inter-negative?

A Yes.

Q What is the difference in just a very general way?

A A negative is shot, is an original piece of film.

An inter-neg is an intermediate negative material designed to go from a transparency to a print.

Q Would you have been able to tell, at the time that you developed the duplex films, whether the film was a negative or an inter-negative?

A Yes, because the inter-negative cannot be processed C-22.

Q So that you are certain then that they were not inter-negatives that you developed?

A No, they were original.

Q Approximately, how much time did it take between the time that you first saw the 4 by 5 duplex holders and the time that the agent left?

A It takes -- it was 30 minutes for the processing on the negative, approximately 45 minutes to dry the negatives, and then the printing, the other print process was 18 minutes, and then on the drying drums probably about 3 minutes, so less than two hours.

Q Did the agent leave immediately after the final prints had been dried?

A Yes.

Q So he did not stay around and talk at all or say anything?

A No.

Q Did he talk to you at all about where he had obtained the photographs?

A No. When he gave us the material to process, he said that they would be -- had been shot at Bethesda and they were autopsy pictures, for us to process them and try to not observe too much, don't peruse.

Q Did he say anything that you now recall other than what you have just mentioned?

A No. We did sign a chain of evidence forms.

Q Could you describe that form for me or what you recall about that?

A It was just a form that everybody that had handled the material signed.

Q What happened to that form?

A The agent took it with him.

Q Did you ever have a copy of that form?

A No.

Q Do you remember whether it was typewritten or handwritten?

A It was a regular printed form.

Q Had you seen forms like that before or did it seem as though it was unique for that particular situation?

A It just was that -- what the material, you know, film and paper, and he wrote down how many of each thing on it, and stuff, and I signed off on it.

Q Did you use forms like that for your other work with the White House?

A No.

Q Have you ever signed a form like that previously?

A It pretty much followed like for a classified piece of material.

Q Did you develop photographs previously that had classified information in them?

A No, we just treated everything that we got as

semi-classified and just kept it within the developed -- you know, within the unit.

Q Was there a reason of which you were aware for treating most of the material as if it were semi-classified?

A Because the only people had the right to release it was the White House.

Q After the agent left, did you do any additional work related to any autopsy photos?

A No.

Q Did you do any other work related to the death of the President?

A No. At that point, we started to gather all the negatives and started to make two, 5 by 7's of every negative that we had in the library, and then we would start to package them and they were taken away. They were going to take them to the Kennedy Library when it was built. Where it went, I left before that project was completed.

Q By the way, approximately, when did you leave the NPC for the first time?

A Let's see. It was within two or three months after

the assassination.

Q Did you ever see any other photographic material related to the autopsy in addition to what you have already described?

A Just, you know, when they came out with some books and stuff later that showed autopsy pictures and stuff, and I assumed that they were done in -- you know, down in Dallas or something, because they were not the ones that I had worked on.

Q Do you recall any books that you have seen with autopsy photographs in them?

A I can't quote the titles of them.

Q But you have seen commercially published books with what appear to be autopsy photos in them?

A Yes.

Q Did you ever hear of any discussion related to autopsy photos at NPC?

A No.

Q So, did you ever discuss the fact that you had processed those with Mr. Madonia, for example?

A No.

Q Did you ever discuss it with anyone else your own work?

A No.

Q Or did you hear of anyone else at NPC who had worked on any other autopsy photographs?

A No.

Q Did you have any opportunity to observe the content of the negatives and the prints as you were working on them?

A Yes, I did.

Q Can you describe for me what you saw as best you can recollect?

A Briefly, they were very, what I consider pristine for an autopsy. There was no blood or opening cavities, opening or anything of that nature. It was quite reverent in how they handled it.

Q If I can just ask for some clarification. Do you mean that the body appeared to be clean, had been washed? Is that what you are suggesting?

A Yes.

Q And that was different from what you had seen in other autopsy photographs, is that right?

A Yes. In other autopsies, they have the opening of the cavity and the removing of vital organs for weighing and stuff of this nature. The only organ that I had seen was a brain that was laid beside the body.

Q And that was in the photograph of President Kennedy?

A Uh-huh.

Q So there was a brain in the photograph beside the body, is that correct?

A Well, yes, the side of the body, but, you know, it didn't appear that the skull had been cut, peeled back and removed. None of that was shown. So, you know, as to whose brain it was, I cannot say.

Q But was it on a cloth or in a bucket or how was it --

A No, it was on the mat* at the table.

Q Did you see any people in the pictures in addition to President Kennedy, such as bystanders or doctors?

A I don't remember anybody or any real measuring

material, instruments, because normally, when you are photographing something like that, you have gauges in there, so that you can determine size and everything.

Q Did you see any cards or any identification markers that would identify an autopsy number or the victim, or something of that sort?

A I don't remember any.

Q Were there any photographs that would show the entire body in one frame, do you recall?

A It seems like there was a full-length one, kind of shot at a 45-degree angle, slight high.

Q Did you see any photographs that focused principally on the head of President Kennedy?

A Right. They had one showing the back of the head with the wound at the back of the head.

Q Could you describe what you mean by the "wound at the back of the head"?

A It appeared to be a hole, inch, two inches in diameter at the back of the skull here.

Q You pointed to the back of your head. When you point

back there, let's suppose that you were lying down on a pillow, where would the hole in the back of the head be in relationship to the part of the head that would be on the pillow if the body is lying flat?

A The top part of the head.

Q When you say the "top of the head," now, is that the part that would be covered by a hat that would be covering the top of the head?

A Just about where the rim would hit.

Q Are you acquainted with the term "external occipital protuberance"?

A No, I am not.

Q What I would like to do is to give you a document or a drawing, and ask you, if you would, on this document, make a mark of approximately where the wound was that you noticed.

MR. GUNN: We will mark this Exhibit No. 148.

[Exhibit No. MD 148 was marked
for identification.]

THE WITNESS: Probably about in there.

BY MR. GUNN:

Q And you have put some hash marks in there and then drawn a circle around that, and the part that you have drawn, the circle that you have drawn on the diagram is labeled as being as part of the occipital bone, is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Did you see any biological tissue, such as brain matter, extruding from the hole that you saw in the back of the head?

A No.

Q Was the scalp disturbed or can you describe that more than just the hole?

A It was just a ragged hole.

Q And it was visible through the scalp, is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Did you see any photographs with the scalp pulled back or reflected?

A No.

Q Did you see any other wounds on the head in addition to the one that you have identified?

A I don't remember any additional.

Q Did you see any photographs that would have shown the right profile of President Kennedy's head?

A I don't remember.

Q Did you see any photographs that would have shown any wounds in either the neck or shoulders or back?

A It seems like I seen -- there was a * at the base of the neck.

Q When you are pointing, you are pointing to the front of your neck to the right side?

A Yes.

Q Do you remember approximately how large that injury was?

A Just about the size of like your thumb pressed in.

Q About how much time were you able to look at the photographs, did you get a good observation of them, was it fleeting? How would you describe that?

A It was -- they traveled. You placed them on the drum, they would travel around, so after you place it on, probably about 15 seconds or so, they start under the drum and it rotates around, and then they drop off, and you grab them and stack

them. So probably just 10 or 15 seconds.

Q Are your observations based upon the prints rather than the negatives?

A Yes. Like I said, the negatives have masking on them, and you don't see too much on a color negative when you are printing.

Q And for the prints to dry, that takes approximately how long?

A Probably about two to three minutes by the time it goes on, it goes around the drum.

Q And that is all entirely on the drum?

A Yes.

Q So the prints themselves would not hang from a wire or anything?

A No, they have electric drum, and it puts the ferrotype finish to it. That was before RC papers when you can air-dry them.

Q What is your best recollection of the approximate size of the wound on the throat that you identified before?

A Just about like that, just like a finger, half-inch.

Q Do you remember whether the wound was jagged or how that appeared?

A No, just -- it appeared just indented. It was, again, clean, pristine, no -- you know, it wasn't an immediate wound, it had some cleaning done to it or something.

Q Were you able to observe any characteristics of the room in which the photographs were taken?

A No.

Q Do you remember what the walls looked like or whether they --

A No, everything basically concentrated straight on the body. It didn't appear like the normal medical setting, you know. I don't know whether they did it in a separate room or they used special coverings on their tables or what, but I don't remember, you know, hospital stainless-steel gleaming or anything, or people running around in green scrubs or anything.

It was just, like I said, it looked a very reverent laid out arrangement.

Q What is your best recollection as to how long after

the autopsy you received the photographs? Let me try and put it in terms of some other events that happened. Do you remember whether you developed the photographs before or after the funeral, for example?

A It was before.

Q Before the funeral. But your recollection also is that it was after the black and white cards had been delivered to the White House?

A Right.

Q Do you recall whether it was on a Sunday or a Monday?

A It was sometime over the weekend. It was during the day. I believe the body arrived back at the White House Saturday morning about 1:00 a.m., so -- because we had a black and white photograph of it being carried into the White House. It was dark, so it would had to have been -- the film would have had to have been shot by that time.

MR. GUNN: What I would like to do is ask that the autopsy photographs be brought in and have you have an opportunity to take a look at those.

We will take a short break.

[Recess.]

BY MR. GUNN:

Q Ms. Spencer, what we would like to do is to start with the very first view, which corresponds to color Nos. 29, 30, and 31.

Ms. Spencer, could you go to the light box and tell me whether you can identify the color transparency of View No. 1 and Image No. 29, as having seen that before.

A No.

Q In what respect is the Image No. 29 different from what you previously saw?

A Like I said, there was none of the blood and matted hair.

Q Can you explain what you mean by that? Are you seeing blood and matted hair on Image 29?

A On the transparency.

Q But that was not present, the blood and matted hair was not present --

A I don't remember.

Q -- on the images that you saw?

A No.

Q Would you describe Image No. 29 as a color positive transparency or a color negative?

A This is a color transparency.

Q Ms. Spencer, could you again look at the color transparency and tell me whether, again, you are certain that you did not develop color transparencies of the autopsy of President Kennedy?

A No, I did not process any color transparencies.

Q Let's turn to the print. Can you identify the print as being a print that you printed yourself at Naval Photographic Center?

A I don't believe it is.

Q Can you look at the back -- turn the light on, please -- can you look at the back of the print and identify whether that is the same type of paper as the Exhibit No. 147, that you brought with you today?

A No, it's not.

Q In what respect do you see it as being different?

A The Kodak logo is smaller.

Q So, based upon your experience, would it be safe to say that it is your best recollection, best understanding, that the print of the autopsy that is in the Archives does not correspond with the paper that you were using in November of 1963 at NPC?

A Correct.

Q Could you look again at the image of View No. 29? In what respect is the image that you see in 29, in the color print, different from what you observed on the prints that you made at NPC?

A Like I said, the body was pristine, and this has dried blood on the support, the ear, and the hair.

Q Do you recall whether there was a metal holder for the head on the images that you developed?

A I don't remember a metal holder.

Q Do you remember what kind of cloth or any other material was identifiable in the photograph in comparison to what you see on this image?

A As I remember it was a darker cloth. This appears to be a towel over one of the trays, stainless-steel trays.

Q Previously, you said that, if I recall correctly, that the background in the photograph looked different from what you had previously seen in terms of -- I understood that you said that it didn't look like a hospital.

A Right.

Q Could you describe the photograph that you see in front of you now, whether that is the same sort of background that you noticed in the photographs that you developed?

A Well, it would be the dark background, because normally, when you are doing the autopsies, the overhead lights and stuff are on. It appears that the lights have been turned off and that they were using a flash rather than just overall general lighting.

Q Do you remember, in the photographs that you developed, whether the background was visible, such as the walls?

A No.

Q You don't remember?

A I don't remember, but it appeared that it was darkened, the room was darkened.

Q So, to that extent that the images would seem to correspond to what you recollect --

A Right.

Q -- the background would seem to, you don't notice any difference?

A No.

MR. GUNN: Just so the record is clear, that the one that Ms. Spencer has just been shown is the first view, left side of head and shoulders, corresponding to color Nos. 29, 30, and 31.

Could we now see the second view, identified in the 1966 inventory as the right side of head and right shoulder, corresponding to color Nos. 26, 27, and 28.

BY MR. GUNN:

Q Ms. Spencer, have you had an opportunity now to look at the second view corresponding to color Nos. 26, 27, and 28?

A Yes, I have.

Q Do those two images correspond to the photographs that you developed at NPC in November of 1963?

A No.

Q In what way are they different?

A There was no -- the film that I seen or the prints that we printed did not have the massive head damages that is visible here.

Q Putting aside the question of the damage of the head, does the remainder of the body, the face, correspond to what you observed?

A No.

Q In what way is it different?

A The face in the photographs that we did, did not have the stress that these photos -- on the face that these photos show.

Q Could you describe a little bit more what you mean by that?

A The face, the eyes were closed and the face, the mouth was closed, and it was more of a rest position than these show.

Q Could you look at the back of the print and see whether that paper corresponds to the image that you brought with you today, please.

A No.

Q It doesn't correspond. So, the paper that these prints are printed on is not the paper that you were using at NPC in November of 1963, is that correct?

A Correct.

Q Could we next look at View 3, identified as the superior view of the head corresponding to color Nos. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36 and 37.

Ms. Spencer, have you had an opportunity to look at the third view?

A Yes, I have.

Q Do you those two images, again when you are looking at a positive transparency and a print, do those correspond to the photographs that you developed in November of 1963?

A No.

Q In what way are they different?

A Again, none of the heavy damage that shows in these photographs were visible in the photographs that we did.

Q So, just to make sure that I am understanding correctly, previously, in your deposition, you described a wound, a small, circular wound in the back of the head,

approximately two inches or so as I recall that you stated, whereas, these show a much larger injury, is that correct?

A That is correct.

Q Could you once again take a look at the paper on which the print is made and tell me whether that corresponds to the paper that you brought with you today?

A No.

Q Just so the record is clear, the paper does not correspond to the paper that was used in November '63 at NPC.

A No.

Q Is that correct?

A That's right.

Q Thank you. Could we look at the fourth view, which is identified as the posterior view of wound at entrance of missile height and shoulder, corresponding to color Nos. 38 and 39.

Ms. Spencer, do you have the fourth view in front of you now?

A Yes, I do.

Q Can you tell me whether those photographs correspond

to the photographs that you developed in November of 1963?

A No, it does not.

Q In addition to what you have already said in describing the other photographs, is there anything additional in these photographs that appears to you to be different?

A They are using a measuring device, which I don't remember in any of the photographs that we produced, and I don't remember any hands on the President during any of the shots that we reproduced.

Q Now, could you look at the place on the back of President Kennedy's head that corresponds to where you identified a wound in the back of the head. Do you see that wound present in these photographs?

A No, I do not.

Q Would this view have shown the wound that you previously saw in the photographs of President Kennedy's head?

A Yes. The wound that I seen would have been approximately in this area.

Q If we described that as very roughly the cowlick area, would that be fair to say?

A Uh-huh.

Q Could we look at the fifth view now, described as the right anterior view of head and upper torso including tracheotomy wound, color Nos. 40 and 41.

Let me try the first question as being whether the paper on the print matches the paper that you brought with you to the deposition today.

A No, it does not.

Q Ms. Spencer, could you look at the wound in the throat of President Kennedy and tell me whether that corresponds to the wound that you observed in the photographs you developed?

A No, it does not.

Q In what way are they different?

A This is a large, gaping gash type.

Q That is, in the fifth view, it's a large, gaping gash, is that correct?

A Uh-huh. In the one that we had seen, it was on the right side, approximately half-inch.

Q Is the wound in a different location or is it just a larger wound on the throat?

A It could be just a larger wound.

Q Is there anything else that you can identify in these images that are different from what you observed in November of 1963, on the photographs you developed?

A Right. None of the flooring was showing or anything of that nature. I don't remember any floor. I don't remember any extremely high angles like this.

Q Can we turn to the sixth view described as the wound of entrance in right posterior occipital region corresponding to color Nos. 42 and 43.

Ms. Spencer, is there any differences that you noticed between the sixth view, that is now present before you, and those photographs that you saw in November of 1963?

A Yes. They are again using measuring devices that were not in the pictures that we did. The section that appears to be the skull weight, the side is not there, and again, there are hands in the background. This is not a photograph that was in the set that we produced.

Q In terms of the locations of the wound, do you see any differences or similarities with those that you developed

in November 1963?

A No, there is no similarity.

Q Could we look now at the seventh view described as missile wound at entrance and posterior skull following reflection of scalp corresponding to color Nos. 44 and 45.

Ms. Spencer, in November of 1963, did you see any images corresponding to the seventh view that you have in front of you now?

A No.

Q Are you able to identify what that view is?

A It appears to be the opening of the cavity, top of the head, with the brain removed.

Q Could you look once again at the paper for the color print and tell me whether that is the paper that you were using in 1963 at the NPC?

A No, it is not.

Q Can we take a look at the eighth view, please. The eighth view is described as the basilar view of brain, corresponding to color Nos. 46, 47, 48, and 49.

Ms. Spencer, during your testimony, you said that

you had seen an image with the brain present next to the body.

Is Image No. 8 the view that you saw previously?

A No.

Q Did you see any work in November of 1963 that resembled the view that you are being shown now?

A No, I did not.

Q Could you look at the paper for the color print and tell me whether that is the paper that you were using in November of 1963?

A No, it is not.

MR. GUNN: I think we don't need to take a look at the ninth here, which is the superior area over the brain.

BY MR. GUNN:

Q Ms. Spencer, you have now had an opportunity to view all of the colored images, both transparencies and prints, that are in the possession of the National Archives related to the autopsy of President Kennedy.

Based upon your knowledge, are there any images of the autopsy of President Kennedy that are not included in those views that we saw?

A The views that we produced at the Photographic Center are not included.

Q Ms. Spencer, how certain are you that there were other photographs of President Kennedy's autopsy that are not included in the set that you have just seen?

A I could personally say that they are not included. The only thing I can determine is that because of the pristine condition of the body and the reverence that the body was shown, that -- this is speculation on my part -- that perhaps the family had the second set shot and developed as possible releases if autopsy pictures were demanded, because at that time, Mrs. Kennedy was attempting to keep all sensationalism out of the funeral and maintain the President's dignity and name.

Q Are you able to -- let's start with a conjecture as to whether the photographs that you developed, and the photographs that you observed today, could have been taken at different times?

A I would definitely say they were taken at different times.

Q Is there any question in your mind whether the

photographs that you saw today were photographs of President Kennedy?

A There is not doubt they are pictures of President Kennedy.

Q Is there any doubt in your mind that the photographs that you saw in November 1963 also were of President Kennedy?

A No, that was President Kennedy, but between those photographs and the ones that we did, there had to be some massive cosmetic things done to the President's body.

Q Do you have an opinion as to whether the photographs that you developed in 1963 were taken before or after the photographs that you observed today?

A I would say probably afterwards.

Q So you would think that the photographs that you developed were taken after reconstruction of the body?

A Yes.

Q In the photograph that you saw in November of 1963, with the brain lying next to the body, were you able to observe whether there had been any damage to the brain?

A No, it was not damaged as this brain, as the brain

on these photographs were.

Q When you say "these photographs," you means that we just saw today?

A The ones that we just viewed.

Q Ms. Spencer, before we started I said that I would give you an opportunity to add anything if you have any additional statement that you would like to make, and I will just give you that opportunity now.

A I had brought along a photograph that was reproduced approximately 10 days prior to the time that we printed the autopsy photographs that we produced at NPC, and because of the watermark and stuff on it does not match those that I viewed, and NPC bought all of a run, which meant every piece of paper within the house would have the same identical watermarking and logo on it, I can say that the paper was not a piece of paper that was processed or printed out of the Photographic Center within that time frame.

Like I said, the only thing I can think of is that a second set of autopsy pictures was shot for public release if necessary.

MR. GUNN: Ms. Spencer, thank you very much. We appreciate your time in coming all the way from Missouri. Thank you very much.

THE WITNESS: I wish I could have identified them for you.

MR. GUNN: Thank you.

[Off the record.]

BY MR. GUNN:

Q Ms. Spencer, there is one other question I would like to ask you about, and this is in reference to a document that is labeled Exhibit MD 121, that appears on its face to be a cover sheet and a memorandum signed by James Fox dated February 16, 1967.

After we concluded the deposition, I showed you a copy of this document. Did you have an opportunity to read that?

A Yes, I did.

Q Can you tell me, if you wouldn't mind going through the document, and telling me anything that you perceive in the document either to be accurate, that is, as you recall, or

inaccurate and different from what your own recollection is?

A Okay. During the time that I seen Agent Fox, he did not have any black and white film with him. The only thing he had in his possession was color film, and he remained with us while we processed it and printed it. It was not printed on different days.

Q Mr. Fox says that this happened on November 27th, 1963, which would be approximately five days after the assassination.

Does that correspond with your recollection as to when he came to -- or when an agent came to the NPC?

A No. My recollection was before the burial of President Kennedy.

Q And in the statement by Agent Fox, he refers to color positives. From what you have said before, that would not be --

A No.

Q -- correspond with what you yourself observed, is that correct?

A Right. The only thing that we had was color negative

material.

Q Mr. Fox also refers to going with Chief Robert Knudsen. You knew Mr. Knudsen, is that correct?

A Yes. Chief Knudsen was our liaison boss between the White House and the Photographic Center and he was -- he was not with the agent when the agent come, and if he was in the building, he would have come up.

Q So to the extent that Mr. Fox is correct in what he makes on the statement, this is not the event that you yourself witnessed, would that be fair to say?

A That is correct.

MR. GUNN: Thank you very much.

[Signature not waived.]

[Whereupon, at 11:40 a.m., the deposition was concluded.]