

Mrs. Rowland's defective vision and her need for glasses she was not then wearing were both otherwise known to both the Commission and its assistant Counsel Arlen Specter. During his examination of Arnold Rowland on March 10, 1964, in a session over which Chief Justice Earl Warren and Congressman Gerald Ford alternately alternately president, and in which the Congressman took an active part, Mr. Specter asked of Mrs. Rowland, "And what was the quality or condition of her eyes?"

"She had nearsightedness and has to wear glasses," Mr. E Rowland replied.

"Was she wearing glasses at that time?"

"No, she wasn't."

"Based on your knowledge of her eyesight, would it have been possible for to have seen him considering your relative positions?"

"Had he still been there she would have been able to acknowledge the figure with no description."

A few sentences earlier, Mr. Rowland had testified that he had called the presence of this man to his wife's attention while she was looking at something else and by the time she looked at the window the man in it was gone. She never saw him, Mr. Rowland said.

Rather gently and with something less than the lust for full and complete disclosure of essential intelligence for the Commission, Assistant Counsel David W. Belin eased into the same question during his examination of Mrs. Rowland. This Deposition was taken in Dallas April 7, 1964. Presumably the only other person present was the stenographer. Although married, Mrs. Rowland was still a girl, "very young" according to Secret Service Agent Sorrels, even when compared with her but 18-year old husband. Well into the interrogation (Volume 6, page 182) this exchange appears:

Mr. Belin. I notice you are not wearing glasses now. Do you wear glasses?

Mrs. Rowland. Yes; sometimes.

Mr. Belin. Are you near-sighted or far-sighted?

Mrs. Rowland. Near-sighted.

Mr. Belin. Did you have any trouble looking at this window?

Mrs. Rowland. No, I saw the window plainly, and I saw some people hanging, looking out of some other windows, but he said that the man was standing in the background.

The condition of Mrs. Rowland's vision was not a secret from Mr. Belin. His subtle appeal to her girlish vanity is made more pointed by the exact language of the affidavit she gave the Dallas County Sheriff's Department immediately after the assassination, when she and her husband were questioned by these officers and the FBI and the Secret Service: ~~XXX~~

"Arnold told me to look up at the building which was the Texas Book Depository at two adjoining windows, that there was a man up there holding a rifle and he must be a secret service man. I looked up, and Arnold told me he had looked back, but I didn't see anything because I am very nearsighted and I didn't have my glasses on" (Verbatim from Volume 19, page 493, Exhibit No. 5323).

In his testimony of May 7, 1964, Dallas Secret Service Chief Forrest Sorrels told Commission Assistant Counsel Samuel A. Stern that after leading the motorcade to Parkland Hospital he immediately rushed back to the scene of the assassination, then went to the Sheriff's office where Chief Deputy Allan Sweatt soon told him, "Forrest, there are some people here I think you ought to talk to." Mr. Sorrels describes Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Rowland as "a young man and his wife, very young".

Rowland told him, Mr. Sorrels said, of having seen a man in a window with a rifle with a telescopic sight, how he was holding the rifle, and how he determined the rifle had a telescopic sight.

"And that he remarked to his wife, 'I guess that is a Secret Service man.

"And I asked her if she saw it, and she said, no, that she had left her glasses home, and she is nearsighted, and she could not see him...."

A few lines later this exchange appears:

"Mr. Stern. Did Mrs. Rowland confirm that he had discussed this with her?

Mr. Sorrels. She confirmed the conversation, but she said she could not see anything because she didn't have glasses her .

Mr. Stern. Did Mr. Rowland tell you he had seen anyone else in the windows of the Book Depository Building?

Mr. Sorrels. I don't recall that he did. I don't recall that at all, He may have, but I don't recall that." (Volume 7, pages 350-1)