

## Memorandum

September 11, 1997

To: File (Interviews)

By: Michelle Combs

Subject: Interview with Max D. Phillips

On September 2, 1997, Max D. Phillips, a former Secret Service Agent was interviewed by Michelle Combs at his home in Elk Grove, California. The interview, lasting approximately 45 minutes, was recorded on one audio cassette.

- Mr. Phillips verified that he has never been interviewed by a government agency or commission about his activities at the Secret Service at the time of the assassination of President John Kennedy.
- Mr. Phillips began by outlining his career with the Secret Service and the various positions he held. He confirmed that he was assigned to the Protective Research Section at Secret Service Headquarters in Washington, DC at the time of the Kennedy assassination.
- Mr. Phillips explained that he was in Austin, Texas on the day of the assassination. He had been working on Lyndon Johnson's ranch outside of Austin, where Kennedy was scheduled to spend the night of November 22nd, checking for clandestine listening devices. He explained that PRS normally worked on presidential trips and that it was his job to check for clandestine listening devices during presidential trips. Mr. Phillips noted that PRS regularly worked with the CIA on checking and scanning for listening devices because CIA had the best equipment..
- As he was driving into the Austin airport to return his rental car, Mr. Phillips said he heard a report of the assassination over the car radio. Mr. Phillips said he turned in the rental car and called his supervisor Robert I. Bouck at Secret Service Headquarters in Washington, DC. Mr. Bouck directed Mr. Phillips to fly to Dallas immediately to assist in whatever needed to be done. As Mr. Phillips recalled, he flew into Dallas approximately 4:00-5:00pm that afternoon and went immediately to the Dallas Field Office.
- Mr. Phillips said he remembered being in the Dallas Field Office when Mr. Abraham Zapruder and his son came arrived. He said Mr. Zapruder was clearly very upset and was very protective of his film. Mr. Zapruder wanted Mr. Phillips to promise that only the Secret Service would handle the film, which he did.

- I showed Mr. Phillips the xeroxed copy of the Kodak film box with his name and the date and time and he said he remembered marking the box;
- At first, Mr. Phillips said he had been in Dallas for 5-10 days before returning to Washington but, with further questioning, he remembered that he had worked the day of the Kennedy funeral (Nov. 25) in Washington. He said he must have returned to Washington the day before the funeral, November 24th, and then returned to Dallas after the funeral. Mr. Phillips apologized for his uncertainty but noted that the days had tended to run together as everyone was working on pure adrenalin.