

23 NOV 1964
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500 WARREN-SECRET SERVICE
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, NOV. 23 (AP)-THE SECRET SERVICE AGENT RIDING IN THE FRONT SEAT OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY'S DEATH CAR NEVER CONSIDERED VAULTING INTO THE BACK TO SHIELD KENNEDY AFTER HE HEARD THE SHOTS THAT STRUCK THE PRESIDENT.

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VAULTING INTO THE BACK TO SHIELD KENNEDY AFTER HE HEARD THE SHOTS THAT STRUCK THE PRESIDENT.

SPECIAL AGENT ROY H. KELLERMAN SAID HIS ONLY THOUGHT WAS TO "GET THIS MAN TO A HOSPITAL, BECAUSE HE NEEDED MEDICAL TREATMENT."

KELLERMAN--IN CHARGE OF THE PRESIDENT'S FATEFUL VISIT TO DALLAS LAST NOV. 22--SAID THE LOW METAL BAR SEPARATING HIM FROM PRESIDENT AND MRS. KENNEDY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH HIS DECISION TO REMAIN UP FRONT FOR THE RACE TO PARKLAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

KELLERMAN, 43 AND THE FATHER OF TWO DAUGHTERS, REVEALED HIS THINKING IN TESTIMONY BEFORE THE WARREN COMMISSION LAST MARCH, MADE PUBLIC TODAY. SECRET SERVICE AGENT CLINTON J. HILL, MRS. KENNEDY'S BODYGUARD, ALSO TOLD THE COMMISSION HOW THE PRESIDENT, ON THE MONDAY BEFORE, HAD INSISTED THAT AGENTS NOT RIDE DURING THE MOTORCADES ON THE METAL FOOTRESTS BUILT INTO THE BACK OF THE PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE.

KELLERMAN, QUESTIONED BY ASSISTANT COUNSEL ARLEN SPECTER, TESTIFIED:

"AFTER I HAD HEARD PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S VOICE SAY, MY GOD, I AM HIT, I VIEWED HIM, WHICH WAS ENOUGH FOR ME THAT HE WAS. MY DECISION WAS TO GET THIS MAN TO A HOSPITAL, BECAUSE HE NEEDED MEDICAL TREATMENT. AND DURING THE FEW SECONDS THAT I INSTRUCTED THE DRIVER TO GET OUT OF HERE, WE ARE HIT, MY SECOND INSTRUCTION WAS TO THE MAN IN THE LEAD CAR AHEAD OF US. . . TO LEAD US TO A HOSPITAL, HAT WE ARE HIT.

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"I THEN TURNED AROUND, AND I HAD TWO PEOPLE INJURED. NOT ONLY WAS THE PRESIDENT DOWN IN HIS SEAT; THE GOVERNOR WAS DOWN IN HIS SEAT. MY PRESENCE BACK THERE WAS GONE. (SIC) ON TOP OF THAT, I HAD MR. HILL LYING ACROSS THAT TRUNK."

KELLERMAN WAS ASKED WHAT HE MEANT BY "MY PRESENCE BACK THERE WAS GONE."

"THEY WERE COMFORTABLE, IF THERE IS A COMFORT IN THIS," THE 23-YEAR SECRET SERVICE AGENT REPLIED. "MR. HILL WAS TAKING CARE OF MRS. KENNEDY. MRS. CONNALLY WAS OVER THE GOVERNOR; THERE WAS NO MOTION. THE NEXT THING WAS A DOCTOR, SIR."

KELLERMAN WAS THE ONLY WITNESS IN THE CAR TO TESTIFY THAT KENNEDY EXCLAIMED, "MY GOD, I AM HIT."

TESTIFYING THAT HE HEARD WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS THE POP OF A FIRE-CRACKER, KELLERMAN SAID HE TURNED HIS HEAD TO THE RIGHT AND "I HEARD A VOICE FROM THE BACK SEAT AND FIRMLY BELIEVE IT WAS THE PRESIDENT'S, 'MY GOD, I AM HIT,' AND I TURNED AROUND AND HE HAS GOT HIS HANDS UP THERE LIKE THIS...

"WHY I AM SO POSITIVE, GENTLEMEN, THAT IT WAS HIS VOICE--THERE IS ONLY ONE MAN IN THAT BACK SEAT THAT WAS FROM BOSTON, AND THE ACCENTS CARRIED VERY CLEARLY."

HILL TOLD THE COMMISSION OF THE HANDHOLDS AND FOOTRESTS ON THE BACK OF THE LIMOUSINE--ESPECIALLY INSTALLED FOR THE AGENTS TO MOUNT AND USE WHEN NECESSARY.

MINUTES BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION, HE SAID, HE MOUNTED THE BACK OF THE CAR TO PROTECT MRS. KENNEDY AS THE LIMOUSINE SLOWED TO GO THROUGH THICK CROWDS IN DOWNTOWN DALLAS.

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THEN HE RETURNED TO THE RUNNING BOARD OF THE FOLLOWUP CAR, WHERE HE REMAINED UNTIL THE SHOOTING.

"IT IS LEFT TO THE AGENT'S DISCRETION MORE OR LESS TO MOVE TO THAT PARTICULAR POSITION WHEN HE FEELS THAT THERE IS A DANGER TO THE PRESIDENT," HILL TESTIFIED.

"THE PRECEDING MONDAY, THE PRESIDENT WAS ON A TRIP IN TAMPA, FLA., AND HE REQUESTED THAT THE AGENTS NOT RIDE ON EITHER OF THOSE TWO STEPS."

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