

## The Warren Details

# How Jackie Told Of Those Bullets

## 26 Volumes On Death of President

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"And all I remember is seeing my husband, he had this sort of quizzical look on his face . . ."

Thus Mrs. John F. Kennedy recalled the precise second that the 35th President of the United States was hit by a bullet from the sixth-floor window of the Texas School Book Depository building in Dallas, one year and one day ago yesterday.

Her 1500-word statement was one small and poignant part of 26 volumes of testimony and exhibits of the Warren Commission report of the assassination of John Fitzgerald Kennedy, made public yesterday. The volumes were placed on sale for \$76 a set.

Here, in 15 volumes of testimony and 11 volumes of exhibits, was the raw material that led the Commission last September 27 to publish its finding that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone and not as part of any conspiracy, was the assassin of the President.

### REGRET

The White House ordered the volumes made public yesterday after a news agency obtained portions of them and distributed a story. Originally the material was to have been given to newsmen on Wednesday, and released

to the public next Monday, to provide time for examination of the contents.

George E. Reedy, White House press secretary, said in Austin, Tex., "I regret very much this premature release which has precluded an orderly method of handling this testimony."

In small print, in enormous detail, in often moving and sometimes terrifying prose, the 552 witnesses whose testimony was taken by the Warren Commission told their story of what led up to the events of November 22, 1963, and the killing of Oswald by Jack Ruby two days later.

There was much that had been revealed before, and some that had not.

For example, Oswald's widow, Marina, told the Commission last September that she thought her husband was aiming at Texas Governor John B. Connally, not the President. She agreed under intensive and seemingly skeptical questioning of Commission members that she had no evidence at all to back this up.

And there was Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson's description of Jacqueline Kennedy on the plane that took the new President and the dead President back to Washington:

### CAKED

"Her right glove was caked—that immaculate woman—it was caked with blood, her husband's blood . . . somehow that was one of the most poignant sights—exquisitely dressed and caked in blood."

Mrs. Kennedy was asked only about the events at the last moment of the shooting. In testimony taken at her Georgetown home last June 5, she recalled the belief she said she once held that is she had only been looking at her

husband instead of out the side of the car, she might have saved hi.

As for the actual moment of disaster, she put it this way:

"I was looking this way, to the left, and I heard these terrible noises. You know. And my husband never made any sound. So I turned to the right. And all I remember is seeing my husband. He had this sort of quizzical look on his face, and his hand was up. It must have been his left hand. And just as I turned and looked at him, I could see a piece of his skull and I remember it was flesh colored. I remember thinking he just looked as if he had a slight headache. And I just remember seeing that. No blood or anything.

"And then he sort of did this (indicating), put his hand to his forehead and fell in my lap.

### FALLING

"And then I just remember falling on him and saying,

'Oh, no, no, no,' I mean, 'Oh my God, they have shot my husband.' And 'I love you, Jack,' I remember I was shouting. And just being down in the car with his head in my lap. And it just seemed an eternity."

Then she added, "You know, then, there were pictures later on of me climbing out of the back. But I don't remember that at all."

As for her own view on the what-might-have-been, she said when speaking of how many gunshots she heard:

"Well, there must have been two because the one that made me turn around was Governor Connally yelling. And it used to confuse me because first I remember there were three and I used to think my husband didn't make any sound when he was shot. And Governor Con-

nally screamed. And then I read the other day that it was the same shot that hit them both. But I used to think if I only had been looking to the right I would have seen the first shot hit him, then I could have pulled him down, and then the second shot would not have hit him. But I heard Governor Connally yelling that that made me turn around, and as I turned to the right my husband was doing this (indicating with hand at neck). He was receiving a bullet. And those are the only two I remember."

The most dramatic words in the volumes of blue-bound testimony are those from the principals of that day in Dallas. So far as the Warren Commission's central finding was concerned, however, it was the laconic prose of J. Edgar Hoover and director John A. McCone of the Central Intelligence Agency that counted most heavily.

### JOHNSON

Two of the highlights of the testimony are the recollections of President and Mrs. Johnson. The President's report, of about 3000 words, was sent to the Commission as a letter. Mrs. Johnson's was in the form of a tape recording which she made a few days after the killing.

Mr. Johnson remembered vividly the moment of gun-fire.

"I was startled by the sharp report or explosion, but I had no time to speculate as to its origin because Secret Service agent (Rufus) Youngblood turned in a flash, immediately after the first explosion, hitting me on the shoulder, and shouted to all of us in the back seat to get down. I was pushed down by agent Youngblood. Almost in the same moment in which he hit or pushed me, he vaulted over the back seat and

sat on me. I was bent over under the weight of agent Youngblood's body, toward Mrs. Johnson and Senator (Ralph) Yarborough."

The motorcade then raced toward Parkland Hospital. Mr. Johnson was taken to a room. The President died around 1 p. m. Shortly afterward, Mr. Kennedy's long-time assistant, Kenneth O'Donnell, arrived.

#### O'DONNELL

"It was Ken O'Donnell who, at about 1:20 p. m., told us that the President had died," Johnson said. "I think his precise words were, 'He's gone.' O'Donnell said that we should return to Washington and that we should take the President's plane for this purpose.

"I found it hard to believe that this had happened. The whole thing seemed unreal — unbelievable. A few hours earlier, I had breakfast with John Kennedy; he was alive, strong, vigorous. I could not believe now that he was dead. I was shocked and sickened."

Mrs. Johnson remembered the siren-screaming ride under the triple underpass and on to Parkland Hospital as "fast — faster and faster."

#### HOSPITAL

In the hospital, she said, "Suddenly I found myself face to face with Jackie in a small hall. I think it was right outside the operating room. You always think of her — or someone like her — as being insulated,

protected; she was quite alone. I don't think I ever saw anyone so much alone in my life. I went up to her, put my arms around her, and said something to her. I'm sure it was something like, 'God, help us all.' Because my feelings for her were too tumultuous to put into words."

On the plane where Mr. Johnson was sworn in as President, Mrs. Johnson remembered Mrs. Kennedy saying something like, "What if I had not been there?"

At another point, Mrs. Johnson said, Mrs. Kennedy remarked, "Oh, Lady Bird, we've always liked you so much."

Mrs. Johnson added, "I tried to express something of how we felt. I said, 'Oh, Mrs. Kennedy, you know we never even wanted to be Vice President, and now, dear God, it's come to this.'"