

He went to where Mrs. Kennedy was standing in the doorway and told her the President was dead.

"I'm all right," she said. "I understand; may I go to him."

Nurses and doctors commenced plucking out the tubes and wires in his body.

It was I P. M.

Secret Service agents telephoned Oneal, Inc., funeral directors, and told the proprietor, V. B. Oneal, to bring a casket "the best" he had, and they admonished him not "under any circumstances" to divulge the cost.

Paper Shroud

Oneal said that by the time he arrived, the President's head had been wound around and around with gauze until his eyes, nose, mouth and chin—his whole face—were covered. He had been clad in "an expendable paper shroud," said Oneal.

Oneal and two of his attendants rolled the casket into Trauma One, where Mrs. Kennedy was standing at her husband's head.

Oneal waited there perhaps 20 minutes, he said, after the agents told him they would come back to tell him when to put the President in the casket.

Mrs. Kennedy took a plain gold band from her finger, he said, and slipped it on the President's finger.

Remarking that the ring was dangling from the tip of the President's finger and might get "lost off," Oneal asked if he might push it farther.

"Yes, please," she said, Oneal did.

Dispute Over Body

Outside Trauma One, the question of releasing the President's body to the Secret Service agents was being discussed with some heat.

Dr. Earl Forrest Rose, 37, Dallas County medical examiner and a graduate of the University of Nebraska Medical School, said that if "normal procedure under the law" was to be followed the body would be autopsied here, then released.

He said that in his opinion the body should not be removed without the autopsy which would "protect not only the President but whoever was charged with his assassination."

However, Dr. Rose—from all accounts, including his own—was not adamant on this point.

But he was insistent that if the body was to be released without autopsy, it must be done by a justice of the peace executing a "Record of Death" form which contains the phrase, "body released by . . ."

It was after this phrase, said Dr. Rose, that a justice of the peace's name should go.

"The law is the law," he said. "Who knows anything about the trajectories of these bullets—or even how many bullets were fired, or how many bullets the President has in him—all vital to the man we are going to try for this?"

Casket Moved

Meanwhile, the agents ordered Oneal to place the President's body in the bronze, brown velvet-lined casket.

This, Oneal and his two attendants did, lining the casket first with a rubber sheet and further shrouding the President's head in several plastic bags—all against the possibility of further bleeding.

As Secret Service agents gave the order to bring the casket out from Trauma One, Dr. Rose intervened.

"It was embarrassing," said Dr. Rose, "and I knew my position was virtually untenable, but I was going to insist on the law."

Again, he cited his claim that the body had not been released. "It held up the entourage for a few minutes," he said.

The casket was wheeled back into Trauma One.

It was at this juncture that Justice of the Peace Therman Ward said he called several persons—including Dallas County Sheriff Bill Decker and District Attorney Henry Ward—to ask their advice.

He came away from the phone, he said, convinced that he ought to release the body.

And this, Ward did with a "wave of the hand."

No Records Left

Dr. Rose said, however, that he still protested the "illegality," arguing that the release was not being properly done.

Again the Secret Service agents directed Oneal to bring the casket out.

He did so, Mrs. Kennedy still by the President's head.

Rose said he called after them:

"You can't take that body; it hasn't been released."

At that moment, he said, the casket was disappearing into the hearse.

The President's clothing was carried away by the Secret Service agents in two brown paper bags; his personal effects—a wallet and a couple of letters from his coat—were put in a manila envelope and taken away, too.

Also taken was the hospital record on John Fitzgerald Kennedy, which had grown to almost ten pages in a half hour.

"They cleaned us out," said hospital spokesman.

"We don't have a scrap of paper at the hospital about the President," said Dr. Rose. "It's just as if he had never been."

Back at the scene, the sniper shots had sent the crowd surging back toward the book warehouse.

Rush to Building

Patrolman M. E. Baker rushed for the main door of the building.

"Where's the stairway?" he shouted at Truly.

"Come on with me," Truly said, running across the first floor toward the rear of the building.

Truly thought the shots had come from across the park near the railroad yards. To him they sounded like "a toy cannon being fired."

He had been standing almost directly under the sniper's window.

Truly and the officer raced up the steps.

The patrolman went into a second-floor hallway where there is an 18-by-20 foot lunchroom for employes. It has chairs, tables and vending machines.

Oswald was standing near a Coke machine. "Do you work here," the patrolman shouted at Oswald, thrusting his gun toward him.

Oswald Startled

Oswald appeared startled by the gun.

Truly, who was racing ahead of the officer, turned around to follow him into the lunchroom.

"Is this man an employe here?" Baker asked.

"Yes he is," Truly said.

They continued their race up the steps to the seventh and top floor.

The rifle—a Carcano with Mauser-type bolt action mechanism and a clip magazine—was found hidden between cartons of books near a crudely lettered sign in red and white reading: "Stairway."

It was down the stairway the sniper could have run to the second floor encounter with the policeman.

Three spent cartridge casings were found near the window. A single cartridge was still in the chamber of the rifle. The safety was off. It would have taken only the press of a sniper's finger on the trigger to fire it.

There has been speculation that the gunner was getting ready to fire a fourth time when the limousine finally sped away.

Truly left the officer to his hurried searching and returned to the first floor where officers were trying to assemble the building's employes for a quick head count.

As Truly was returning to the first floor, Oswald was seen going out the back door which leads to Pacific av.

Deputy Sheriff Roger D. Craig saw him leave. He headed west on Pacific av.

Boards Bus

Six blocks away, Oswald knocked on the door of a Dallas transportation bus driven by C. J. McWatters. The bus was headed west toward the book warehouse.

"This isn't a regular stop," McWatters said, "but I'll let you on."

Oswald said nothing. People in the bus were shouting that something had happened to the President.

"I'll bet someone's shot the President," a teen-ager said with a laugh.

A man in the stalled traffic ahead of the bus, which moved only one block after Oswald got on, came back to inform McWatters that the President had indeed been shot.

"I just heard it on my car radio," the man said.

Oswald got up from his seat and asked the driver for a transfer.

McWatters handed him a yellow transfer ticket and let Oswald off in the middle of the block.

He Takes Taxi

Oswald next showed up two blocks to the south at the taxi stand at the Greyhound bus