

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Assassin Witness Reported

Quick Denial Made by U.S.

BY THAYER WALDO

An informed source told the Star-Telegram Sunday that a witness being held in protective custody can identify Lee Harvey Oswald as the slayer of President Kennedy, but the report was quickly denied by government spokesmen.

The source identified the witness as a Negro employed as a janitor at the Texas School Book Depository on Nov. 22, the day of the assassination.

The witness has been in protective custody since the day of the assassination, the source continued, and will appear before the Warren Commission investigating the slaying of Kennedy.

Chief Denies Story

The Justice Department was the first to deny the witness story.

"There is no truth to the story at all, and no such witness exists," said Edwin O. Guthman, a Justice spokesman.

A similar denial came from J. Lee Rankin, chief counsel of the Warren Commission.

"I have never heard of there being an eyewitness," said State Attorney General Waggoner Carr in Austin. Carr has been very close to the investigation on the state level.

And in Dallas, Sheriff Bill Decker, declared: "I know absolutely nothing about it. I do not have such a person in my custody."

Dallas Police Chief Jesse Curry also disclaimed knowledge of the witness.

The Dallas police department knows of no eyewitness to the

assassination," Curry said.

R. S. Truly, superintendent of the book depository, said a Negro who worked there on Nov. 22 left his job shortly before Jan. 1.

But the former employe reportedly has been seen on Dallas streets since Jan. 1 by other depository employes, Truly stated.

Original Version

"There is no indication that any employe of the depository is under protective custody," he added.

The Star-Telegram's source, in his original version, referred to the witness as an "eyewitness," and said he was working on the sixth floor, from where the assassin reportedly fired the bullets that killed Kennedy and wounded Governor Connally.

After the publication of this newspaper's first edition, the source called to offer several revisions to his original story.

He said the man described as a witness was actually on the fifth floor at the time of the shooting, which he heard but did not see.

In his revised statement, the source said the man hid behind crates when he heard footsteps coming down the stairs after the shots were fired.

"Scared to Death"

The witness identified the man coming down the stairs as Oswald, the source maintained.

Details which were not altered in this revision included the statements that the Negro man rendered to officers the same day and told them:

"I was scared to death. I thought he (Oswald) was going to kill me, too."

The source said he had seen the man once "while he was being questioned by officers."

"They slapped a vagrancy charge on him so he could be held," the source explained. "He was jailed in Dallas, but has since been moved elsewhere. I do not know the new location." The man was described as being "in his thirties." He told officers, the source said, that "Oswald almost stepped on me when he ran past me down the stairs. I know it was him."

The Negro was said to have a record of previous arrests on misdemeanor charges, mostly for gambling.

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