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Saturday, 15 March 1969

Dear Sylvia,

I'm responding to your queries concerning the misquotation of F. Lee Mudd's interview with the FBI (CE 2108) that is found on page 132 of Six Seconds. Two points should be made: (1) I bear the full responsibility for *the* error as it was no part of your function to check the typed quotations against the original text. (2) It is clearly a misquotation of his testimony as it now stands, but I don't think the misquotation is critically damaging in light of the fact that it really was the Dal-Tex Building Mudd was referring to.

When I got your letter I certainly was shaken. This is the first really bad error that has shown up. I dug out of my files my manuscript and quickly saw that the error had crept in on some subsequent draft. For on the mss. I find Mudd's testimony and in the midst of it the interpolated remark in brackets["this is the Dal*Tex Building"]. I enclose a Xerox of the mss. page in question. This is certainly better than the final result, but I seem to remember an earlier handwritten draft in which the identity of the "nearby building" was discussed in a footnote. Unfortunately, I discarded all the handwritten material and only preserved the first typed mss. I surmise then that in one of the typings and editings subsequent to the submission of the first typed mss. the bracketed material was incorporated into the citation without indication. This could only have been done by an error of the typist or a judgment on the part of one of the two editors, either Berendt or Preston. In any case, it slipped quite by me.

It is a regrettable error but I don't think it is a disaster. Certainly a quick reading of CE 2108 suggests that the "building nearby" is the TSBD. But although I can't find now the handwritten draft with its footnote on the identity of this building, I recall now the reasoning that ~~led~~ to the conclusion that the building is the ~~TSBD~~ Dal-Tex Building. Mudd stated that the building had "several broken windows on the fourth floor" and that he thought the shots might have been fired through these broken windows. He also noted that the building "appeared to be abandoned." Although he seems to be implying that the building is the TSBD, strictly speaking, he does not say so. The CE, written by the two FBI agents, gives us this impression. What building has some broken windows on the fourth floor? The TSBD? The Records Building? The Dal-Tex Building? We have photos of the TSBD that show all the fourth floor windows within seconds of the shooting. None of these windows are broken, nor do any broken windows appear on other floors. Photos of the Records Building show no broken windows and it should be pointed out that this building is modern and fully air-conditioned. What about the Dal-Tex Building? I seem to recall having seen a photo showing some broken windows on the third or fourth floor. I think this may have been one of the Jim Murray shots taken in Dealey Plaza shortly after the shooting. I can't find it in a cursory look through my photo files, but I have the definite recollection of seeing ~~it~~ as I recall that this was the clincher in concluding that the building in question was the ~~TSBD~~ ^{Dal-Tex}. It seems to me we can clearly rule out the TSBD, and once that is done, even without the picture we were talking about, the probability is established that the building in question was the Dal-Tex. Mudd's remark about the building appearing "abandoned" and about noone entering or leaving would better fit the Dal-Tex than the TSBD. Thus, although the error is regrettable at least I don't feel guilty of having unwittingly misled any reader. The building was the Dal-Tex and not the TSBD.

I hope you'll explain all this to the person who brought this error to your attention. If Six Seconds ever has another edition the error will be corrected, and your informant has my thanks for bringing it to my attention.

Best regards,
H. J.

that the Governor was struck at exactly Z236 -- this is only the midpoint of the interval during which he could have been struck. The 27 degree angle of declination was measured by Drs. Shaw and Gregory on Governor Connally's body, but should not be taken as more accurate than plus or minus two degrees. Likewise the 20 degree deflection angle was only a rough estimate made from a jacket that had already been dry cleaned. ⁽¹⁶⁾ A more judicious conclusion from the available data would ^{affirm} that the shot originated somewhere in the region described by the diagram. This region would include the Records Building as well as parts of the Dal-Tex and Criminal Courts Buildings.

Is there any independent evidence that a shot originated in this general area?

A number of witnesses located the origin of one or more shots as at the north end of Elm Street. Charles Brehm, for example, told the FBI that "it seemed quite apparent to him that the shots came from one of two buildings back at the corner of Elm and Houston Streets" (22H837). ⁽¹⁷⁾ Assistant District Attorney Sam Paternostro told the same agency that he recalled ~~hearing~~ hearing a shot which "came from the TSBD building or the Criminal Courts Building or the triple overpass" (24H537). Other witnesses pointed more directly to the Records and Dal-Tex Buildings.

Elsie Dorman watched the motorcade from an open fourth floor window of the TSBD. Two days after the assassination she told the FBI "she felt that these shots were coming from the area of the Records Building" (Archives, CD 5).

F. Lee Mudd later reported that he thought one or more of the shots came from the direction of the Dal-Tex Building. Standing along the north curb of Elm Street, he dropped to the ground when the shots were fired and looked towards the Elm/Houston corner. "He looked around him," the FBI report relates, "and he recalled that in looking toward the building nearby, he noted several broken windows on the fourth floor [this is the Dal-Tex Building], and the thought occurred to him that possibly the shots had been fired through these broken windows... [He] stated that when the shots were fired, they sounded as if they came from the direction of the building" (24H538). It should be pointed out that within minutes of the assassination a young man was arrested by police in the Dal-Tex Building. ⁽¹⁸⁾ The report states only that the suspect "had been up in the

Note
Sylvia