

Deposition - MALCOLM O. COUCH, April 1, 1964, 6 H 153-62.

Questioning by David W. Belin, asst. counsel, Warren Commission.

Mr. Couch is a WFAA-TV news cameraman and a ministerial student.

He says he was in the 5th or 6th car which was "clipping along" after they turned into Houston, and offered films as proof of the speed. The car was 15-20 feet past the turn into Houston at the time of the first shot. It was 50-60 feet from the turn into Elm when he heard the third shot. He saw about a foot of a rifle barrel as it was being withdrawn into the building, but no person, after a warning from Bob Jackson, who had first seen the rifle.

Here and elsewhere there apparently is no effort on the part of the Commission to learn whether these press people, more skilled than most observers, notified the police about what they had seen.

Couch exposed footage as the car turned into Elm Street, including the front door of the Depository Building, which the Commission has. Note there is no indication that this film was ever examined for any purpose. Two of the obvious purposes are to see whether the picture of the person represented as Lovelady rather than Oswald is any more distinct or to see if Oswald or any other people who might be of interest are on the steps.

Couch says some of the photographers jumped out right after the car turned into Elm and the others persuaded the driver to let them out about 70 yards past the building. Couch got some "sweeping pictures" of the crowd after he ran back, possibly including the front door, not over 1-1/2 minutes after the third shot. Again, the same question about the examination of these films. And at this time people entering or leaving might be of especial interest. They might confirm Oswald's story, too.

Note this: When Couch was "standing on that little sidewalk ... between the Book Depository property and the beginning of the parkway ... it's there that I saw blood on the sidewalk." This is on p.159. He makes specific identification

of this spot where there was an 8 to 10-inch diameter blood area and and is then asked questions I think were intended to confuse him. The distance from the corner is immaterial and requires unnecessary estimates. He located a specific place that required no estimates. At this point the questioner leaves the subject, without seeking to learn if it could be related to the location of the President's car at the time of the head wound. I take this to indicate that the Commission wants to be in a position to conjecture and to have more flexible ~~points~~ points for the first ~~and~~ and last shots. It is also possible that this location might be too uncomfortably close to the fairly specific location of the first shot. This would have the effect of shortening the time in which all 3 shots had to be fired. Couch quotes Wes Wise, KRLD-TV, about a rumor Wise saw Ruby leave the Depository 5 to 10 minutes after the assassination. In the light of this, it is strange that Wise is not listed as a witness in any manner. It would also seem strange that, as a TV newsman, presumably with footage or information, he was not interviewed on that score.

Couch says the FBI erred in preparing his statement in saying he said there were 10 seconds between the shots. Couch said he had to time his films to short periods and 10 seconds - "that's a long time". He says there is 5 seconds at the longest. Estimating the angle of the rifle when ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> saw it, he says, "Approximately a 45° angle westward."