

Mr. Elgin E. Crull
City Manager
City of Dallas

Sir:

On Friday, November 22, 1963, I was driving the lead car of the Presidential Motorcade. In the car with me were Secret Service Agents Forrest Sorrells and Lyn Lawson, and Sheriff Bill Decker. We had led the motorcade from Love Field on the prescribed route. We turned right on Main Street from Harwood Street. We continued on Main Street west to Houston, where we turned right to proceed to Elm Street. We made the left turn (west) and were proceeding at a speed of approximately 8 to 10 miles per hour. The time was about 12:30 p.m. We proceeded toward the Triple Underpass which is about one block from Houston Street. As I recall, we were about half-way between Houston and the triple underpass when I heard a sharp crack. Someone said, "Is that a firecracker?" After this remark, I remember hearing two other sharp reports. All of these reports were fired fairly close together. There was perhaps a longer pause between the first and second reports than between the second and third. At this time I glanced into my rear view mirror and could see a commotion in the President's car which I believe was about 100 feet behind our car at this time. At this time we could see that the Presidential car was speeding up and someone in the car said, "Let's get out of here." Then a solo motorcycle officer pulled up behind my car and I asked, "What has happened in the Presidential car - has someone been hit?" The officer said, "Yes." I told him to head for Parkland Hospital, which is the nearest hospital from that location.

I immediately went on the air and informed the dispatcher to notify Parkland Hospital to stand by for an emergency. I then broadcast orders to surround the building immediately, meaning the building from which the shots had been fired. We then proceeded out Stemmons Expressway to Industrial Boulevard, to Harry Hines Boulevard to the 5200 block, to the emergency entrance of Parkland Hospital. I alighted from the car and rushed in and told some of the attendants standing by to bring the stretchers out. I spent some time in the hospital then.

While I was at the hospital, I was told that Officer J. D. Tippit had been shot and killed about 1:15 p.m.

Friday, November 22, 1963. After leading the presidential cars to Parkland Hospital, I remained at the hospital for some time (perhaps 45 minutes or an hour). Someone from the Secret Service detail asked Inspector H. J. Putnam and me to have some cars standing by to take President Johnson to Love Field. In a few minutes the President and some Secret Service agents got into my car (I think there were three agents). I believe Mrs. Johnson and some other people got into Inspector Putnam's car.

I was requested to take the most direct route to Love Field where the presidential planes were parked. We proceeded to Love Field and the President, Mrs. Johnson, Secret Service agents and others, boarded the presidential plane. Sometime later, an ambulance and several other cars arrived. Mrs. Kennedy and others of the official party alighted from the vehicles. A casket was removed from the ambulance and placed on the plane.

A short time later I was informed that Judge Sarah Hughes was enroute to administer the oath of office to President Johnson. When she arrived, I escorted her aboard the plane and witnessed the President taking his oath of office. Then I escorted Judge Hughes back to her car, and saw Mayor Cabell and his wife and talked to them.

After the President's plane departed, I returned to City Hall about 3:45 or 4:00 p.m. I saw that many newsmen were in the basement and were crowded into the north corridor, third floor. Some officers were near the elevator screening people who were getting off the elevators to determine what business they had on the third floor. Two officers (uniformed) were stationed just outside the Homicide office.

I was told that the suspect in the slaying of Officer Tippit was a prime suspect in the assassination of President Kennedy.

I was in and out of the Homicide office several times during the remaining part of the day. About 7:00 p.m., Captain Fritz told me he was ready to file charges against Lee Harvey Oswald for the murder of Officer Tippit. Several times during the evening, I saw and talked to Mr. William Alexander and District Attorney Henry Wade.

The investigation continued and near midnight charges were accepted by, I think, Mr. Wade (I was not present), against Oswald for the murder of President Kennedy.

During the evening, the FBI had approached me several times and asked that Vince Drain, one of their agents, be permitted to take all of our physical evidence to their laboratory in Washington, D.C., to be examined. It was decided to release our physical evidence to Mr. Drain who was to fly with it to Washington, D. C., wait for the reports of the examination, then return it to us. The evidence was turned over to Drain about 12 midnight, Friday, November 23, 1963.

About 1:30 a.m., Justice of the Peace David Johnston arraigned Oswald in the Identification Bureau. I was present for the arraignment, and went home a short time later.

Saturday, November 23, 1963: I arrived at the office about 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. During the day, I conferred with my staff and many other

persons. I do not remember all of them. I was asked many times by newsmen when Oswald would be transferred to the County Jail. I told them I did not know. I talked to Captain Fritz about the time of transfer and he told me he was still talking to Oswald. I asked him if he thought he would be ready to transfer the prisoner by 4:00 p.m., and he said he did not think so. I asked him about 10:00 a.m., Sunday, November 23, and he said, "I think so." On Saturday evening, I don't recall the hour but I think it was about 7:00 p.m., several newsmen asked me again if we were going to transfer Oswald that night. I replied, "No" and someone asked if we would transfer him on Sunday and when they should come back to the City Hall. I told them if they were here by 10:00 a.m., they would be in time. I went home on Saturday evening about 10:00 or 11:00 o'clock, as I recall.

Sunday, November 24, 1963. I arrived at the City Hall about 9:00 a.m., and as I approached the jail office I saw Lieutenant Wiggins. I asked him to have parking stalls #1 and #2 vacated as we wanted to put the news media there. These parking stalls are directly in line with the corridor leading from the basement parking area into the City Hall basement. There was a large TV camera in the corridor and I told the operator that it should be moved across the ramp drive into the parking stalls. At this time, Assistant Chief Batchelor and Deputy Chief Stevenson came up to me and we briefly discussed our security plans for moving Oswald. I told them all the news media would be across the ramp in the parking area and no one else, except police, would be admitted. I then went up to my office on the third floor.

A short time later, I called Sheriff Decker and informed him that we were ready to turn Oswald over to him and he said, "We are ready, bring him on." I replied, "I thought you were coming after him" and he replied, "Either way is okay with me." I told him that we would bring Oswald to the County Jail and would call him just before we left the City Hall.

I told Assistant Chief Batchelor and Deputy Chief Stevenson that we would transfer Oswald to the County Jail. Since threats had been made against Oswald's life, we decided to try to obtain an armored car for the transfer. Assistant Chief Batchelor got in touch with Mr. Harold J. Fleming of the Armored Motor Service. He agreed to get in touch with his drivers and send us two trucks. We could use either of them. He said he would call us when they were ready to leave their office. Shortly after this, Assistant Chief Batchelor and Deputy Chief Stevenson told me they were going down to "check the basement."


I went to Captain Fritz' office and found him interrogating Oswald. Present were representatives of the FBI and Secret Service, as well as two or three of our own detectives. I returned to my office and at

about 10:45 a.m., Assistant Chief Batchelor told me the armored cars were on their way. I asked him if everything was okay in the basement and he said that it was. He said the spectators on Commerce Street had been moved across the street and the news media were "in their place." He left for the basement to line up the vehicles for the transfer.

I called Sheriff Decker again and told him we planned to transfer Oswald in an armored car and told him our route of travel. I informed him we planned to drive the truck into his security area at the rear of his jail. He agreed and said they would be ready.

I then went to Captain Fritz' office and listened to the interrogation of Oswald for a few minutes. When I had an opportunity, I asked Captain Fritz if he was about ready to transfer Oswald. He replied that he was and I told him our plans. He told me he didn't like the idea of the armored car because it would be too difficult to maneuver in case a crowd of people attempted to stop the motorcade. He suggested the transfer be made in a regular detective car with other detective cars leading and following. I agreed that we would do it that way but would still use the armored car as a decoy with an escort of police vehicles. We then agreed Oswald would be rushed into a detective car. The armored car would proceed over the planned route but the vehicle bearing Oswald and the other cars of guards would cut out of the motorcade at Main Street and proceed quickly down Main Street to Houston and into the County Jail.

Deputy Chief Stevenson heard our change of plans and instructed Lieutenant Pierce to go to the basement, get a car and two men, and position the car to lead the armored car. I told Captain Fritz I would go on downstairs, and as I was walking down the third floor corridor, someone, I can not recall who it was, told me that Mayor Cabell wanted to talk to me on the phone. I went to the phone to talk to the Mayor and was talking to him when Oswald was shot. In a few minutes I was told that a man named Jack Ruby had shot Oswald and that the wound was serious.


J. S. Curry
Chief of Police