To: Edgar Tatro
From: Bill Cheslock
Re: Notes on "Eye witnesses" Panel
Date: November 15, 1991

Robert Groden initiated this session with a presentation of the Zapruder film.

Malcolm Summers was at the postal annex and went to Dealey and saw three Mexicans in a car dashing away toward Oak Cliff, after the assassination. He added, "I believe that there was more than one person doing the shooting, as the last two shots were very close together, like one second.

Jean Hill arrived one hour before the parade, and found it too crowde in front of the TSBD, moved down Elm, but police officer told her she wasn't allowed down that far. However, she and her friend were able to finally maneuver to where she finally saw the assassination. After shots were fired, she saw a man run from in front of the TSBD towards the rear and railroad tracks. Her first instinct was to chase him, but when she got up the grassy hill, a hahd was roughly put on her shoulder, and two men said, "You're coming with us." They confiscated the photos she had, and escorted her to the Records Building. Their identification said "Secret Service" and when she got inside, she told them that she heard four shots. They told her that she was wrong, and it would be very wise to keep her mouth shut about it. She told us that her father was a game ranger, and that he took her out many times in her child hood days, and she knows shots when she hears them. She heard shots and saw someone shooting from behind the fence across from where she was standing.

Mr. and Mrs. Hartman were in the Records Building before the shooting began. From there, they went to a coffee shop down Main St. when they heard shots. They ran to Houston St. After the shooting, they were walking around Dealey Plaza, when they discovered a bullet mark on the southeast side of Elm. A police officer told them that it was made by the President's skull.

Ed Hoffman had two sign language specialists with him. He was on his way to the dentist when he saw a crowd around Dealey. He stopped to see the President on Stemmons. He said that he saw two men talking, and one ducked down, came up, then saw smoke, a gun, and watched the man run with the gun to another man at the train station. Mr. Hoffman could see that JFK's head was destroyed. He tried to follow the man, but he lost him.

Mr. Hoffman went home and told his father what happened and what he saw. His father dissuaded hime from going to the police, as he didn't want any trouble. Later, on television, Mr. Hoffman realized that the authorities were saying that shots were fired from a building. "No." He told his father again that he saw who shot the President, and tried to chase him. He decided to talk to his uncle, who was on the Dallas Police Force, and his uncle suggested that he just forget the entire thing, or he would get killed. At this point, frustrated, he decided to write a letter to Ted Kennedy, and he even went to Washington D.C. to try and tell his story.

Aubrey Rike was an ambulance driver and contracted himself out to the City of Dallas. He was the driver of the ambulance which responded to the epileptic fit in Dealey Plaza just prior to the arrival of the motorcade. While at Parkland with the epileptic patient, he saw the limousine arrive with the wounded. He saw Lyndon Johnson walk in the hospital, and stated that Governor Connally was covered with blood. He watched authorities clean the car, and was asked to provide a casket. He went in the trauma room, and JFK had a sheet over him, head wrapped. He saw Mrs Kennedy put a ring on her dead husband's finger. He then assisted in putting the President into the bronze casket. He stated that there was a pushing match over the question of an autopsy between Dallas and government authorities. He remembers while putting the body in the casket that they put a rubber sheet down, he felt tha back part of his skull protruding, and he drove in the hearse behind the one carrying the casket to Love Field. A couple of questions were asked by the audience. "Was the President's face covered?" Answer, "No." I asked Mr Rike if he wanted to expand on the conversation we were having in the lobby earlier about the dozen or so false alarms ambulances had to respond to in Dealey Plaza a few days before November 22. He agreed and proceeded to tell the audience that they were indeed called to Dealey and found nothing but false alarms. He speculated that someone could've been timing how long it took to the ambulance to respond, and/or someone wanted to hear the acoustics of a siren in Dealey, i.e., would a siren drown out the sound of gun fire? Mr Rike added that the epileptic incident happened at the same time the President was to have been driving through on Elm, but was a few minutes late.

Paul O'Connor was on duty in the Bethesda morgue on Nov. 22, 1963,

and he was told by his superior that he would be confined to the morgue because they "Had a special visitor coming tonight." He immediately knew who he was talking about. When JFK's body arrived it was in a cheap box, and was in a body bag. The PPresident was nude, except for a sheet wrapped around his face. The top of his head was gone, and there was a little bit of brain left. His right eye was pushed out of the socket. Where the eyeball sits, that area was fractured. Mr. O'Connor states that he believes that JFK was shot from both behind and front. He added, "It looked a bomb exploded in his head." Mr. O' Connor determined that the President's personal physician was actually in charge of the autopsy. He concluded by stating that all of the Navy personnel in the autopsy room had to sign an order not to talk about events of Nov. 22 at any time. Questions were asked by the audience. "Did you see arubber sheet in the casket?" Answer: "I saw a body bag." I asked Mr. O'Connor if he noticed any wounds on the left side of the President's head, suggesting a shot from Mr. Tatro's south grassy knoll shooter. He answered that he did not notice a wound to that area of the President's head.