

April 26, 1996

Mr. James W. Powell
3891 Roosevelt Street
Riverside, CA 92503-3615

Dear Mr. Powell:

I'm writing to thank you once again for taking the time to meet with me on April 12. I enjoyed our lunch and our conversation very much. Your remarks helped clarify your experiences on November 22, 1963, and researchers and historians will find them to be of significant value.

I'm returning the military documents you loaned me. I hope that information from them will help us locate other former members of the 112th INTC Group. As I promised, should we contact any others (especially Bob Green), I will pass on their whereabouts to you if they give me permission to do so.

There are a few things that still need to be wrapped up following our meeting. You would assist us greatly if you would take a few moments to do the following:

1. I've enclosed two copies of the verbatim transcript made from the tape of our conversation. One copy is for your records. Please review the other copy, and make any factual corrections or additions you think necessary to provide a full and complete historical record. Don't worry about grammar or smoothing things out to make them sound better -- this is, after all, a record of a spoken conversation. We are, however, interested in any additions or clarifications you think would be helpful. (One particular item: You mentioned in our conversation that you discussed the assassination with Colonel Frindell; however, your Memorandum from November 22 says that it was Lieutenant Colonel Roy H. Pate. . .)
2. I've also enclosed a sketch map of the Dealey Plaza area similar to the one I showed you at our interview. Using a pen (a red or green pen would probably be easiest to see), please draw on this diagram the path you followed on the day of the assassination, beginning with when you approached Dealey Plaza and ending when you were detained inside the School Book Depository. Please indicate where you were (a) when you heard the shots fired, and (b) where you were when you took the picture of the School Book Depository.

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3. You will also find a brief questionnaire covering two items that we touched on over lunch but that I neglected to cover with you on the record. If you would be so kind, I would appreciate it if you would write brief answers to those questions so we can have an official record of your responses.

When you have finished, please place the marked-up copy of the transcript, the Dealey diagram, and completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope and return them to us.

Finally, at our meeting we briefly discussed the possibility of putting your things in the National Archives. As you know, the JFK Records Collection Act set up a special collection there dedicated to preserving assassination-related materials. This Archives collection now holds everything from Oswald's rifle to the investigative records from the Warren Commission and HSCA. Additional items are being added all the time as the ARRB locates and declassifies previously-undisclosed government records. Donations from private sources also play an important role. Several of your items -- especially your original slide photos, the original signed copy of your Memorandum for Record, and any notes (if you still have them) that you might have made from your conversations outside the School Book Depository or with personnel in your unit afterwards -- would be invaluable additions to this collection.

Donating these items to the National Archives has two important benefits. First, the Archives will take special care to preserve these items in perpetuity. They will not only prevent them from being lost, they will also keep them from further deteriorating with age. Second, by placing them in the Archives you will ensure that they will be freely available to everyone, from scholars to schoolchildren, who wants to see them in the future. The Kennedy Assassination Collection is already one of the most popular collections in the Archives; by placing your items there, they will be seen by generations of people, side by side with other relevant materials from the assassination. And they will do it for free: unlike many private collections, National Archives holdings are open to all without charge.

As I told you, I would not ask you to part with something of significant sentimental value to you. But let me suggest this. Without cost, the National Archives will provide you state-of-the-art, high-quality prints of your November 22 photos in return for the original slides. Similarly, they will provide you high-quality bond reproductions of any documents you choose to donate. It seems to me that this would satisfy your interest in having something to show your grandchildren (accompanied, if you desire, by a document certifying that the originals are in the James W. Powell Records in the Archives' Kennedy Assassination Collection), while at the same time ensuring the preservation and availability of the originals for posterity. Please think about this. I'm enclosing a sample Deed of Gift similar to that used by several others in donating their records to

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the Archives. This is a "generic" form that we would obviously adapt to you and your materials. Read it over and discuss it with members of your family or your personal attorney. Naturally, I'd be happy to address any questions you have. I expect to be back in California around the middle of June to attend my son's graduation from UCLA. If we could work out a suitable Deed of Gift, I could possibly receive your materials at that time for delivery to the Archives.

Thanks once again for your friendly and willing cooperation. Don't forget to send me back the revised transcript, Dealey diagram, and questionnaire. I'll be calling you in a week or two to discuss the Deed of Gift.

Sincerely yours,

Timothy A. Wray
Chief Analyst for Military Records

Enclosures

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Follow up Questions

1. Did you know an individual assigned to the 112th INTC Group named Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Jones? [LTC Jones was the Group Operations Officer at Fort Sam Houston.] Do you recall ever discussing with him the events of November 22, 1963?

2. Do you recall an individual assigned to the 112th INTC Group named Edward J. Coyle? Did you ever discuss with him the events of November 22, 1963? Do you recall ever hearing him or anyone else discuss his activities on that date?