

Deposition - JAMES ROBERT UNDERWOOD, April 1, 1964, 6 H 167-171  
Questioning by Joseph A. Ball, asst. counsel, Warren Commission

Underwood is assistant news director of KRLV-TV and radio. He was in the photo car with Dillard and others. His camera was broken and the motordade ("I thought it was the fastest motorcade that passed through a crowd; this was really moving ... ") was going so fast he couldn't get to swap it for a good one with his assistant stationed along the route. He says the car was closer to Elm than Main at the time of the first shot, which he said sounded like an explosion (Dillard said, "torpedo"), which he attributed to a reverberation (the same word Dillard used). But the second and third shots sounded different and he "realized" they were shots, again as Dillard had. He said of the first, "I have heard many rifles fired but it didn't sound like a rifle to me." On the origin, he specified only the last two sounded as though they came from "overhead" from the Depository. When Jackson saw a rifle, Underwood looked and saw nothing.

Underwood ran back and got a camera and ran again to the Depository where he saw "most of the people in the area were running up the grassy slope toward the railway yards" behind the Depository. "I recognized at least a dozen deputy sheriffs running also in that area." He shot more film. He then went back to Elm and Houston where he shot the entrance of the Depository and took some pictures of men "going in and out of the building". At that time the police had Euins at that door, and he quotes Euins, who was himself a Negro, as telling the police he saw a colored man lean out the window with a rifle. He also said that when closely questioned by the police Euins insisted it was a colored man. Underwood remained there and took pictures. He says, "there was quite a time lapse between the time the shots were fired and the time anyone checked the building." It's clear he meant

by this "kept the spectators out." Note "out" only - no reference to denying ~~any~~ exit (p.170). Earlier he had reported taking pictures of men "going in and out of the building". Apparently the Commission didn't ask for his films and accep~~t~~s his statement that "during January when things had calmed down", he had checked~~d~~/his films for several days and found no "face in it~~d~~/that would have been important to this". Why did not some agency of the government do this~~d~~? How can they possibly let someone else assume this responsibility? Can there be~~d~~/any excuse for ~~a~~this obvious negligence? And why was this not done immediately? Why were not he, Dillard and the others specifically asked if~~d~~ they had reported what they saw to the police? And how could the police have failed to ask ~~d~~them~~d~~? Among the other obvious ~~values~~ of ~~o~~-this film to the Commission and the police, was whether or not~~d~~ <sup>the</sup> building was sealed; if it was, when and by whom. These questions are not at all finalized in the report.

Unless the Commission and the various agencies had already reached the conclusion they wanted, no evidence other than what indicated Oswald was alone, they should have wanted to see for themselves what face or faces were in the films, who was going out of the building, and the importance of~~d~~who was leav ing the building cannot be exaggerated. It seems obvious that the government did not want to learn what these films might show. There is a very clear inference here that the government did not want to run the risk of finding any corroboration of Oswald's story to the police.

None of the above material is referred to in the report, which is also incorrect in its indexing of Underwood. He is briefly mentioned on p.65, but the index refers to pp.64 and 65. However, on p.64, the Commission states that at 12:36, after speaking to Euins,

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Sgt. Harkness radioed his report of the sixth floor shooting to headquarters, making even more inexplicable the failure of the police to order an immediate search and quarantine of the area and of the Commission's failure to go into why they did it.

Although Underwood quotes Euins as having insisted to the police the man he saw was a Negro, Euins is quoted in the report as unable to say whether the man was Negro or white.