

Why Tippit?



DALLAS, April 12 — District Attorney Jim Garrison's contentions regarding President Kennedy's assassination are being watched—"Hands Off"—with intense interest by Federal and local officials who commanded the investigating teams that supplied the material here for the Warren Commission report.

Aside from this, however, I find a fact that is utterly unfathomable to these knowing men.

Straight across the board, they ask a question of themselves obscured in the Niagara of outside comment and books.

Their question is: Why did Lee Harvey Oswald kill patrolman J. D. Tippit?

They pinpoint the moment at which Oswald's identifiable premeditation of the murder began, as the moment he made the brown paper bag to carry the rifle to the building where he worked. Oswald's problem was his getaway.

Study the facts carefully, say the investigators here.

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OSWALD'S temporary hole-in was at 1026 N. Beckley-av., a rooming house, under the alias O. H. Lee. He left the book depository building at 12:33, three minutes after the shots, and reached his rooming house about 12:59, totally unflustered. When he came in housekeeper Earlene Roberts said only, "Oh, you are in a hurry," altho Oswald did not respond.

He changed his clothes within three or four minutes and walked out zipping up a later-discarded jacket.

Some 22 minutes earlier Homicide Bureau Chief J. Will Fritz had radioed a Code 3 (emergency) order directing all downtown patrol cars to the book depository building. At 12:45, again at 12:48 and at 12:52 he broadcast a suspect's description — an amazingly fast and accurate description.

At 12:45 the radio dispatcher ordered Car 78 — Tippit's plainly emblazoned police car — to "move into Central Oak Cliff area" to strengthen the search there.

At 12:54 Tippit radioed that he was in place and cruising. That

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was the last heard from Tippit. This trained and respected veteran of 11 years on the force did not report sighting any suspect, ask for any description clarification, warn anybody that he was about to confront a possible killer, call other cars to stand by with him or express any suspicions whatever.

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NOW we come to 1:15. At least 12 witnesses saw what happened about eight blocks from where Tippit checked in at 12:54. Oswald was walking unobtrusively on the sidewalk, 100 feet beyond an intersection. Tippit had passed beyond him, pulled to the curb and presumably called the walking man to him.

Oswald literally sauntered over to the car from the rear, leaned toward the right-side door in a casual way, put one or both hands on the window sill and was seen to exchange words with Tippit.

Tippit got out on the far side and started to walk around the left front of the vehicle toward where Oswald stood.

Now for the moment of action that baffles the investigators here.

Tippit, out of his patrol car and coming to Oswald, had not drawn his gun. Oswald pulled out a revolver and four bullets killed Tippit instantly.

Nothing could have created a more public commotion, nothing could have more surely defeated Oswald's getaway and of course it resulted in Oswald being seen and caught within minutes after he rushed thru the bystanders and ran (eight blocks) to the Texas Theater.

When Sgt. Gerald Hill brought in his prisoner for the murder of Patrolman Tippit, Captain Fritz told Hill to help pick up for questioning a man named Lee Oswald "not present at the roll call of book depository employees."

Said Hill: "Captain, we'll save you the trouble . . . There Oswald sits."

The investigators of the assassination are fed up with the many mysteries claimed by outsiders, that are not mysteries at all. But this is their own inside mystery. They find no answer to what happened at 1:15 that Friday, Nov. 22.