

May 17, 1968

TO: ALVIN OSER, Executive Assistant D. A.

FROM: TOM BETHELL

RE: DEALEY PLAZA WITNESSES

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The following is a list of selected Dealey Plaza witnesses. Most of them gave testimony which suggests that the shots may have been fired from the grassy knoll. I have also included three witnesses -ARNOLD LOUIS ROWLAND, MRS. CAROLYN WALTHER and MRS. TONEY HENDERSON who gave testimony that indicated there may have been two men on the sixth floor of the Book Depository at the time shots were fired.

The evidence that shots were fired from the Book Depository is actually much stronger than the evidence that shots were fired from the knoll. The knoll evidence is almost exclusively earwitness testimony, whereas the Book Depository evidence includes eyewitnesses, shell cases and a rifle.

In accordance with Russo's testimony, therefore, I think it would be better to include witnesses who say shots were fired from the Book Depository as well. The best way to do this is to use witnesses who suggest there may have been two assassins on the second floor. Moreover, the ballistics evidence of Connally's wounds requires an assassin behind the motorcade.

It should be borne in mind that earwitness testimony is likely to be challenged by witnesses who will say that the acoustical properties of Dealey Plaza are such that it is difficult to say where the shots came from.

I include as an appendix an analysis I did last year of all witnesses who looked up at the TSBD during the assassination.

1. MISS VICTORIA ELIZABETH ADAMS

ADDRESS: 3651 Fontana  
Dallas, Texas

EMPLOYMENT: Secretary for  
Scott, Foreman & Co.

TESTIMONY: 6 H 388, 22 H 632

Miss Adams watched the motorcade from the 4th floor of the TSBD. She was standing with Sandra Styles, Elsie Dorman and Dorothy May Garner.

She testified to the Warren Commission: (6 H 388) "It seemed as if it came from the right below rather than from the left above. Possibly because of the report."

2. DANNY GARCIA ARCE

ADDRESS: 1506 Bennett                      EMPLOYMENT: ?  
Dallas, Texas

TESTIMONY: 6 H 365-7; 22 H 634

Arce was standing "in front of the Texas School Book Depository" when he heard the shots. Asked about the direction of the sound he testified: "I thought they came from the railroad tracks to the West of the Texas School Book Depository." (6 H 365) He ran to the railroad tracks after the shooting.

3. MRS. DONALD BAKER

ADDRESS: (Has been difficult                      EMPLOYMENT: ?  
to locate. May be  
found through her husband  
at Insurance Wrecking Co.  
in Dallas.)

TESTIMONY: 7 H 507-15; 22 H 635

Mrs. Baker was standing in front of the TSBD when the shots were fired. She testified: "Well, the way it sounded - it sounded like it was coming from - there was a railroad track that runs behind the building - there directly behind the building and around, so I guess it would be by the underpass, the triple underpass." (7 H 510)

4. OCHUS V. CAMPBELL

ADDRESS: 4646 Chapel Hill                      EMPLOYMENT: Vice President of  
Dallas, Texas.                                      the School Book  
Depository

PHONE: TA 4-5527

TESTIMONY: 22 H 638; 845

Campbell was standing on Elm Street in front of the TSBD at the time of the assassination. He stated to the FBI: "I heard shots being fired from a point which I thought was near the railroad tracks located over the viaduct on Elm Street." Campbell is Vice President of the TSBD.

5. JOHN ARTHUR CHISM

ADDRESS: 4502 Underwood  
Dallas, Tex.

EMPLOYMENT: At time of the assass.  
was a cook at the  
Marriott Hotel

PHONE: FR 6-4729

TESTIMONY: 19 H 471; 24 H 525

Chism was standing in front of the concrete memorial (Pergola) on Elm Street. An FBI report states: "On hearing the second shot he definitely knew the first was not a firecracker and was of the opinion the shots came from behind him. He immediately turned towards the North but did not see anyone who appeared to be doing the shooting either in the aforementioned concrete memorial or in the TSBD." His wife was with him at the time.

6. JAMES N. CRAWFORD

ADDRESS: 3517 Ridgedale Dr.  
Garland, Texas

EMPLOYMENT: Deputy in County  
District Clerk's  
office.

PHONE: BR 8-9754

TESTIMONY: 6 H 171-174

Crawford was standing on the Southeast corner of the Elm-Houston intersection. He testified that after the shots he looked up at the TSBD and caught a glimpse of an "indistinct movement. . . a very quick movement and rather indistinct and it was very light colored" in "Oswald's window." (6 H 173). As to the sound direction, he said: "I thought it was a backfire in the cavalcade from down the hill, down the hill toward the underpass." (6 H 173)

He was accompanied by MARY ANN MITCHELL, who reports that he said at the time: "If those were shots, they came from that window."

7. DOROTHY ANN GARNER

ADDRESS: 911 Royal  
Forney, Texas

EMPLOYMENT: Office Manager for  
Scott, Foreman & Co.  
(in TSBD)

TESTIMONY: 22 H 648

At the time of the assassination, Mrs. Garner was watching the motorcade from the 4th floor of the TSBD. She stated to the FBI: "I thought at the time the shots or reports came from a point to the West of the building."

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8. OFFICER BOBBY W. HARGIS

ADDRESS: 1818 Adelaide  
Dallas, Texas

PHONE: FR 1-3580

TESTIMONY: 6 H 293-296

At the time of the assassination, Officer Hargis was riding motorcycle to the left rear of the President's limousine.

He testified: "It sounded like the shots were right next to me. There wasn't any way in the world I could tell where they were coming from, but at the time there was something in my head that said that they probably could have been coming from the railroad overpass, because I thought since I had got splattered, with blood - I was just a little back and left of - just a little back and left of Mrs. Kennedy, but I don't know."

Hargis' testimony is important because it is one of the rare instances in which we have other than earwitness evidence that shots came from the knoll.

9. CHARLES HESTER

ADDRESS: 3415 Coker  
Irving, Texas

PHONE: BL-5-1832

TESTIMONY: 19 H 478; 22 H 841

EMPLOYMENT: Representative for  
Moloney, Regan &  
Schmitt, Inc.

Hester was standing with his wife Beatrice "were standing along the street at the point immediately preceding the underpass on Elm Street where President JOHN F. KENNEDY was shot. An FBI report states that "he heard two shots fired from what appeared to be a building on the corner of Elm Street and Houston Street. He stated he and his wife were almost in a direct line of the fire and he immediately grabbed his wife and shoved her to the ground."

Sprague has useful photos of the Hesters in the concrete pergola, looking through the back of it after the shots were fired.

10. MRS. JEAN HILL

ADDRESS: 9402 Bluffcreek  
Dallas, Texas

PHONE: EV 1-2271

TESTIMONY: 6 H 205-223

Mrs. Hill was standing with MARY MOORMAN on the South side of Elm Street, approximately half way between Houston Street and the underpass. She testified: "I have always said

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Mooney was standing in front of the Criminal Courts Building on the East side of Houston Street with Deputy Sheriff Hiram Ingram, also Officer Boone. He ran across to Elm Street, up the grassy knoll and into the railroad tracks because, "from the echo of the shots, we thought they came from that direction."

TESTIMONY: 3 H 281-290

PHONE: DA 7-4076

ADDRESS: 8918 Sweetwater Dr. EMPLOYMENT: Deputy Sheriff  
Dallas, Tex.

13. LUKE MOONEY

She was standing at the southwest corner of Houston and Elm Streets, and told the FBI that "it sounded as though these shots were coming from the triple underpass." (22 H 846)

TESTIMONY: 22 H 657; 846

PHONE: Unlisted

ADDRESS: 716 North Franklin Ave. EMPLOYMENT: was a clerk-typist  
(Apt 211) Dallas, Tex. for McGraw Hill in  
TSBD

12. MRS. DOLORES A. KOUNAS

The main weakness here is that from Holland's and Reilly's position, the corner of the picket fence and the TSBD are in a straight line."

Holland was standing on the triple underpass with Mr. REILLY, R. C. DODD, N. H. POTTER and LUKE WINBORN. He heard four shots and "a puff of smoke came out about 6 or 8 feet above the ground right out from under those trees." Holland also saw "about a hundred" footprints and mud on a car bumper behind the picket fence. Holland's testimony is partially corroborated by Frank E. Reilly, who said "it seemed to me like they (the shots) came out of the trees." (6 H 230).

TESTIMONY: 6 H 239-248

PHONE: BL 3-2185

ADDRESS: 1119 Lucille Irving, Texas  
EMPLOYMENT: Supervisor of Union Terminal

11. S. M. HOLLAND

there were some four to six shots." (6 H 207) Also "I didn't realize that the shots were coming from the knoll." (6 H 212) She added that she thought more than one person was shooting because of "the way the gun report sounded and the difference in the way they were fired - the timing."





"At that time it seemed the shots came from the west end of the building or from the colonnade located on Elm Street across from the west end of our building. The shots really did not sound like they came from above me."

20. ABRAHAM ZAPRUDER

ADDRESS: 3909 Marquette  
Dallas, Texas

EMPLOYMENT: Dress  
Manufacturer

PHONE: EM 1-1593

TESTIMONY: 7 H 569-576

ZAPRUDER was standing on a concrete abutment which is a part of the pergola on Elm Street. He took color movies of the assassination. In a handwritten Secret Service memorandum, dated "9:55 p.m." (Nov. 22, 1963," the following paragraph occurs:

"According to MR. ZAPRUDER the position of the assassin was behind MR. ZAPRUDER." (National Archives, CD 87, Control 66)

In his testimony to the Warren Commission, ZAPRUDER equivocates as to the source of the shots, and in more recent statements on radio, ZAPRUDER has indicated he does not believe the shots came from behind him.

ZAPRUDER will be needed as a witness if we show the ZAPRUDER film, but his testimony as to the sound direction may not be consistent with his earliest impressions.

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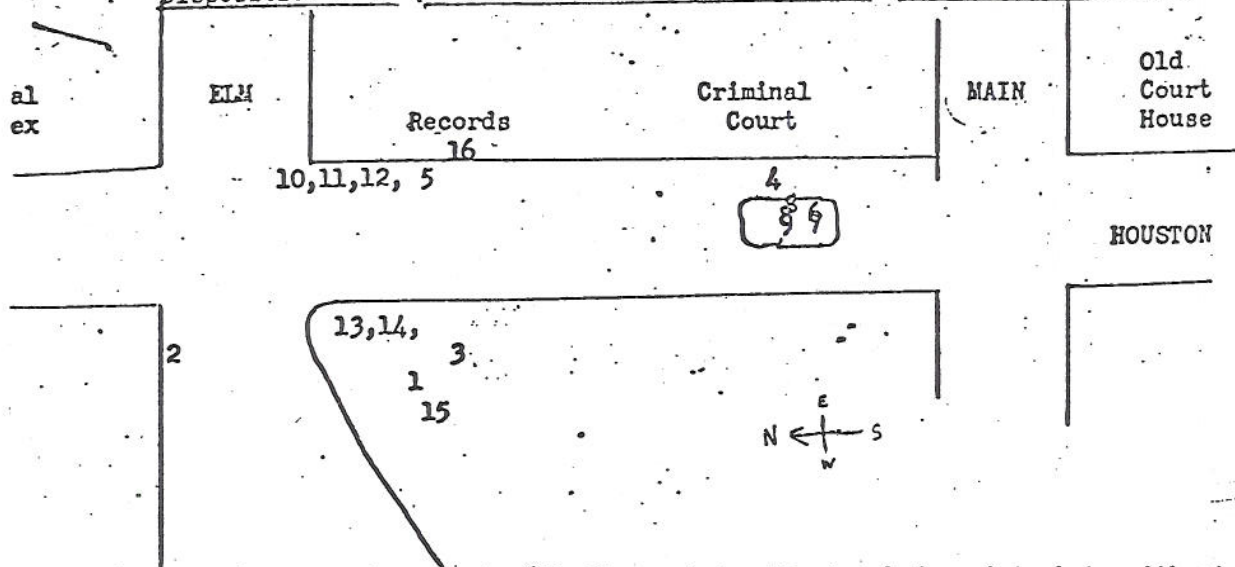


APPENDIX

I include as an appendix a list of those who looked up at the TSBD during the shooting. Most of them tend to corroborate the view that shots came from that building. In the above list I have included MRS. WALTHER and ARNOLD LOUIS ROWLAND. We might consider adding MRS. TONEY HENDERSON (CE 2089), who says she saw two men together on "one of the upper floors of the building." One may have been a Mexican or a Negro.

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Disposition of a. those who looked up at TSBD during the assassination



1. Howard Leslie Brennan Saw man in 6th floor window 10 mins before 1st shot, without gun then saw him firing last shot and "step back" from window. Brennan is most important WC witness. To discredit would be necessary to find film of him not looking up during shooting. He wore construction helmet low over eyes.
2. James Worrell After first shot looked up above his head and saw gun sticking out of window. Then looked down and saw Kennedy slump. Then looked up again. Heard 4 shots, then ran to back of TSBD, where saw man running out. Testimony merits little credence. aged 20
3. Amos Lee Euins After 1st shot looked up and saw man with "bald spot" shooting from 6th floor window. Although he says he saw the shot fired, he ran down to point west of the TSBD like everyone else. He says "There wasn't hardly no-one on that corner but me." False (see CE 479 174193) Aged 16.
4. Arnold Louis Rowland aged 18. About 15 mins before 1st shot saw man SW 6th floor window with gun held in "parade rest" position. Simultaneously saw man in SE 6th floor window. Pointed out man with gun to his wife but she saw no-one. Rowland testifies that the shots sounded as though they came from the grassy knoll, and he immediately went there after the shots.
5. Mrs Carolyn Walther As the limousine turned onto Houston from Main she says she saw 2 men in the 4th or 5th floor SE window. One was pointing gun out of window. Her testimony is open to refutation or corroboration by the Hughes film.
6. Robert Jackson Saw rifle being withdrawn after the 3rd shot. Did not see a man holding the gun. Exclaimed "There is the gun." Says Negroes in 5th floor window were straining up above them. Not borne out by the Dillard picture.
7. Malcolm Couch Sitting next to Jackson, heard him exclaim, and saw the gun being withdrawn.
8. Tom Dillard Heard Jackson and took picture of TSBD but saw no-one. The picture, it is estimated, was taken about 6 seconds after the last shot.
9. James Robert Underwood Also in car with above three but did not see gun.
10. T.E. Moore Looked up at the TSBD at the sound of the first shot, however he saw nothing.
11. James N. Crawford Looked up after the 3rd shot and saw a 'movement' of something being withdrawn, something light colored, on the 6th floor of the TSBD.
12. Mary Ann Mitchell Was with Crawford and looked up at the TSBD after the 3rd shot but saw nothing.
13. Robert Edwards Saw man in 6th floor window as car rounded Main & Houston. Thought shots
14. Ronald Fischer came from west of TSBD. Hughes film will decide.
15. Mrs. William Parker Looked up after first shot but saw nothing.
16. Lillian Mooneyham from 3rd floor records bldg saw man behind boxes on 6th floor TSBD, 4 1/2 to 5 minutes after last shot. Therefore could not be Oswald.
17. Mrs Toney Henderson Impossible to establish her position as given in CE 2089. In any event her statement is valueless as no indication is given of how long before the 1st shot she looked up at the TSBD and saw 2 men on an upper floor.

The testimony of these 17 witnesses suggests to me that at least some of the shots came from the TSBD. Admittedly T.E. Moore and Mrs. William Parker saw nothing although they looked up after the first shot. Mary Ann Mitchell and Billard and Underwood saw nothing but they probably looked up too late anyway.

Edwards and Fischer are not really credible witnesses and one gathers that Warren Commission counsel felt the same way from the tone of his interrogation. The same goes for James Worrell, who seems to have tried to get in on the act by seeing everything, the gun firing, Kennedy slumping, and a man running out of the back of the building. (The evidence of the two newsmen, Allman and Ford, is quite convincing that Oswald in fact left by the front door. They spoke to him, asking where the phone was, as they were going in and he was leaving. Oswald supplied this information himself, except he thought they were SS agents. Allman and Ford corroborated his story to the extent that they went in the front door of the TSBD shortly after the assassination and asked someone - they could not identify him as Oswald because they were in an agitated state - where the phone was.)

Arnold Rowland and Mrs. Carolyn Walther say they saw two men at the same time on the sixth floor, which is not consistent with the Commission story of an unaided assassin. (It should be borne in mind that the 6th floor of the TSBD ~~extends~~ is one large room, so two men at opposite ends of the building on this floor would be in sight of each other.) On the other hand, the testimony of these two witnesses is not consistent with attempting to maintain that no-one was firing from the TSBD. The Warren Commission was anxious not to believe Rowland and portrayed him as an unreliable witness; Mrs Walther was ignored. Schiller evidently considers her reliable, however.

This leaves us with Brennan, Euins, Jackson and Couch; also James N. Crawford. Brennan is considered an unreliable witness by most of the critics, for reasons outlined in such books as "Rush To Judgement" and "Whitewash". I enclose a document pertaining to Brennan, which has not previously come to light, which sheds serious doubt on Brennan's testimony, as it suggests that he was not looking up at the TSBD at all. It is to be noted that Brennan is questioned about this at the end of his testimony. (3H211) Somebody should contact George Murray at NBC about this, as I have not been able to find a record of the interview with him that was evidently conducted.

What convinces me more than anything that someone was probably shooting from the TSBD is the combined testimony of Jackson, Couch, Underwood, and Dillard. They all heard Jackson exclaim "There is the gun", Couch saw it being withdrawn, and Dillard took a picture as soon as he could although he was too late. If their story was made up at a later date to fit the ~~TSBD~~ official version, then there is no explanation of why he took the picture.

If the Hughes film could clearly show that no-one was looking out of the 6th floor window right up until the time the car turned the corner onto Elm St., one would be prepared to believe that no-one shot from that window, but unfortunately this does not appear to be the case. I have spoken to 2 people who have seen this film (Nancy Haskell of Life Mag. and Bob Richter of CBS) and they both say that the film is not quite clear enough to make a categorical statement about what it shows. At any rate there is no-one obviously in the window, and there might be no-one at all, they say.

In conclusion, I would say at this stage that a gun was fired from the Book Depository Building, or at any rate a gun was probably aimed out of the window at the motorcade; possibly it was not fired, but the evidence of Connally's wounds indicates that a shot was fired from somewhere behind the motorcade. This analysis does not imply, of course, that Lee Harvey Oswald handled the gun in the TSBD, nor that shots were not fired from elsewhere.

T. Bethell,  
National Archives,  
Washington, DC.,  
April 26 1967