

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, you spoke to them and told them that you had talked to Jack, but that was after you knew Jack had shot Oswald?

Mr. PAUL. No—I told them that he called me on Saturday night a few times.

Mr. HUBERT. But did you tell them that before you knew that Jack had shot Oswald or after?

Mr. PAUL. After.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, Mr. Paul. I don't believe we have talked about anything today that has not been made a part of the record, is that correct, sir?

Mr. PAUL. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. I certainly thank you for coming again, Mr. Paul.

Mr. PAUL. Okay—my pleasure.

TESTIMONY OF HARRY TASKER

The testimony of Harry Tasker was taken at 7 p.m., on August 24, 1964, at the Federal Building, Forth Worth, Tex., by Mr. Leon D. Hubert, Jr., assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. HUBERT. This is the deposition of Harry Tasker.

Mr. Tasker, my name is Leon Hubert. I am a member of the advisory staff of the general counsel of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. Under the provisions of Executive Order 11130 dated November 29, 1963, and the joint resolution of Congress, No. 137, and the rules of procedure adopted by the Commission in conformance with that Executive order and that joint resolution, I have been authorized to take this sworn deposition from you.

I state to you that the general nature of the Commission's inquiry is to ascertain, evaluate and report upon the facts relative to the assassination of President Kennedy and the subsequent violent death of Lee Harvey Oswald.

In particular, as to you, Mr. Tasker, the nature of the inquiry today is to determine what facts you know about the death of Oswald and any other pertinent facts you may know about the general inquiry and about Jack Ruby and his operations and movements and so forth.

We are also inquiring into the circumstances of the presence of Jack Ruby in the basement of the police department and his movements and so forth on November 24.

Now, Mr. Tasker, every witness is required by rules adopted by the Commission to have 3-days written notice to appear and give their deposition, but the rules also provide that if the witness is willing, he may waive that written notice and can go ahead and testify.

Mr. TASKER. I guess I can answer your questions or what you want to know—what's the use of waiting 3 days?

Mr. HUBERT. You are willing to testify right now, as I understand?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, will you rise so I can administer the oath.

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give in this matter will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Will you state your name, please?

Mr. TASKER. Harry T. Tasker.

Mr. HUBERT. Where do you reside?

Mr. TASKER. Right now I'm living at 4396 Percy Street, Lancaster, Tex. I've bought me a home out there. It's in Dallas, but my mailing address is Lancaster, Tex.

Mr. HUBERT. What is your occupation?

Mr. TASKER. I drive a taxicab.

Mr. HUBERT. How long have you been so doing?

Mr. TASKER. Two years.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, did you have occasion to be near the Main Street entrance of the Dallas Police Department on the morning of Sunday, November 24, 1963?

Mr. TASKER. I was.

Mr. HUBERT. Would you tell us, please, how you came to be there?

Mr. TASKER. Well, I picked up a news reporter. I've forgot which one of the papers he was with. I don't know whether it was United or—I believe it was United, but I'm not for sure now, which press he was with.

Mr. HUBERT. It was a national press system, was it?

Mr. TASKER. Well, it was one of these reporters with the United Press, I believe. I believe that was it or either the Associated Press?

Mr. HUBERT. You don't know his name?

Mr. TASKER. No; and he hired me to stay with him and I drove around the block there and parked.

Mr. HUBERT. What time did he hire you?

Mr. TASKER. Well, now, that—I've forgotten, sir. It was up around between 9 and 10 o'clock in the morning, I believe now. Now, I might be wrong—now—I won't say.

Mr. HUBERT. So, he hired you to be standing by?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. And you weren't to take any passengers, is that what your duties were?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, no—he paid me for my time and everything.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he tell you where to be so he could reach you?

Mr. TASKER. Yes; he had me to park about at a 45° angle east and north of the entrance of the north entrance of the city hall basement.

Mr. HUBERT. That's the so-called Main Street entrance?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. So, you were parked on Main Street?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you on the same side?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, no—I was on the opposite side.

Mr. HUBERT. And how far from Harwood Street were you?

Mr. TASKER. I was about—I'll say—90 feet.

Mr. HUBERT. Would you say that you were just nearly opposite the Main Street entrance?

Mr. TASKER. No; I was on about a 45°—you know.

Mr. HUBERT. Were there other cars parked the same way there?

Mr. TASKER. Well, you see what it was down there ahead of me was no parking zones and things like that, you see, and there was no one there.

Mr. HUBERT. So you were the only car there?

Mr. TASKER. I was the only one there.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you seated in your car all the time?

Mr. TASKER. Sir?

Mr. HUBERT. Were you seated in your taxi all the time?

Mr. TASKER. Yes; I was seated in my taxi part of the time, and then I went over one time to look for my reporter, you see, because I didn't want to lose him, and that's about all I ever done, and then I go back to my cab.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, if you were sitting in your cab, the back of your head would be toward the city hall, would it not?

Mr. TASKER. No.

Mr. HUBERT. No?

Mr. TASKER. It would be—I was looking straight at the city hall.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, when you say you were parked at a 90° angle—

Mr. TASKER. About a 45° angle.

Mr. HUBERT. A 45° angle, you were parked with the back of your cab near the curb or the front of your cab near the curb?

Mr. TASKER. The back of my cab was to the east. The front of my cab was to the west.

Mr. HUBERT. The back of your cab was toward the curbing on Main Street opposite from the police department?

Mr. TASKER. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. So, in effect, you were on a 45° angle but looking at the Main Street entrance all the time?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Even when seated in the car, is that correct?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, yes.

Mr. HUBERT. How long were you there before the shooting took place?

Mr. TASKER. I don't know, sir; how long I was there. I can't recall just how long.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, do you think it was as long as half an hour?

Mr. TASKER. Well, I imagine I was there longer than that—maybe an hour or so.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you ever leave at all?

Mr. TASKER. No; you see, when you've got a customer, you don't leave your cab.

Mr. HUBERT. Where were you expecting your customer to come from?

Mr. TASKER. He was supposed to come back out the door.

Mr. HUBERT. The Main Street entrance?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, you were looking for him to come out of the Main Street entrance of the jail?

Mr. TASKER. That's right, of the basement.

Mr. HUBERT. Of the basement—yes. Did you see a policeman standing in that entrance?

Mr. TASKER. Yes; there was a policeman.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know his name?

Mr. TASKER. No; I don't.

Mr. HUBERT. Was he in uniform?

Mr. TASKER. Yes; I believe he was—yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Where was he standing?

Mr. TASKER. Well, he was standing about the middle of the opening of the door.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he stand back into the ramp or forward?

Mr. TASKER. Oh—no.

Mr. HUBERT. Just in the ramp?

Mr. TASKER. Just beyond the opening.

Mr. HUBERT. Just beyond the opening and was right in the middle of it?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he move around?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, yes; he moved around—yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Was there a crowd of people there?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Were there people on both sides of the ramp?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. On the Harwood Street ramp as well as the Pearl Expressway ramp?

Mr. TASKER. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. How many people do you think there were on either side?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, I'd say there was a hundred.

Mr. HUBERT. You mean a hundred on each side?

Mr. TASKER. No—no.

Mr. HUBERT. About 50—about equally divided?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. How close were they standing to the Main Street entrance?

Mr. TASKER. As far as from here to that wall.

Mr. HUBERT. As far as from here to that wall—that's about 7 or 8 feet?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Was this policeman having any difficulty with them?

Mr. TASKER. Well, yes, he had a little difficulty now and then. Somebody would try to slip by him and he would hail them and bring them back out.

Mr. HUBERT. Did that happen once or more than once?

Mr. TASKER. It happened a few times—I've just forgotten just how many.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he grab them?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, yes; he just went and got them and brought them back out. He didn't mistreat them or anything like that.

Mr. HUBERT. How would they slip by?

Mr. TASKER. Well, he was probably looking at something on this side and somebody didn't know he was on guard there and walked down there.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, just about a minute or so before the shooting, did you see a car come out of that ramp, come out of the Main Street ramp, out of that ramp, with policemen in it?

Mr. TASKER. There was a car went in, wasn't it?

Mr. HUBERT. You saw a car go in?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. How long before the shooting did that car go in?

Mr. TASKER. I really don't know. It wasn't too awful long.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, how long?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, probably 15 or 20 minutes, we'll say.

Mr. HUBERT. Before the shooting?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. What kind of car was it?

Mr. TASKER. It was one of the police squad cars.

Mr. HUBERT. It had policemen in it?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, yes.

Mr. HUBERT. How many do you remember?

Mr. TASKER. Well, there was three people—three was two policemen and a gentleman in there in civilian clothes.

Mr. HUBERT. And they drove down into the basement?

Mr. TASKER. Down into the ramp—they drove down the ramp.

Mr. HUBERT. Which way did they come from, do you know?

Mr. TASKER. Well, they came from—

Mr. HUBERT. The Harwood Street direction?

Mr. TASKER. I believe they came off of Harwood and made a left turn there on Main Street and went on down in the ramp.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see any other cars go down there?

Mr. TASKER. No.

Mr. HUBERT. Only one?

Mr. TASKER. That's all I remember.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see any car come out?

Mr. TASKER. Well, I seen some cars come out after the shooting.

Mr. HUBERT. No; I mean before the shooting?

Mr. TASKER. No—I don't remember that.

Mr. HUBERT. You don't remember any at all?

Mr. TASKER. I don't remember whether any of them come out or not. It seemed to me like that the policeman was having a problem more so with people coming down on Sunday morning to get their friends and relatives and things like that out of jail after a Saturday night drunk.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, the people that wanted to get in there, you thought had a legitimate reason for going in there?

Mr. TASKER. Yes, but they couldn't come in that door.

Mr. HUBERT. How were you able to tell that, could you hear conversations?

Mr. TASKER. No, but that's the general thing down there on Sunday morning.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you ever go on the other side of Main Street from where your car was parked?

Mr. TASKER. No.

Mr. HUBERT. You always stayed on your own side?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know a man by the name of Nathaniel Daniels?

Mr. TASKER. I don't believe I do.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you know Jack Ruby at all?

Mr. TASKER. No—no, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. You've seen his pictures, of course, since?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, I've seen his pictures.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see him around in that crowd that morning?

Mr. TASKER. No, sir; I never have remembered seeing that man coming up, walking, riding, or anything else.

Mr. HUBERT. You didn't see him coming up Main Street from the Western Union office?

Mr. TASKER. No.

Mr. HUBERT. You didn't see him walking along Main Street?

Mr. TASKER. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see Vaughan come out in the street at anytime to control traffic so the police car could get by?

Mr. TASKER. I believe, sir; he did. I'm not for sure, but I believe one of them come out there to control traffic, and I suppose it was him.

Mr. HUBERT. When did he have occasion to do that?

Mr. TASKER. Well, it was—I think he came out to hold the traffic up so this car could get out.

Mr. HUBERT. Which car was that?

Mr. TASKER. The one coming out of the basement.

Mr. HUBERT. And how long before the shooting was that?

Mr. TASKER. Well, I don't remember whether that was before that shooting or after.

Mr. HUBERT. You don't remember whether it was before or after?

Mr. TASKER. I don't remember that, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. But you do remember that on one occasion at least, that you saw him come out to direct traffic so that this automobile could come out?

Mr. TASKER. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. And you remember only one automobile?

Mr. TASKER. Well, it might have been more, but I don't remember but one.

Mr. HUBERT. Your impression is that what you saw was after the shooting rather than before?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you have any reason for forming that opinion?

Mr. TASKER. No—I've been very—I've always thought the case—I've never talked about the case to anybody, you see, because in the first place, I would implicate myself in something I don't want to be implicated in. I have no part of it and—

Mr. HUBERT. Were you ever interviewed by the FBI?

Mr. TASKER. Sir?

Mr. HUBERT. Were you ever interviewed by the FBI?

Mr. TASKER. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Let me ask you again—did any cars go down in there, say within 5 or 10 minutes before the shooting—go down in there? You said you saw one?

Mr. TASKER. Well, now, sir; it seemed like it probably would have been more than one and it might have been two, but just to remember back that far, I don't remember too much about it no more.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, as I understand it, you would say that there was at least one and possibly two cars that went down in the basement?

Mr. TASKER. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, I'd like, if you could, to fix the time of at least the one and possibly the other?

Mr. TASKER. Well, let me think about it this way—what time in the morning was it he was shot down there? Wasn't it between 10 and 11 o'clock?

Mr. HUBERT. Suppose you figure it was about 11:20?

Mr. TASKER. He got shot around 11:20?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes.

Mr. TASKER. Well—

Mr. HUBERT. I don't know if you can do it by clock time, unless you were watching your watch. You'd have to do it by how much time passed between the time the car went down in and/or came out and the time of the shooting?

Mr. TASKER. Well, sir; it seemed to me like that those cars probably went down there around 20 to 30 minutes ahead of that shooting.

Mr. HUBERT. It's your impression that there was none that went down in there 5 or 10 minutes before the shooting?

Mr. TASKER. No.

Mr. HUBERT. And with reference to the one that came out, you don't know how to fix that at all?

Mr. TASKER. I believe that one came out after the shooting.

Mr. HUBERT. Was that the time that Vaughan stepped out in the street—you think that was after the shooting?

Mr. TASKER. Yeah.

Mr. HUBERT. How did the shooting come to your attention?

Mr. TASKER. I heard it—I heard the fire—I heard the shot.

Mr. HUBERT. And it was after you heard the shot that you saw Vaughan come out and that car come in there?

Mr. TASKER. There was cars come out of there—maybe several cars, but I know of two that come out of there at least.

Mr. HUBERT. After the shooting?

Mr. TASKER. After the shooting.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, put your mind to this—you remember the shooting because your memory still retains the sound of that shot?

Mr. TASKER. Yes; I heard the shot.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, about a minute or so before that, did a car come out of that place?

Mr. TASKER. I believe it did, sir; and I won't swear it to be the truth, but I believe it did, because that policeman had gotten away from that opening for some reason, and he was sort of crouched down so he could see under the curvature of the basement, you know? You know what I'm trying to explain to you? He couldn't stand up straight and see into the basement—you have to crouch down to see what those people were doing down there—he crouched down and pulled his pistol, when he heard that fire.

Mr. HUBERT. No; I was thinking about that automobile coming out of there just before?

Mr. TASKER. Well, I believe that's where that automobile come up there because they got him away from that door, you see.

Mr. HUBERT. You mean—before the shot?

Mr. TASKER. Well, he got away from that door for some reason—just before that happened.

Mr. HUBERT. Just before the shot?

Mr. TASKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see him get away from the door?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, he was just there keeping people back.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, isn't it a fact that the car passed by and he had to get out of the way of the car so it could pass, isn't that it, and that he stepped out and perhaps went at least to the curb and perhaps into the street to look for traffic?

Mr. TASKER. Yes; that's possible.

Mr. HUBERT. But you have no recollection of it?

Mr. TASKER. No—I don't know this, but I believe that at the time that that was all screwed up and the crowd was kind of leaving, they sent him some help out there—a plainclothes policeman.

Mr. HUBERT. That was after the shooting too, wasn't it?

Mr. TASKER. Well, that was a few minutes before the shooting too.

Mr. HUBERT. Why did you think that the man they sent to help him, who was in plainclothes, was a policeman?

Mr. TASKER. Because I know him when I see him.

Mr. HUBERT. What's his name?

Mr. TASKER. I don't know what his name is, sir. I know he's a policeman.

Mr. HUBERT. Was he a white man or Negro?

Mr. TASKER. Yes. When you drive a cab for 2 years and I've been in this town since 1923, you learn the policemen.

Mr. HUBERT. It was your impression that there was a policeman in plainclothes was sent or who came to stand with the man—the policeman in uniform?

Mr. TASKER. Well—and to assist him with that traffic and that crowd, and when the shooting happened, then they called in additional squad cars to come there and help too.

Mr. HUBERT. That plainclothes policeman was there with the uniformed policeman helping him for how long before the shooting?

Mr. TASKER. For probably 15 or 10 or 20 minutes—something like that.

Mr. HUBERT. You don't know his name at all?

Mr. TASKER. No—I don't even know the policeman's name on that door that day. I'd know him if I seen him.

Mr. HUBERT. You think you would know the plainclothes policeman if you saw him?

Mr. TASKER. Well, that, I couldn't say.

Mr. HUBERT. Could you describe him a little bit?

Mr. TASKER. Well, he was a man that weighed about 175 pounds.

Mr. HUBERT. A young man, middle-aged man?

Mr. TASKER. Well, he wasn't particularly a young man. He was a man between 40 or 45 years old.

Mr. HUBERT. How was he dressed?

Mr. TASKER. Well, the best I can remember, I believe he was in a dark suit.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he have a hat on?

Mr. TASKER. I don't believe he did.

Mr. HUBERT. What was he doing to assist the uniformed policeman?

Mr. TASKER. Just keeping the crowd back so that they could get the traffic in.

Mr. HUBERT. In any case, he came to your attention and you recognized him as a man you knew to be a policeman?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you remember where you met him or saw him?

Mr. TASKER. No—just around.

Mr. HUBERT. Was he a detective, you think?

Mr. TASKER. He was a detective.

Mr. HUBERT. You knew him as a detective?

Mr. TASKER. Oh—yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you remember what part of the department he was in—the vice squad?

Mr. TASKER. No; I don't. You see, you meet them, sir, driving a cab. They try to pull stunts on cabdrivers, and that's where you learn them.

Mr. HUBERT. Probably the vice squad then?

Mr. TASKER. You know—they try—I don't want this in the words here—

Mr. HUBERT. Well, that's all right. You actually work for the City Transportation Co., don't you?

Mr. TASKER. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. And their offices are located at 610 South Akard Street?

Mr. TASKER. Yes, sir—South Akard.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you own your cab?

Mr. TASKER. No; they own it.

Mr. HUBERT. You had never met Ruby before?

Mr. TASKER. No—no, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. You never brought any customers to his Carousel Club?

Mr. TASKER. No—in fact, I didn't know he had a place down there. I might have took someone some time down there.

Mr. HUBERT. How long after the shooting did your reporter come back?

Mr. TASKER. Oh, it was probably 20 or 30 minutes and he come and told me he wouldn't need me no more.

Mr. HUBERT. He paid you and you just went off?

Mr. TASKER. Well, he had already paid me. He had given me the money—he had already given me \$10 and he give me a couple more dollars more.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you ever interviewed by the Dallas Police Department?

Mr. TASKER. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Just the FBI?

Mr. TASKER. Just the FBI and they got my name through this reporter.

Mr. HUBERT. The reporter told them about you?
Mr. TASKER. You know, that he had hired a cab.
Mr. HUBERT. He knew your name?
Mr. TASKER. He knew my number.
Mr. HUBERT. When were you interviewed by the FBI?
Mr. TASKER. Oh, I was interviewed, I think, two or three times—the best I can remember—probably—I know twice, it might have been three, but I believe it was just twice.
Mr. HUBERT. It was all right after the shooting?
Mr. TASKER. Once was right after and then there was a little time lapsed.
Mr. HUBERT. Where were you interviewed—in the FBI office?
Mr. TASKER. No; down at the office of the company.
Mr. HUBERT. There was no one else with you that day?
Mr. TASKER. Oh—no—you mean when they interviewed me?
Mr. HUBERT. No; I mean on Sunday the 24th, when you were waiting?
Mr. TASKER. No—no—you mean with me?
Mr. HUBERT. Yes?
Mr. TASKER. Oh—no.
Mr. HUBERT. Do you know anybody else who was around then?
Mr. TASKER. No; I don't.
Mr. HUBERT. You can't recollect any person that you now know who was there?
Mr. TASKER. No; I don't remember seeing anybody I knew—you know—personally.
Mr. HUBERT. Except the plainclothes policeman?
Mr. TASKER. I didn't know them personally.
Mr. HUBERT. No; but you just knew he was a policeman?
Mr. TASKER. Yes; that's right. I've never been arrested in my life, sir, or anything, or any kind of prosecution and so I don't say I know any policeman because I don't have no problems for them to solve.
Mr. HUBERT. All right, sir. I think that's all. Let me ask you this final question—is it not a fact that there has been no conversation between you and me except that which has gone in the record?
Mr. TASKER. Yes.
Mr. HUBERT. Thank you, Mr. Tasker. I appreciate your coming down, sir.
Mr. TASKER. Well, it was an awful thing for that to come to Dallas—I'll tell you that, and I was glad they didn't get me down there on that jury.
Mr. HUBERT. All right, sir. Thank you very much indeed. That's all.
Mr. TASKER. All right. I'm glad I met you.
Mr. HUBERT. I'm glad I met you, sir.
Mr. TASKER. Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF LYNDAL L. SHANEYFELT

The testimony of Lyndal L. Shaneyfelt was taken at 10:45 a.m., on September 1, 1964, at 200 Maryland Avenue NE., Washington, D.C., by Mr. Norman Redlich, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. REDLICH. The purpose of today's deposition is to take the testimony of Lyndal L. Shaneyfelt, special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Mr. Shaneyfelt, you have previously testified in connection with the Commission proceedings on April 23, 1964, and June 12, 1964, is that correct?

Mr. SHANEYFELT. That is correct.

Mr. REDLICH. You still consider yourself under oath?

Mr. SHANEYFELT. Yes; I do.

Mr. REDLICH. You also appeared on one other occasion; is that correct, Mr. Shaneyfelt?