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February 10, 1967

3/20/67  
Rec'd 3/23/67

In November, 1963, I was employed as a reporter by the Morning Star-Telegram in Fort Worth, Texas. When the visit to that state by President Kennedy, Vice-President Johnson and their wives was announced, another S-T reporter, Ed Johnson, and I were given the prime assignment of covering the Fort Worth-Dallas portion of the junket.

We met the incoming party at Carswell Air Force Base in Fort Worth on the night of November 21, reported the reception there and followed the party to the Hotel Texas. Next morning, we covered the presidential breakfast at that hotel, then drove to Dallas to be on hand for the arrival of the two planes, Air Force I and Air Force II.

As it happened, I was the last person to shake hands and chat with the President before he and the First Lady left Love Field for their drive through the city. I then proceeded to the Trade Mart, as per pre-arrangement, to do a story on the setting for the luncheon at which Mr. Kennedy was scheduled to speak, and to wait there for arrival of the motorcade.

Ed Johnson was assigned to the press bus accompanying the motorcade.

After word of the shooting on Elm Street reached us at the Trade Mart, over a police cruiser radio, I checked with my city desk and was told to go at once to Dallas police headquarters.

I did so, hearing the news of the President's death en route, and reached there about 1:20 p. m. There were no other reporters for any media then present. Two reporters for local radio stations had arrived by the time a suspect in the killing of Police Officer J. D. Tippit was brought in.

His name was given us as Lee H. Oswald.

From that time on, continuously--with a total of seven hours' sleep interspersed--Johnson and I spent all our time at police headquarters and/or at Parkland Memorial Hospital, until 5:15 p. m., Nov. 24.

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*What about  
Lane meeting at Casanovi?  
What about  
Mike Howard affair?  
What about  
Pearl and 7 testimony  
at DC?*

add 1-assassination

At no time was I fully satisfied with police explanations of developments; in most cases, on the basis of my own knowledge, I was obliged to reject them outright.

When announcement was made on Nov. 29 of appointment of the President's Commission to investigate the three murders, I hoped that the record would be set straight and the whole truth revealed by that inquiry.

This did not happen. The conclusions set forth in the Commission Report, published Sept. 28, 1964, constitute an arbitrary, captious selection of material from the total body of testimony taken by the Commission, designed solely to support the contention that Oswald was the lone assassin.

I submit that no person of fair mind and reasonably balanced judgment can read all that testimony, contained in 26 volumes, and accept the Commission's conclusion.

However, I have made no public statement on the subject until now, because I knew that several well-qualified investigators--Mark Lane, Harold Weisberg, Penn Jones, Shirley Martin--were devoting a large part of their time to seeking out the facts.

Now most of their findings have been published. Lane's "Rush to Judgment" and Weisberg's "Whitewash" are, in my opinion, excellently researched and admirably organized. Nevertheless, certain essential data of which I have cognizance has not been included in any of these critiques. An enumeration follows:

- 1) Both major Dallas newspapers published maps showing the proposed route of the Presidential motorcade, about 10 days before that event took place. Such a map was again published in the Morning News on Nov. 22--the same edition which carried the notorious full-page ad directed to President Kennedy and signed by Bernard Weissman.

On both occasions, these maps showed the motorcade passing directly down Main Street (see attached sketch) to the Stemmons

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add 2--assassination

Expressway, without making the turns onto Houston and Elm Streets which brought the cars under the windows of the Texas School Book Depository.

No broadcast description contradicted that information. If the announced route had been followed, no one stationed at a window of the Depository building would have had an opportunity to shoot at the presidential car from a distance of less than approximately 300 feet.

Yet a sniper or snipers situated behind the wooden fence fronting the railroad yards or on the triple overpass--the sites from which a large majority of witnesses testified they believed the shots to have come--would have had an equally close target no matter which route was followed.

I questioned three persons about the change of route. Dallas Police Chief Jesse E. Curry insisted there had never been a plan to route the motorcade down Main Street. "I don't know who gave that information to the papers," he said. FBI Agent Tom Carter acknowledged that the route had been changed at the 11th hour, but said he did not know who had given the order. Forrest V. Sorrels, chief of the Secret Service in Dallas, stated that "it is customary to announce one route and then take another in these cases."

(It might be observed, in the case of Mr. Sorrels' explanation, that it is curious to note that this, the only deviation from the announced route during a seven-mile trip, took the motorcade away from a large open space and under the windows of a warehouse-type building--traditionally the type of structure which the Secret Service tries to have a presidential vehicle avoid whenever possible.)

2) The motorcycle officers riding to the left and just behind Mr. Kennedy's open convertible have testified that they were spattered with blood and particles of flesh at the moment of impact of the second shot. Those riding on the right side of the car were

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add 3-assassination

apparently unaware that anything had happened, since when the speeding motorcade reached the Trade Mart, these two officers turned into the parking lot, as per schedule, and only swerved back into the street when they observed the cars continuing on toward Parkland.

It is an exiting bullet, not an entering one, that explodes human material in the line of its trajectory.

3) The first description of the rifle found in the Depository building was, as is well known, that of a 7.65 Mauser. Indeed, both the law-enforcement officers who testified to having found that weapon on the sixth floor so identified it under oath. (Oswald's rifle was, of course, the famous Mannlicher-Carcano 6.5.) Still more puzzling were the statements given to me about the gun by Capt. Glenn King of the Dallas Police Department.

At about 1:25 p. m. on the 22nd, I overheard fragmentary talk about a rifle's having been found. I questioned Captain King and he replied, "Yes, they found a Mauser on the roof of the building." Later, when it was officially announced that the weapon had been discovered on the sixth floor, I assumed that King's statement was the result of natural confusion.

However, when I asked him about it, his reply was: "Oh, the Mauser turned out to belong to a guard on the roof, and he dropped it there when he heard shots below and ran to investigate." (Italics mine.)

Perhaps the dubious credibility of this version is why it was never heard again--nor was any additional information about a Mauser, once the make of Oswald's rifle had been determined.

4) T. F. Bowley, who arrived at the scene of Officer Tippit's murder at 1:10 p. m. by his watch, to find the policeman lying beside his squad car and appearing "beyond help to me," called the police operator on Tippit's car radio to report the killing. His testimony to his action appears on page 202 of volume XXIV of the gross

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add 4-assassination

record; but, like a very large body of testimony which fails to support the Commission's basic conclusions, it is not included in the Report.

If Tippit was already dead at 1:10 p. m., then not even the Commission's fabulous timetable could get Oswald to the site soon enough to have done the job. A similar motive no doubt explains omission from the Report of the description of Tippit's killer by the only reliable eyewitness to the act, Domingo Benavides: "He was a stocky guy with kind of bushy hair and he was wearing a white shirt."

Oswald was slender, with scanty, thinning hair, and he was wearing a dark brown sports shirt when brought to police headquarters immediately after his arrest.

Benavides was not called to view Oswald in any of the police lineups.

5) It was Lt. George Butler of the Dallas police who gave the "all clear" to bring Oswald into the basement of the police building for his transfer to county jail, on the morning of Nov. 24. Butler was officially identified to me at the time as in charge of security there. Inexplicably, at Ruby's murder trial, it was asserted by Sgt. Patrick Dean and other officers that the security assignment on that day was Dean's.

Butler is a self-acknowledged leader of extreme right-wing elements in the Dallas police force. In 1961, while in Midlothian, Texas, to make an anti-communist speech, he approached Penn Jones, editor and publisher of the weekly Midlothian Mirror, with a proposition. This was to print a statewide newspaper under auspices of the Ku Klux Klan. He stated at the time, Jones has reported, that about one half of the members of the Dallas police

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add 5--assassination

force belonged to the KKK.

6) When I sought information about the transfer of Oswald, from my hotel at 7 a.m., Nov. 24, I spoke to a police sergeant in the homicide bureau. In my urgency to discover if I had already missed the event, I failed to identify myself in any way but merely asked, "Have they moved Oswald yet?" The prompt reply was, "No, sir, that'll be in about three hours from now." One must assume that any other unidentified caller could have received the same information--then and at subsequent times, when the transfer schedule was moved back.

7) Although the funeral home which owns the ambulance that picked up Oswald is located more than seven miles from Dallas police headquarters, it entered the ramp a fraction over three minutes after Ruby's single shot had been fired.

8) At Ruby's trial, Sergeant Dean testified that Patrolman Roy E. Vaughn, assigned to guard the Main Street ramp entrance on the morning of Nov. 24, and an ex-policeman who was talking to him there, were called away by the occupants of a police squad car which pulled to the curb at the exact moment when Jack Ruby, according to his statements to police, entered the ramp at that point.

This testimony was ignored by the Commission.

9) On the evening of Nov. 22, Jack Ruby sat for more than an hour in a parked car, talking to Dallas Patrolman Harry N. Olsen and the latter's common-law wife, Kay, who had worked as a stripper at Ruby's night club, the Carousel. The conversation centered entirely on the deaths of the President and Officer Tippit. Kay Olsen later told a close friend that her 'husband' repeatedly made such comments as: "That lousy cop-killing rat, that s.o.b. who knocked off our good buddy J. D. Tippit as well as the President, is going to get out. You know how the goddam juries are these days--they'll say he was nuts and turn him loose. Somebody ought to get the bastard before he ever goes on trial."

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add 6-assassination

One of Ruby's first remarks to policemen who subdued him after he had shot Oswald was: "Well, somebody had to do it--you boys couldn't."

Atty. Melvin Belli, Ruby's chief trial lawyer, tried unsuccessfully to locate the Olsens. Only some time later was it learned that Olsen had been dropped from the police force three weeks after Oswald's murder, and the pair had left immediately for California. Even then, their exact residence could not be determined--and has not yet been, to my knowledge.

10) Wes Wise, a reporter for Dallas radio station KRLD, remarked to me about four months after the assassination: "I can't see that they (the Commission) are knocking themselves out to get this thing wide open. They haven't even asked me about seeing Ruby there (at Dealey Plaza, scene of the assassination)." Wise was never called to testify.

11) The only person permitted to interview Ruby at Parkland Hospital during his terminal illness informed me as follows: "I had secured a complete roster of the Dallas police force in November 1963. It contained the names of not two but three Tippits, none related to each other. When I showed that to Ruby he became incoherent." presence on the force of one other Tippit besides J. D.--Gayle M. Tippit--was previously known.)

12) While Ruby was in Cuba in 1959, at the invitation of Lewis J. McWillie, a well-known Las Vegas gambler, he boasted to at least two persons, both U. S. citizens, that he was "in with both sides." He claimed to have close friendship with former Cuban Senator Rolando Masferrer (who operated a private army during the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista) and with a man named Batisti, also an ex-senator and former owner of the Sevilla Biltmore hotel. Ruby also named several other Cuban exiles whom he professed to know well: among them were two men whose names appeared recently in published lists of those detained while readying an assault on Haiti, under Masferrer's leadership.

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add 7-assassination

Ruby further stated at that time that "I can get a personal knockdown to Castro any time I want it, from a buddy of his and mine in Texas."

Robert R. McKeown, of Houston, told the FBI in 1964 that a man he identified as Ruby from various photographs had approached him about one month after Castro's takeover and offered him \$25,000 for a letter of introduction to Castro. McKeown had been photographed with Castro in Houston at the time of the latter's April 1959 visit there.

Although McKeown agreed to Ruby's proposition, he never heard from him again.

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