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CONNALLY TESTIMONY (2100)

WASHINGTON, NOV. 23 (AP)-A PARTIAL TEXT OF TESTIMONY GIVEN APRIL 21 BY GOV. JOHN B. CONNALLY TO THE WARREN COMMISSION INVESTIGATING THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY FOLLOWS:

GOV. CONNALLY: THE FURTHER YOU WENT (TOWARD DOWNTOWN DALLAS) THE MORE ENTHUSIASTIC THE RESPONSE WAS MRS. CONNALLY REMARKED TO THE PRESIDENT, "WELL, MR. PRESIDENT, YOU CAN'T SAY THERE AREN'T SOME PEOPLE IN DALLAS WHO LOVE YOU." AND THE PRESIDENT REPLIED, "THAT IS VERY OBVIOUS," OR WORDS TO THAT EFFECT.

ARLEN SPECTER, ASSISTANT COMMISSION COUNSEL: ARE THERE ANY OTHER CONVERSATIONS WHICH STAND OUT IN YOUR MIND ON THE PORTION OF THE MOTORCADE TRIP THROUGH DALLAS ITSELF?

CONNALLY. NO; ACTUALLY WE HAD MORE OR LESS DESULTORY CONVERSATION AS WE RODE ALONG.

MR. SPECTER. AS TO THE COMMENT WHICH MRS. CONNALLY HAD MADE TO PRESIDENT KENNEDY WHICH YOU JUST DESCRIBED, WHERE ON THE MOTOR TRIP WAS THAT COMMENT MADE, IF YOU RECALL?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. . . . RIGHT BY THE COURTHOUSE BEFORE WE TURNED LEFT ONTO ELM STREET, ALMOST AT THE END OF THE MOTORCADE, AND ALMOST, I WOULD SAY, PERHAPS A MINUTE BEFORE THE FATAL SHOOTING.

MR. SPECTER. WHAT WAS THE CONDITION OF THE CROWD AT THAT JUNCTURE

. . . .
GOVERNOR CONNALLY. . . . WHEN SHE MADE THIS REMARK, THE CROWD WAS VERY THICK AND VERY ENTHUSIASTIC. . . . WE COULD LOOK AHEAD AND SEE THAT THE CROWD WAS BEGINNING TO THIN ALONG THE BANKS, JUST EAST, I GUESS OF THE OVERPASS.

MR. SPECTER. WAS THERE ANY DIFFICULTY IN HEARING SUCH A CONVERSATIONAL COMMENT?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. "NO, NO; WE COULD TALK WITHOUT ANY, AND HEAR VERY CLEARLY, WITHOUT ANY DIFFICULTY, WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR STRAIN. WE DIDN'T DO IT AGAIN BECAUSE . . . IT WOULD BE APPARENT TO THOSE WHO . . . ON THE SIDEWALK, AND WE DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE THE IMPRESSION WE WERE NOT INTERESTED IN THEM, AND SO WE JUST DIDN'T CARRY ON A CONVERSATION, BUT WE COULD DO SO WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE.

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MR. SPECTER. AS THE AUTOMOBILE TURNED LEFT ONTO ELM FROM HOUSTON, WHAT DID OCCUR THERE, GOVERNOR?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. WE HAD JUST MADE THE TURN, WELL, WHEN I HEARD WHAT I THOUGHT WAS A SHOT. I HEARD THIS NOISE WHICH I IMMEDIATELY TOOK TO BE A RIFLE SHOT. I INSTINCTIVELY TURNED TO MY RIGHT BECAUSE THE SOUND APPEARED TO COME FROM OVER MY RIGHT SHOULDER, SO I TURNED TO LOOK BACK OVER MY RIGHT SHOULDER, AND I SAW NOTHING UNUSUAL EXCEPT JUST PEOPLE IN THE CROWD, BUT I DID NOT CATCH THE PRESIDENT IN THE CORNER OF MY EYE, AND I WAS INTERESTED, BECAUSE ONCE I HEARD THE SHOT IN MY OWN MIND I IDENTIFIED IT AS A RIFLE SHOT, AND I IMMEDIATELY--THE ONLY THOUGHT THAT CROSSED MY MIND WAS THAT THIS IS AN ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT.

SO I LOOKED, FAILING TO SEE HIM, I WAS TURNING TO LOOK BACK OVER MY LEFT SHOULDER INTO THE BACK SEAT, BUT I NEVER GOT THAT FAR IN MY TURN. . . . THEN I FELT LIKE SOMEONE HAD HIT ME IN THE BACK.

MR. SPECTER. WHAT IS THE BEST ESTIMATE THAT YOU HAVE AS TO THE TIME SPAN BETWEEN THE SOUND OF THE FIRST SHOT AND THE FEELING OF SOMEONE HITTING YOU IN THE BACK. . . .

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. A VERY, VERY BRIEF SPAN OF TIME. . . . I IMMEDIATELY THOUGHT THAT THIS--THAT I HAD BEEN SHOT. I KNEW IT WHEN I JUST LOOKED DOWN AND I WAS COVERED WITH BLOOD, AND THE THOUGHT IMMEDIATELY PASSED THROUGH MY MIND THAT THERE WERE EITHER TWO OR THREE PEOPLE INVOLVED OR MORE IN THIS OR SOMEONE WAS SHOOTING WITH AN AUTOMATIC RIFLE. . . .

SO I MERELY DOUBLED UP, AND THEN TURNED TO MY RIGHT AGAIN AND BEGAN TO--I JUST SAT THERE, AND MRS. CONNALLY PULLED ME OVER TO HER LAP. SHE WAS SITTING, OF COURSE, ON THE JUMP SEAT, SO I RECLINED WITH MY HEAD IN HER LAP, CONSCIOUS ALL THE TIME, AND WITH MY EYES OPEN; AND THEN, OF COURSE, THE THIRD SHOT SOUNDED, AND I HEARD THE SHOT VERY CLEARLY. I HEARD IT HIT HIM. I HEARD THE SHOT HIT SOMETHING, AND I ASSUMED AGAIN--IT NEVER ENTERED MY MIND THAT IT EVER HIT ANYBODY BUT THE PRESIDENT. I HEARD IT HIT. IT WAS A VERY LOUD NOISE, JUST THAT AUDIBLE, VERY CLEAR.

IMMEDIATELY I COULD SEE ON MY CLOTHES, MY CLOTHING, I COULD SEE ON THE INTERIOR OF THE CAR WHICH, AS I RECALL, WAS A PALE BLUE, BRAIN TISSUE, WHICH I IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED, AND I RECALL VERY WELL, ON MY TROUSERS THERE WAS ONE CHUNK OF BRAIN TISSUE AS BIG AS ALMOST MY THUMB, THUMBNAIL, AND AGAIN I DID NOT SEE THE PRESIDENT AT ANY TIME EITHER AFTER THE FIRST, SECOND, OR THIRD SHOTS, BUT I ASSUMED ALWAYS

THAT IT WAS HE WHO WAS HIT AND ONE ONE ELSE.

I IMMEDIATELY, WHEN I WAS HIT, I SAID, "OH, NO, NO, NO." AND THEN I SAID "MY GOD, THEY ARE GOING TO KILL US ALL." NELLIE, WHEN SHE PULLED ME OVER INTO HER LAP-- . . . MRS. CONNALLY. WHEN SHE PULLED ME OVER INTO HER LAP, SHE COULD TELL I WAS STILL BREATHING AND MOVING, AND SHE SAID, "DON'T WORRY. BE QUIET. YOU ARE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT." SHE JUST KEPT TELLING ME I WAS GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.

AFTER THE THIRD SHOT, AND I HEARD ROY KELLERMAN TELL THE DRIVER "BILL, GET OUT OF LINE." AND THEN I SAW HIM MOVE, AND I ASSUMED HE WAS MOVING A BUTTON OR SOMETHING ON THE PANEL OF THE AUTOMOBILE, AND HE SAID, "GET US TO A HSOPITAL QUICK." I ASSUMED HE WAS SAYING THIS TO THE PATROLMAN, THE MOTORCYCLE POLICE WHO WERE LEADING US.

AT ABOUT THAT TIME, WE BEGAN TO PULL OUT OF THE CAVALCADE, OUT OF THE LINE, AND I LOST CONSCIOUSNESS AND DIDN'T REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS UNTIL WE GOT TO THE HOSPITAL.

MR. SPECTER. WHAT WAS YOUR IMPRESSION. . .AS TO THE SOURCE OF THE SHOT?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. . . . WHEN I HEARD THE FIRST SHOT I IDENTIFIED THE SOUND AS COMING BACK OVER MY RIGHT SHOULDER.

MR. SPECTER. AT AN ELEVATION?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. AT AN ELEVATION. I WOULD HAVE GUESSED AT AN ELEVATION.

MR. SPECTER. DID YOU HAVE AN IMPRESSION AS TO THE SOURCE OF THE THIRD SHOT?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. THE SAME. I WOULD SAY THE SAME.

MR. SPECTER. DID PRESIDENT KENNEDY MAKE ANY STATEMENT DURING THE TIME OF THE SHOOTING OR IMMEDIATELY PRIOR THERETO?

GOVERNOR GONNALLY. HE NEVER UTTERED A SOUND AT ALL THAT I HEARD.

MR. SPECTER. DID MRS. KENNEDY STATE ANYTHING AT THAT TIME?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. YES; I HAVE TO--I WOULD SAY IT WAS AFTER THE THIRD SHOT WHEN SHE SAID, "THEY HAVE KILLED MY HUSBAND."

MR. SPECTER. DID SHE SAY ANYTHING MORE?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. YES; SHE SAID, I HEARD HER SAY ONE TIME, "I HAVE GOT HIS BRAINS IN MY HAND.

MR. SPECTER. DID THAT CONSTITUTE EVERYTHING THAT SHE SAID AT THAT TIME?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. THAT IS ALL I HEARD HER SAY.

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MR. SPECTER. DID YOU OBSERVE ANY REACTION BY PRESIDENT KENNEDY AFTER THE SHOOTING.

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO; I DID NOT SEE HIM.

MR. SPECTER. DID YOU OBSERVE ANY REACTION BY MRS. KENNEDY AFTER THE SHOOTING?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. I DID NOT SEE HER. THIS ALMOST SOUND INCREDIBLE, I AM SURE, SINCE WE WERE IN THE CAR WITH THEM. . . . BUT I COULD NOT SEE INTO THE BACK SEAT, SO I DIDN'T SEE EITHER ONE OF THEM.

R. SPECTER. DID YOU OBSERVE ANY BULLET OR FRAGMENTS OF BULLET STRIKE THE WINDSHIELD?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO.

MR. SPECTER. DID YOU OBSERVE ANY BULLET OR FRAGMENTS OF BULLET STRIKE THE METAL CHROME?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO.

MR. SPECTER. WHEN DID YOU FIRST KNOW YOU WERE WOUNDED IN THE RIGHT WRIST?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. WHEN I CAME TO IN THE HOSPITAL ON SATURDAY, THE NEXT MORNING, AND I LOOKED UP AND MY ARM WAS TIED UP IN A HOSPITAL BED, AND I SAID, "WHAT IS WRONG WITH MY ARM?". AND THEY TOLD ME THEN THAT I HAD A SHATTERED WRIST, AND THAT IS WHEN I ALSO FOUND OUT I HAD A WOUND IN THE THIGH.

MR. SPECTER. WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF THE EXIT WOUND ON THE FRONT SIDE OF YOUR CHEST, GOVERNOR?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. I WOULD SAY, IF THE COMMITTEE WOULD BE INTERESTED, I WOULD JUST AS SOON YOU LOOK AT IT. IS THERE ANY OBJECTION TO ANY OF YOU LOOKING AT IT?

THE CHAIRMAN. NO.

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. YOU CAN TELL YOURSELF. . . . THE BULLET WENT IN HERE--SEE IF I PROPERLY DESCRIBE THAT--ABOUT THE JUNCTURE OF THE RIGHT ARM AND THE SHOULDER.

MR. SPECTER. LET THE RECORD SHOW THAT THE GOVERNOR HAS REMOVED HIS SHIRT AND WE CAN VIEW THE WOUND ON THE BACK WHICH HE IS POINTING TOWARD.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. I WONDER IF I MIGHT ASK A QUESTION?

THE CHAIRMAN. GO RIGHT AHEAD.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. THIS IS A LITTLE BIT OFF THE SUBJECT, BUT IT IS PRETTY WELL ESTABLISHED THAT THE GOVERNOR WAS SHOT AND HE HAS RECOVERED. DO YOU HAVE ANY REASON TO BELIEVE THERE WAS ANY CONSPIRACY AFOOT FOR SOMEBODY TO ASSASSINATE YOU?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NONE WHATEVER.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. HAD YOU EVER RECEIVED ANY THREAT FROM LEE HARVEY OSWALD OF ANY KIND?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. DID YOU KNOW HIM?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. HAD YOU EVER SEEN HIM?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. HAVE YOU EVER HAD ANY BELIEF OF, SUBSEQUENT TO THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND YOUR OWN INJURY, THAT THERE WAS A CONSPIRACY HERE OF ANY KIND?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NONE WHATEVER.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. WHAT IS YOUR THEORY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. WELL, IT IS PURE THEORY BASED ON NOTHING MORE THAN WAS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE. . . . I THINK YOU HAD AN INDIVIDUAL HERE WITH A COMPLETELY WARPED, DEMENTED MIND WHO, FOR WHATEVER REASON, WANTED TO DO TWO THINGS; FIRST, TO VENT HIS ANGER, HIS HATE, AGAINST MANY PEOPLE AND MANY THINGS IN A DRAMATIC FASHION THAT WOULD CARVE FOR HIM, IN HOWEVER INFAMOUS A FASHION, A NICHE IN THE HISTORY BOOKS OF THIS COUNTRY. AND I THINK HE DELIBERATELY SENT OUT TO DO JUST WHAT HE DID, AND THAT IS THE ONLY THING THAT I CAN THINK OF.

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YOU ASK ME MY THEORY, AND THAT IS MY THEORY, AND CERTAINLY NOT SUBSTANTIATED BY ANY FACTS.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. GOING ON AGAIN, GOVERNOR, AND AGAIN USING THE WORD "THEORY," DO YOU HAVE ANY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS NY CONNECTION BETWEEN OSWALD AND RUBY?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. I HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THERE WAS; NO, CONGRESSMAN.

ALLEN W. DULLES COMMISSION MEMBER: YOU RECALL YOUR CORRESPONDENCE WITH OSWALD IN CONNECTION WITH MARINE MATTERS, WHEN HE THOUGHT YOU WERE STILL SECRETARY OF THE NAVY?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. AFTER THIS WAS ALL OVER, I DO, MR. DULLES. AS I RECALL, HE WROTE ME A LETTER ASKING THAT HIS DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE BE CORRECTED. . . . I HAD RESIGNED AS SECRETARY OF THE NAVY A MONTH BEFORE I GOT THE LETTER, SO IT WOULD REALLY TAKE A PECULIAR MIND, IT SEEMS TO ME. TO HARBOR ANY GRUDGE AS A RESULT OF THAT WHEN I HAD RESIGNED AS SECRETARY PRIOR TO THE RECEIPT OF THE LETTER.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. YOU HAVE NO DOUBT ABOUT THE FACT THAT HE WAS DELIBERATELY TRYING TO HIT YOU?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. YES, I DO; I DO HAVE DOUBT, CONGRESSMAN. I AM NOT AT ALL SURE HE WAS SHOOTING AT ME. I THINK I COULD WITH SOME LOGIC ARGUE EITHER WAY. THE LOGIC IN FAVOR OF HIM, OF THE POSITION THAT HE WAS SHOOTING AT ME, IS SIMPLY BORNE OUT BY THE FACT THAT THE MAN FIRED THREE SHOTS, AND HE HIT EACH OF THE THREE TIMES HE FIRED. HE OBVIOUSLY WAS A PRETTY GOOD MARKSMAN, SO YOU HAVE TO ASSUME TO SOME EXTENT AT LEAST THAT HE WAS HITTING WHAT HE WAS SHOOTING AT.

ON THE OTHER HAND, I THINK I COULD ARGUE WITH EQUAL LOGIC THAT OBVIOUSLY HIS PRIME TARGET, AND I THINK REALLY HIS SOLE TARGET, WAS PRESIDENT KENNEDY.

MR. SPECTER. GOVERNOR CONNALLY, IN 1963 WE WERE INFORMED THAT LEE HARVEY OSWALD PAID A VISIT TO AUSTIN, TEX., AND IS SUPPOSED TO ALSO HAVE VISITED YOUR OFFICE. DO YOU HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE OF SUCH A VISIT?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO, SIR.

REPRESENTATIVE BOGGS. ...WOULD YOUR OFFICE RECORDS INDICATE SUCH A VISIT?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. IT MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT, CONGRESSMAN. WE HAVE THERE A RECEPTION ROOM THAT IS OPEN FROM ABOUT 9:30 TO 12 AND FROM 2 TO 4 EVERY DAY, AND DEPENDING ON THE TIME OF THE YEAR THERE ARE LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE WHO COME IN THERE.SO FOR ME TO SAY HE NEVER WAS IN THERE, I COULDN'T DO THAT; AND HE MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN THERE, AND NO RECORD OF IT IN THE OFFICE.

MR. SPECTER. ...WHAT RECOLLECTION DO YOU HAVE, IF ANY, OF THE EVENTS ON THE WAY TO THE HOSPITAL FROM THE ASSASSINATION SCENE?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NONE REALLY. I THINK AT THAT POINT I HAD LOST CONSCIOUSNESS...

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MR. SPECTER. ...DO YOU KNOW OF ANY EVENTS OR OCCURENCES EITHER BEFORE THE TRIP OR WITH THE PRESIDENT IN TEXAS DURING HIS TRIP, OR AFTER HIS TRIP, WHICH COULD SHED ANY LIGHT ON THE ASSASSINATION ITSELF?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NONE WHATEVER.

MR. SPECTER. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY CONVERSATIONS INVOLVING

ANYONE AT ALL...WHICH WOULD SHED ANY LIGHT ON THE FACTS SURROUNDING THE ASSASSINATION?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NONE WHATEVER.

MR. SPECTER. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO ADD WHICH YOU THINK WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE COMMISSION IN ANY WAY?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO, SIR; MR. SPECTER, I DON'T.

I WANT TO EXPRESS MY GRATITUDE TO THE COMMISSION FOR HEARING ME SO PATIENTLY, BUT I ONLY WISH I COULD HAVE ADDED SOMETHING MORE THAT WOULD BE HELPFUL...

SENATOR COOPER. WERE YOU AWARE AT ALL OF ANY SOUNDS OF RIFLESHOTS FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE OVERPASS, FROM THE EMBANKMENT?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY SHOTS FROM THE OVERPASS, SENATOR. SENATOR, I MIGHT REPEAT MY TESTIMONY WITH EMPHASIS TO THIS EXTENT, THAT I HAVE ALL MY LIFE BEEN FAMILIAR WITH THE SOUND OF A RIFLESHOT, AND THE SOUND I HEARD I THOUGHT WAS A RIFLESHOT, AT THE TIME I HEARD IT I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS A FIRECRACKER, OR BLOWOUT OR ANYTHING ELSE. I THOUGHT IT WAS A RIFLESHOT. I HAVE HUNTED ENOUGH TO THINK THAT MY PERCEPTION WITH RESPECT TO DIRECTIONS IS VERY, VERY GOOD, AND THIS SHOT I HEARD CAME FROM BACK OVER MY RIGHT SHOULDER, WHICH WAS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SCHOOL BOOK DEPOSITORY, NO QUESTION ABOUT IT. I HEARD NO OTHER. THE FIRST AND THIRD SHOTS CAME FROM THERE. I HEARD NO OTHER SOUNDS THAT WOULD INDICATE TO ME THERE WAS ANY COMMOTION OR DISTURBANCE OF SHOTS OR ANYTHING ELSE ON THE OVERPASS.

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MR. DULLES. GOVERNOR, WERE YOU CONSULTED AT ALL ABOUT THE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE DALLAS VISIT?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO, SIR; NOT REALLY; NO, SIR; AND LET ME ADD WE NORMALLY ARE NOT.

MR. DULLES. I REALIZE THAT.

SENATOR COOPER. MAY I ASK A RATHER GENERAL QUESTION? I WOULD LIKE TO ASK, IN VIEW OF ALL THE DISCUSSION WHICH HAS BEEN HAD, WAS THERE ANY OFFICIAL DISCUSSION OF ANY KIND BEFORE THIS TRIP OF WHICH YOU WERE AWARE THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME ACT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE PRESIDENT?

GOVERNOR CONNALLY. NO, SIR.

(END PARTIAL TEXT)

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