

September 22, 1997

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

Re: Request for Information (SS-20): Information Related to NPIC Analysis of the Zapruder Film for Secret Service

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Dear Jane:

This letter constitutes our twentieth 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 ask you to 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 suggests that NPIC conducted an analysis to clarify two issues: (1) which film frames likely depicted the wounding of President Kennedy and Governor Connally, and (2) the probable time elapsed between shots. The notes indicate 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. 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." According to the color lab manager, Agent Smith 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 obtained 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.

In order to follow up that issue and broaden the inquiry to include the Service's use and handling of the Zapruder film (and/or copies), we ask that you locate records that are responsive to the following questions:

- (1) Did a Secret Service agent transport a copy of the Zapruder film to NPIC immediately after the assassination? If so, please provide the name of the agent and the office to which he was attached. Was there a "Bill Smith" who worked for the Secret Service in a relevant capacity in 1963? Please provide as much identifying information as possible including, but not limited to, Social Security Number, current address, photograph, and telephone number. In the event your search for "Bill Smith" in your personnel records does not uncover such a name, we request that you provide the names and positions of all Secret Service personnel who were 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.)
- (3) What was the chain-of-custody of the Zapruder film copy (or copies) flown to Chief Rowley in Washington on November 22, 1963, or later? We ask that you provide receipts for copies of the film(s), the names of people at the Secret Service who had

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custody or responsibility for the film(s), and records that list names of individuals who viewed the film(s). In addition, please provide the name, Social Security Number, current address, and telephone number of the administrative assistant to SAIC Forrest Sorrels of the Dallas field office in November, 1963.

- (4) Do memoranda or reports exist that would illuminate in any way the events at NPIC involving the Zapruder film analysis and reproduction conducted at the direction of the Secret Service? What analysis did the Secret Service perform on the film(s)?

In addition, please provide the following records:

- (A) Any surviving Zapruder film briefing boards (approximately 2½ X 3 ½ feet in width, containing 5" X 7" color photographs);
- (B) Any notes by "Bill Smith" or any other Secret Service employee dated November, 1963, at NPIC;
- (C) Any reports written by Secret Service agents or employees that refer to or describe the NPIC analysis; and
- (D) Any records that suggest who ordered the production of the briefing boards and to whom they were distributed.

To the extent that this request presents logistical or other difficulties that we may not have anticipated, or to the extent that these records may be located in the National Archives at a place other than the JFK Collection, we will be happy to discuss with you ways in which the request might be amended.

We ask that you respond by October 31, 1997. We appreciate your help in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

David G. Marwell  
Executive Director

Enclosures

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cc: Mr. Donald Personette