

April 10, 2017

Ms. Jane E. Vezeris  
Deputy Assistant Director  
Office of Administration  
1800 G Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20223

Re: Request for Information (SS-18): Information Related to NPIC Analysis of the Zapruder Film  
for Secret Service

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Dear Jane:

This letter constitutes our eighteenth formal request for additional information and records under the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992, 44 U.S.C. § 2107 (Supp. V 1994).

I am writing to ask that you conduct a search for records related to an analysis of the Zapruder film of President Kennedy's assassination that was performed for the Secret Service by the CIA's National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) approximately two days after the assassination, i.e., on or about November 23 or 24, 1963. Background information on this matter is provided below for your convenience, and is followed by specific questions which we would ask that you address.

Background: On May 14, 1975, in response to a Rockefeller Commission inquiry, the CIA provided all the documentation it could find regarding an NPIC analysis of the Zapruder film conducted by the CIA's National Photographic Interpretation Center for the Secret Service (*see* attachment A). A perusal of the NPIC undated working notes indicates that an analysis was conducted by NPIC to determine which film frames likely depicted the wounding of President Kennedy and Governor Connally, and the probable time elapsed between shots, and also indicates that internegatives and prints were made at NPIC from the Zapruder film, and that four photo briefing boards were prepared.

Following up on these leads, ARRB staff has located and interviewed the two former NPIC employees who created the internegatives and the prints referenced in the NPIC working notes.

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They both remember that the event in question occurred within two days of the assassination, and prior to President Kennedy's funeral (which took place on Monday, November 25, 1963). The NPIC supervisor for this activity, who was the color lab manager, distinctly remembers that the Zapruder film was delivered to NPIC by a Secret Service agent named "Bill Smith;" that this agent said he was delivering the film to NPIC in Washington from Rochester, N.Y.; and that the agent remained in the room during the analysis and subsequent production of internegatives and color prints from selected frames of the movie. The color lab manager remembered that the agent not only delivered the film to NPIC from Rochester, but that he was the person who defined the tasking--which was to choose selected frames from the motion picture film, and produce enlarged color prints for briefing purposes--and was the person who guided the analysis of the film and was instrumental in selecting which frames would be used for briefing purposes.

Attachments B and C reveal that the Secret Service did obtain two copies of the Zapruder film from Mr. Zapruder on November 22, 1963, and attachment B specifies that one of these copies was sent to Washington on November 22, 1963.

What remains unclear is whether the copy transmitted to Washington first went to Rochester for some reason, prior to being delivered to NPIC in the Washington Navy Yard approximately two days after the assassination; who gave the direction for this activity in the first place; for whom the briefing boards were being prepared; and whether Bill Smith is the real name of a Secret Service employee, or a pseudonym.

Specific Questions: Accordingly, we ask that you make every attempt to locate records which are responsive to the following questions:

- (1) Who was "Bill Smith?" If a Secret Service agent or employee, to which office was he attached? If a pseudonym, we would like to examine records which reveal his true identity and for whom he was working. In the event your search for the name Bill Smith does not uncover such a name, we request that you provide the names and work affiliations of all Secret Service personnel involved in photographic work in 1963.
- (2) Who ordered the NPIC activity, and why? For example, for whom were the four briefing boards mentioned in attachment A prepared, and subsequently delivered? (It is known that one briefing board, at least, was retained by the CIA, since it was delivered by CIA's HRG to NARA in 1993.)

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- (3) What was the chain-of-custody of the Zapruder film copy flown to Chief Rowley in Washington on November 22, 1963? Was it, or any other copy or version of the Zapruder film flown for any reason to Rochester, N.Y. prior to being couriered to NPIC the weekend of the assassination? If so, why? Do memoranda or reports exist which would illuminate in any way the events at NPIC involving the Zapruder film analysis and reproduction conducted at the direction of the Secret Service?

We ask that you respond by September 30, 1997. We appreciate your help in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

David G. Marwell  
Executive Director

Enclosures