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Subject: ARRB Interviewed Homer McMahon
MEETING REPORT DOCUMENTS AUTHOR: Douglas Horne/ARRB Date Created: 07/15/97 Meeting Logistics Date: 07/14/97 Agency Name: Witnesses/Consultants Attendees: Homer McMahon, Jeremy Gunn, Doug Horne, Michelle Combs, and Marie Fagnant Topic: ARRB Interviewed Homer McMahon Summary of the Meeting ARRB staff followed up its June 9, 1997 telephonic initial assessment interview of Mr. McMahon with an in-depth, in-person interview at Archives II during which the original working notes from NPIC and a surviving photographic briefing board could be used as exhibits to test the recollections of the witness. The interview was audiotaped; therefore, this meeting report will only recount substantive highlights of the interview. (All statements which read as if they were "facts" are actually Mr. McMahon's recounting of events as he remembers them in 1997.) Mr. McMahon was manager of the NPIC (National Photo Interpretation Center) color lab in 1963. About two days after the assassination of President Kennedy, but before the funeral took place, a Secret Service agent named "Bill Smith" delivered an amateur film of the assassination to NPIC and requested that color prints be made of frames believed associated with wounding ("frames in which shots occurred"), for purposes of assembling a briefing board. Mr. Smith did not explain who the briefing boards would be for, or who would be briefed. The only persons who witnessed this activity (which McMahon described as an "all night job") were USSS agent Smith, Homer McMahon, and Ben Hunter (McMahon's assistant). Although no materials produced were stamped with classification markings, Smith told McMahon that the subject matter was to be treated as "above top secret;" McMahon said that not even his supervisor was allowed to know what he had worked on, nor was his supervisor allowed to participate. Smith told McMahon that he had personally picked up the film (in an undeveloped condition from the man who exposed it) in Dallas, flown it to Rochester, N.Y. (where it was developed by Kodak), and then flown it down to NPIC in Washington so that enlargements of selected frames could be made on NPIC's state-of-the-art equipment. After the film (either an unslit original or possibly a duplicate) was viewed more than once on a 16 mm projector in a briefing room at NPIC, the original (a double-8 mm unslit original) was placed in a 10X20X40 precision enlarger, and 5" X 7" format internegatives were made from selected frames. A full-immersion "wet-gate" or liquid gate process was used on the original film to reduce refractivity of the film and maximize the optical quality of the internegatives. Subsequently, three each 5" X 7" contact prints were made from the internegatives. He recalled that a minimum of 20, and a maximum of 40 frames were duplicated via internegatives and prints. All prints, internegatives, and scraps were turned over to Bill Smith at the conclusion of the work. Some working notes were created on a yellow legal pad, and they were turned over also. At the conclusion of the work, McMahon said he knew that briefing
Body:
recstat: Record
DeliveryPriority: N
DeliveryReport: B
ReturnReceipt:
Categories: