

First 2 Shots Hit Husband, Mrs. Kennedy Told Inquiry

Washington Bureau of The News

WASHINGTON—The first two shots from the assassin's rifle hit their human target in the presidential limousine in Dallas Nov. 22. Mrs. John F. Kennedy testified before the Warren Commission.

And Mrs. John B. Connally, who sat in a jump seat in front of the former First Lady, testified that after the first shot she turned and saw the President's hands moving toward his throat. She said she thought her husband was hit immediately thereafter by the second bullet.

The two women, whose husbands sat on the right-hand side of the car, shed light into the question of which bullets of three thought to be fired hit their mark.

In its report, the commission concluded that "two bullets probably caused all the wounds suffered by President Kennedy and Gov. Connally" . . . and that "one shot probably missed the presidential limousine and its occupants . . ."

IN ITS STUDY of Mrs. Connally's testimony, the Warren Commission said that "if the same bullet struck both the President and the governor, it is entirely possible that she (Mrs. Connally) saw the President's movements at the same time as she heard the second shot. Her testimony, therefore, does not preclude the possibility of the first shot having missed."

The Warren Commission reported that crowds in the Texas cities visited gave the President a "tremendous reception" and "showed much interest in Mrs. Kennedy."

And it was Mrs. Kennedy, Presidential Assistant David F. Powers testified that he told the late President in Houston Nov. 21, 1963, who attracted 100,000 extra people.

A SOUND similar to the noise of a motorcycle and a cry from the Texas governor gave Mrs. Kennedy her first indication of tragedy. Dressed in her now-famous hot pink suit, Mrs. Kennedy had been waving to the crowd.

Minutes before, the report said, she had heard Mrs. Connally, elated by the Dallas reception, say, "Mr. President, you can't say Dallas doesn't love you."

Mr. Kennedy is quoted as saying, "That is very obvious."

The first shot rang out at 12:30

a.m. Dallas time, the report said.

The Warren Commission said that "on turning she (Mrs. Kennedy) saw a quizzical look on her husband's face as he raised his left hand to his throat. Mrs. Kennedy then heard a second shot and saw the President's skull torn open under the impact of the bullet."

"As she cradled her mortally wounded husband, Mrs. Kennedy cried, 'Oh, my God, they have shot my husband. I love you, Jack.'"

Mrs. Kennedy, according to the commission's report, then cried out, "What are they doing to you?"

THE NEXT FEW MOMENTS are blotted from the memory of the former First Lady, the report said.

Secret Service Agent Clinton J.

Hill testified that by the time he had mounted the car to shield the President "Mrs. Kennedy had jumped up from the seat and was, it appeared to me, reaching for something coming off the right rear bumper of the car, the right rear tail, when she noticed that I was trying to climb on the car. She turned toward me and I grabbed her and put her back in the back seat, crawled up on top of the back seat and lay there."

This scene was photographed by amateur photographer Abraham Zapruder and published in newspapers throughout the country.

Mrs. Kennedy would probably have fallen off the rear end of the car and been killed if Hill had not pushed her back into the presidential automobile, Presidential Assistant David Powers testified.

"Mrs. Kennedy had no recollection

of climbing onto the back of the car," the report said.

ONLY THAT MORNING, Mrs. Kennedy had heard her husband say that "if anybody really wanted to shoot the President of the United States, it was not a very difficult job—all one had to do was get in a high building someday with a telescopic rifle, and there was nothing anybody could do to defend against such an attempt," the commission reported.

Mrs. Connally testified before the commission that she "watched as he (Mr. Kennedy) slumped down with an empty expression on his face" following the first "frightening noise from her right."

When she heard a second shot fired, the report said, Mrs. Connally pulled her husband down into her lap. It said that when she noticed an almost imperceptible movement and knew that her husband was alive, she said "It's all right. Be still."

At that point, the commission reported, both the Texas governor and his wife observed brain tissue splattered over the interior of the car.

AT PARKLAND HOSPITAL, where the presidential limousine was driven, Mrs. Kennedy for a moment "refused to release the President, whom she held in her lap" but then special agents lifted the President onto a stretcher the report said.

Mrs. Kennedy moved in and out of trauma room No. 1, alternating between watching doctors work over her husband and waiting in the hall, testimony stated.

The Warren Commission does not report where Mrs. Connally waited while her husband was operated on, but it says that Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson, accompanied by two Secret Service agents, went to see both Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Connally in the hospital.

AFTER BEING TOLD her husband was dead, Mrs. Kennedy refused to leave Parkland without his body, the commission said.

At 2:38 p.m. Dallas time, with her husband's body in the back of Air Force One, Mrs. Kennedy, the report said, stood with Mrs. Johnson to see her husband's vice-president take the oath of office.

After the flight to Andrews Air Force Base, Mrs. Kennedy, accompanied by former Atty. Gen. Robert Kennedy, went to the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda to wait while the autopsy of her husband's body was performed, the commission reported.

"Mrs. Kennedy chose the hospital in Bethesda for the autopsy because the President had served in the Navy," the report said.

At approximately 4 a.m., Nov. 23, the commission said, Mrs. Kennedy took her husband home to the White House where he lay in state in the black-draped gold-and-crystal East Room.