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Mr. LIEBELER. Indicating the buildings surrounding the intersection of Houston Street and Elm Street; is that correct?

Mr. ALTGENS. Yes. What made me almost certain that the shot came from behind was because at the time I was looking at the President, just as he was struck, it caused him to move a bit forward. He seemed as if at the time----well, he was in a position-- sort of immobile. He wasn't upright. He was at an angle but when it hit him, it seemed to have just lodged--it seemed as if he were hung up on a seat button or something like that. It knocked him just enough forward that he came right on down. There was flesh particles that flew out of the side of his head in my direction from where I was standing, so much so that it indicated to me that the shot came out of the left side of his head. Also, the fact that his head was covered with blood, the hairline included, on the left side all the way down, with no blood on his forehead or face--- suggested to me, too, that the shot came from the opposite side, meaning in the direction of this Depository Building, but at no time did I know for certain where the shot came from.

Mr. LIEBELER. Because you didn't see who fired it?

Mr. ALTGENS. Because I didn't see who fired it. After the Presidential car moved a little past me, I took another picture--now, just let me back up here--I was prepared to make a picture at the very instant the President was shot. I had refocused to 15 feet because I wanted a good closeup of the President and Mrs. Kennedy, and that's why I know that it would be right at 15 feet, because I had prefocused in that area, and I had my camera almost to my eye when it happened and that's as far as I got with my camera.

Because, you see, even up to that time I didn't know that the President had been shot previously. I still thought up until that time that all I heard was fireworks and that they were giving some sort of celebration to the President by popping these fireworks. It stunned me so at what I saw that I failed to do my duty and make the picture that I was hoping to make.

The car never did stop. It was proceeding along in a slow pace and I stepped out in the curb area and made another picture as the Secret Service man stepped upon the rear step of the Presidential car and went to Mrs. Kennedy's aid and then after that I immediately crossed the street and once again I was looking to see if I could find anything in this area of Elm and Houston Streets that would suggest to me where the shot came from.

Moreover, I was interested in knowing whether or not somebody else had been struck by a bullet or one of the bullets in this area. I saw that no one else had been hit. I did notice after I got on this side of the street, that would be on the opposite side of the Presidential car from where I was standing originally, which would be the left side of the car from where I was standing--looking up toward the building--I saw people looking out of windows. I saw a couple of Negroes looking out of a window which I later learned was the floor below where the gun--where the sniper's nest was supposed to have been,

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but it didn't register on me at the time that they were looking from an area that the bullet might have come from. There was utter confusion at the time I crossed the street. The Secret Service men, uniformed policemen with drawn guns that went racing up this little incline and I thought----

Mr. LIEBELER. When you speak of "little incline" that means the area--the little incline on the grassy area here by this concrete structure across Elm Street toward the School Book Depository Building, is that part of Dealey Plaza too over in here, this concrete structure, or is Dealey Plaza only the name ascribed to this area here between Elm Street and Commerce Street?

Mr. ALTGENS. I really don't know, sir--I don't know whether this is considered part of the Dealey Plaza or whether this is just something extra as you might have for dressing.

Mr. LIEBELER. The part we are referring to that we are not just sure if it is a part of Dealey Plaza lies between Elm Street and the railroad tracks that run behind it over here and from the railroad tracks that go over the triple underpass, and this little grassy area that you have just

mentioned is just between the area formed by Elm Street and the street that runs directly in front of the School Book Depository Building; is that correct?

Mr. ALTGENS. Yes, sir.

I started up the incline with--or, after the officers, because they were moving well ahead of me and I was moving behind them thinking perhaps if they had the assassin cornered I wanted a picture, but before I had gotten over one-quarter of the way up the incline, I met the officers coming back and I presumed that they were just chasing shadows, so to speak, because there was no assassin in the area apparently, but I didn't learn the location of the sniper's nest until I was en route out to Parkland Hospital to continue my assignment and I heard it on the radio, that the assassin's nest was in the sixth floor window of the Book Depository Building.

After that I made a good look through this area to see that no one else had been hit. I noticed the couple that were on the ground over here with their children, I saw them when they went down and they were in the area and laid there some time after the Presidential car had disappeared.

Mr. LIEBELER. They threw themselves on the ground in this grassy area that I have just described previously where you ran across after this last shot?

Mr. ALTGENS. Yes; but they were not hit. I looked at them and they weren't hit by a bullet, so I took another long look around before I started my dash back to the office, and as it turned out, my report was the first that our service had on the assassination and my pictures were the only pictures we had available for a period of about 24 hours.

Mr. LIEBELER. I have a picture here which has been marked as Commission Exhibit No. 203 and I ask you if that is not the first picture that you took after you left the intersection of Main and Houston and crossed Dealey Plaza and stood on the side of Elm Street across from the Texas School Book Depository Book Building?

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He was about 30 ft. from the
levo when he took his famous pic
Comm. Exhibit 203

He was about 15 ft. away from the levo at time
of the head shot

Oswald -
last witness

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Mr. LIEBELER. Now, of course, you are aware of the fact that there is an individual portrayed in Exhibit No. 203, standing right in the door of the School Book Depository Building?

Mr. ALIENS. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. Just to the right of the No. A in the picture?

Mr. ALTGENS. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. You are aware that he has been thought to resemble Lee Harvey Oswald by certain people and it has been my understanding that a newspaper reporter by the name of Bonafede called you and discussed this picture with you?

Mr. ALTGENS. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you have any information as to whether or not that man might be Lee Oswald or some other man?

Mr. ALTGENS. No, sir; I have never seen the man before in my life and have seen no one that looks like him since.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did this newspaper reporter tell you that it was Oswald, or that it was somebody else----did you have any conversations with him about that?

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Mr. ALTGENS. Oh, yes, sir; as a matter of fact I had two calls from him. I never met the man Bonafede, personally, but I had two calls from him and he indicated to me he was writing a story around this picture which showed this controversial figure standing in the doorway of picture No. 203. He was asking me if I knew him, if I had any information that I might be able to give him in connection with this, inasmuch as he was doing a story on it, and naturally I had no information to give him in that connection, but I don't know the man and I have never had an assignment down at the bookstore before or after the shooting so I have had no occasion to meet anyone down there in the building either before or after.

Mr. LIEBELER. I don't think I have any more questions at this point, Mr. Altgens. Can you think of anything else you think might be significant--let me ask you this--while you were standing there alongside of Elm Street and you heard this noise that you later deduced was a shot, after that time did you have any occasion to look up at the School Book Depository Building?

Mr. ALTGENS. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEBELER. Did you see anything up there?

Mr. ALTGENS. Well, as I said earlier--when I crossed the street, my vision prior to that was sort of obstructed because of the growth of trees in that area and me being down in a, low spot, I couldn't see the whole building too well, but after crossing the street, I looked up to that building as well as the other buildings back on Houston Street.

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes; I remember you testified about that and you said you saw those two Negroes?

Mr. ALTGENS. I saw the two Negroes but I at that time lent no significance to that until I later heard where the shots were coming from and also since that time I have heard other people say they saw them too.

Mr. LIEBELER. Do you know which window they were in, approximately, where on the fifth floor?

Mr. ALTGENS. Well, they looked to me to be on the floor below, but they were leaning out as though they were looking for something. I do remember that, but since they had nothing in their hands I didn't feel that the shot was coming from their particular area. I saw no rifle at any time although I was looking for one and I reported it to my Associated Press that the President was apparently shot by a high-powered rifle, that's the way we carried it on the wire credited to my statement.

Mr. LIEBELER. When you saw these Negroes up there, were they in the center of the building or toward the part of the building closer to the triple underpass or toward Houston Street,

or just where were they on the face here of the School Book Depository Building as it faces out on Elm Street? And Main Street?

Mr. ALTGENS. Well, as I recall, they were down here close to Houston Street. They weren't directly under the window that was later described as being the area of the assassin's nest, but I think they were in a pair of windows that was maybe the next set of windows over, which was a floor below.

Mr. LIEBELER. When you say "over," you mean down towards the triple underpass?

Mr. ALTGENS. Yes.

Mr. LIEBELER. So that they were closer to the corner of the building that is near the intersection of Elm and Houston than they were towards the triple underpass end of the building?

Mr. ALTGENS. Yes; there were also a number of people looking out of--I believe this building here [indicating on photograph].

Mr. LIEBELER. Indicating the building immediately across Houston Street from the School Book Depository?

Mr. ALTGENS. But--they were scattered and once again, I couldn't see anything over there that suggested to me that they might have a rifle, and, of course, the buildings here which are the county records and courthouse buildings--those windows--I think had nobody in them because I believe they are closed and locked. I'm not real certain of that, but I don't recall seeing anyone at those windows over there.

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Mr. ALTGENS. Let me tell you this off the record, because it doesn't matter, but you notice Mr. Switzer, the FBI agent that came out---he and his partner---and talked with me, he brought up this Bonafede to me the name and then he asked me if I knew somebody else, a woman columnist in a Chicago newspaper.

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes?

Mr. ALTGENS. And then showed me a clipping where she too had referred to me in the taking of a picture and I also received a telephone call from a John Gold who is, I guess, a correspondent connected with the London Daily News. I got a call from him on the Thursday night about 11 or 11:30 at night, asking me what that story was all about because---

Mr. LIEBELER. The Magy Daley story or the Bonafede story?

Mr. ALTGENS. No; this was the Bonafede story, because they had put it on television--as a teaser to sell publications and the public on the upcoming Sunday--the Sunday publication.

Mr. LIEBELER. Yes; the New York Tribune.

Mr. ALIENS. And gee, I didn't know what to tell the guy because I didn't know Bonafede had written, but Bonafede talked with me. I asked him and I said, "Are you going to quote me on anything I say?" And, he says, "Well, if I do quote you, I'll call you back and ask you for your permission," and I said, "Swell."

Mr. LIEBELER. Of course, he did quote you and he didn't call you back?

Mr. ALTGENS. Well, I got a copy of the thing---I didn't gather from the article he was quoting me on anything in particular other than to say that I was a witness and I hadn't been called to testify before the Commission or questioned by the FBI or the Secret Service, but I don't think that he really tied any information to me in the course of writing the story, but it was real strange the way the thing unfolded. I had tried previously to get my bureau chief to give me permission to notify the Warren Commission or someone to let them know I had been in the area, not that my testimony would be of much value, but still if it could be of just a little bit of help I wanted to do what I thought was right, and my boss never got permission for me to do that, and that's why I never did step forward, because I had no authority. Really, I didn't feel that I could act on my own. I wanted to wait until someone gave me authority to do it.

Mr. LIEBELER. Well, your testimony has been helpful to the extent that it helps to establish the timing of the shots and I'm glad you gave it to us.

Mr. ALTGENS. Well, I wish I had been able to give this information to you the next day when it was fresh on my mind because 6 months or so later, sometimes the facts might be just a little bit off and I hate to see it that way.

Mr. LIEBELER. All right. Thank you very much for coming.

TESTIMONY OF HARRY D. HOLMES

The testimony of Harry D. Holmes was taken at 2 p.m., on July 23, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Wesley J. Liebeler, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

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Mr. LIEBELER. Would you rise and raise your right hand? Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. HOLMES. I do.

Mr. LIEBELER. I understand that you have previously been examined by one of the attorneys on the staff, and I assume they advised you of the basis on which we are conducting the examination and the rights that you have in the situation, so I won't bother to go through that

*Mr
on
confidential
stop
FBI
up*

Gold

pieter

never asked about

his camera, lenses, or

for a review of CE 203
