

Date 6/3/64

1

JAMES W. ALTGENS, 6441 Pemberton Drive, telephone No. EMerson 8-7766, advised he is employed as a Wirephoto Operator - Photographer by Associated Press, Room 353, Dallas News Building, Dallas, Texas. ALTGENS said he sometimes acts in the capacity of the News Photo Editor. He said he has been employed by Associated Press for 26 years. ALTGENS advised he was born April 28, 1919, at Dallas, Texas.

ALTGENS advised that on November 22, 1963, he was assigned by Associated Press to take up a position along the motorcade route for the purpose of obtaining pictures of the President and the Presidential motorcade. ALTGENS related he left his office at 11:15 a.m. and proceeded to the triple overpass above Elm and Main Streets where he intended to take his pictures. He said he arrived there about 11:25 a.m. and was advised by uniformed police officers that even though he had his press credentials he would not be permitted to take photographs from the triple overpass. ALTGENS stated he then went to the intersection of Main and Houston Streets arriving there at approximately 11:40 a.m. He said he remained at this location until the motorcade arrived. Just before the Presidential limousine passed, ALTGENS stated he stationed himself in the intersection on the southwest side and took a picture of President and Mrs. KENNEDY as their limousine turned onto Houston Street. ALTGENS advised he then ran diagonally (northwest) downhill over the grassy area that separates Main and Elm Streets, stopping on the south side of Elm Street, across the street from the stairs leading down from the colonnade located on the north side of Elm Street, to get in front of the motorcade again. ALTGENS stated it was from this position that he took the photograph of the Presidential car and motorcade scene. He said this picture also depicts an individual standing in the doorway of the entrance of the Texas School Book Depository building who resembles LEE HARVEY OSWALD. ALTGENS related he was standing about 30 feet from the President when he took this photograph. He recalled that at about the instant he snapped the picture he heard a burst of noise which he thought was firecrackers. He advised he does not know how many of these reports he heard since they had no significance to him at the time and he was unaware of what was happening.

26

1245/26

on 6/2/64 at Dallas, Texas File # DL 100-10461
by Special Agent A. RAYMOND SWITZER and
EUGENE F. PETRAKIS:vm Date dictated 6/3/64

After taking the above photograph, ALTGENS stated he then turned the film in his camera, adjusted the focus to 15 feet and was raising his camera to eye level when he heard another report which he recognized as a gunshot. He said the bullet struck President KENNEDY on the right side of his head and the impact knocked the President forward. ALTGENS stated pieces of flesh, blood, and bones appeared to fly from the right side of the President's head and pass in front of Mrs. KENNEDY to the left of the Presidential limousine. ALTGENS stated Mrs. KENNEDY grabbed the President and ALTGENS heard her exclaim, "Oh, no!" as the President slumped over into her lap. ALTGENS said he also observed blood on the left side of the President's head and face. ALTGENS stated he was standing in utter disbelief at what he had just witnessed and was so aghast that he froze and did not snap the picture. ALTGENS advised he was about 15 feet from the President at this time, was sure the shot came from somewhere behind the President, and is positive this was the last shot fired. He said the President's car was proceeding at about 10 miles per hour at the time.

ALTGENS advised he did not know Governor CONNALLY had also been shot since his attention was focused on the President. He said he learned from the wire services that Governor CONNALLY had been shot.

ALTGENS stated the driver of the Presidential limousine apparently realized what had happened and speeded up toward the Stetmons Expressway. At this point, ALTGENS advised he took a photograph which depicted a Secret Service man standing on the back of the Presidential limousine, left side, assisting Mrs. KENNEDY back to her seat. ALTGENS stated the whole area seemed to be utter confusion. Police came from everywhere as the President's car disappeared from sight.

ALTGENS advised that as the President's car disappeared he observed some Secret Service Agents and police officers with drawn guns on the north side of Elm Street running in the direction of the top of the triple overpass. He said he thought they were chasing someone who had fled from somewhere behind the President. ALTGENS

related he also ran in this direction. After proceeding across Elm Street and up toward the triple overpass, ALTGENS stated he met the police officers returning. At this juncture, ALTGENS advised he then ran to a nearby telephone and informed his office that the President had been shot and that he had witnessed it. He then sprinted to his office in the Dallas News Building with the pictures he had taken. ALTGENS stated the pictures showing the President slumping in his seat with Mrs. KENNEDY bending over him moved on the Associated Press Wirephoto Network at 12:57 p.m. which was 17 minutes after the first news bulletin was sent out by Associated Press.

ALTGENS advised the above three pictures he took were all turned in to Associated Press, and received wide publication and circulation both in the United States and abroad. ALTGENS said he used a 35 mm Nikkorex camera with a 105 mm lens (telephoto lens). He said the camera was loaded with Eastman Kodak Tri-X film.

Regarding the article which appeared in the Magazine Section of the May 24, 1964, issue of the "New York Herald Tribune" by DOM BONAFEDE captioned "The Picture With a Life of Its Own," ALTGENS related the following:

On May 11, 1964, while he was at his residence, he received a telephone call from an individual who identified himself as DOM BONAFEDE. He said he was staying at the Adolphus Hotel in Room 1210 and was in Dallas doing a story on the Associated Press photograph taken by ALTGENS wherein it appeared that an individual in the doorway of the Texas School Book Depository building resembled LEE HARVEY OSWALD. ALTGENS said BONAFEDE informed him that he had been to Washington and to the President's Commission and had seen a "blown up" shot of this picture. ALTGENS stated BONAFEDE asked him a number of questions about the picture, about his position at the time he took this photograph, and what he had witnessed of the assassination of President KENNEDY. ALTGENS said he answered these questions for BONAFEDE. He said BONAFEDE also asked him a number of questions about

1245/28

how the people of Dallas felt about the assassination of President KENNEDY in Dallas and what effect the assassination would have on the City of Dallas.

ALTGENS stated that on May 14, 1964, BONAFEDE again telephoned him at his residence and went over some of the questions he had previously asked in addition to asking him other questions.

ALTGENS stated he did not know and he did not have any contact with BONAFEDE prior to May 11, 1964; and none subsequent to May 14, 1964. He stated that BONAFEDE had told him that if he were going to quote him, ALTGENS, directly, he would call and clear any quotations with ALTGENS. ALTGENS said he never received any call from BONAFEDE in which he cleared any quotation.

ALTGENS advised that on May 21, 1964, at about 11:30 p.m. he received a telephone call at his residence from an individual who identified himself as JOHN GOLD of the "London Evening News." He said he presumes GOLD was telephoning from New York City. He said GOLD informed him that BONAFEDE had written an article and that it was going to appear in the Magazine Section of the "New York Herald Tribune" on May 24, 1964. ALTGENS stated he knew the article written by BONAFEDE would be published but said this was the first information he had received as to when the article was to be published.

ALTGENS stated he is not acquainted with and to his knowledge has never had any contact with JONES HARRIS, ARNOLD KRAKOWER, or BILL BECKMAN, all mentioned in the above article written by BONAFEDE.

Concerning the article which appeared in the "Chicago American," page 7, Monday, May 25, 1964, in the column entitled "DALY DIARY," authored by MAGGIE DALY, ALTGENS stated he is not acquainted with MAGGIE DALY. He further stated that she has never contacted him and he has never furnished her any information. He said he assumes she obtained the information for her column from the article which appeared in the "New York Herald Tribune" on May 24, 1964, written by DOM BONAFEDE.

5
DL 100-10461

ALTCENS stated he does not know and to his knowledge has never had any contact with either LEE HARVEY OSWALD or JACK RUBY.