

Upon landing at the airport in San Antonio, Thursday, Nov. 21, we arrived there at 12:30 p.m., exactly 24 hours and a minute before the President was to be shot. Our press plane arrived approximately one hour before the President. We arrived there also before Air Force 2, the plane bearing the Congressmen. We got there in a Pan-American jet, and it had been drizzling or threatening to drizzle in Washington when we got to the White House at 9:30 in the morning and left Andrews Air Force Base a little after 10:30. The big jet sort of loafed along, especially when it reached Oklahoma, cutting down its altitude gradually and bringing us in easily on time at San Antonio. One of the very first things that we noticed there was that newspapers were being sold in front of the San Antonio airport-- the headline of the afternoon daily newspaper bore out the fact that the President already had arrived, and the upper part of the story said that he was greeted by many thousands of cheering people. It was still the better part of an hour before he actually did arrive when I first saw one of those newspapers. Several other newspapermen were remarking to each other that a paper was taking a terrible chance-- a risk, an obvious risk-- in selling newspapers on the street to the effect that the President was already there, greeted by thousands and made his way downtown, through the downtown section before many thousands of cheering people, even before he'd actually gotten there. The Bexar County Democratic Chairman (I have his name in my handwritten notes), while I was standing, talking with Mayor McAllister, came up to the Mayor and thanked him profusely for agreeing to come out and welcome the President. The Mayor being a Republican and having not been invited to come out and greet the President until about 24 hours earlier-- about 2:30, he said, the afternoon before-- which would have been the afternoon of Wednesday, Nov. 20. The Mayor was quite perturbed at the politics of the non-political trip and so, obviously, were the Democrats. There were no county or city leaders of Bexar County and San Antonio on hand to greet the President in the welcoming line, which was remarkably strange, and that was because of the Liberal-Conservative split within the Texas Party. Lyndon Johnson arrived in a separate plane and went immediately to an office in the airport. There he remained from view from the public, and as the Air Force 2 plane, bearing the Congressmen, sat down, they went in one by one or in small groups to talk with the Vice President. Gov. Connally arrived just moments before the President, having been in Houston earlier in the day, I believe to deliver a noontime luncheon address. (check). The central terminal building at the San Antonio airport was crowded, about four people deep, at the picture windows facing onto the apron of the runway when the President and his wife arrived. An outdoor observation platform on top of the building-- the building being a very tall, one-story structure-- people obviously having arrived earlier in the day were about six deep, I would imagine. And as the President and Mrs. Kennedy stepped off the plane, and made their way through the reception line, the crowd on top of the airport terminal building, obviously had come to see Mrs. Kennedy. For they hollered: Here, Jackie; Look here, Jackie; Look over here, Jackie; and as she smiled and waved, there was great applause from the crowd. Mr. Kennedy beamed proudly also. It was a balmy day in San Antonio. Clouds had followed us down from Washington. They broke somewhere around the Red River and became sparser as we neared San Antonio. By the time we got there, there were quite a few flakes of clouds in the sky, but it was a warm, balmy day, a typical winter's day in south-central Texas. It certainly was a long ride from the airport to the point of President Kennedy's speech; The route of the motorcade going all the way into downtown, then out again in another direction; All in all the ride being about 20 miles. After the speech, we were not to come back out to that airport, but went instead to Kelly Field. So far as the

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press was concerned, the most eventful part of the motorcade ride was the reading of the "pool" notes (I have exact names of those in Air Force 1 with the President, in the Press pool). (There were 2 press buses, as there would be in each other cities. The pool notes were read in each, as we moved through San Antonio's streets.) One of the pool men was Jim Mathis, formerly of the Houston Post and, now of Advance New Service, which is the service for the Newhouse newspapers. He scored the hit of the day by having had a private conversation with Sen. Ralph Yarborough in Air Force 1. Yarborough was an invited guest of the President in the President's plane. During the interview, Sen. Yarborough took a wonderful crack at Gov. John B. Connally. When the pool report was read in the bus, the reporters broke out in laughter and cheers at the Senator's rough treatment of the Governor. This wasn't because the reporters were on one side or the other-- or any side at all-- but this was good copy, the feud. The liberal-conservative fight was clearly on, despite the fact that President Kennedy had come to make peace between both factions. A fairly strong wind was blowing when the President mounted the platform outdoors to make his speech in San Antonio. The discomfort of the Party split and the wind had its affect, I believe, on him and the people on the platform. They looked quite a bit uncomfortable. In San Antonio, Sen. Yarborough was scheduled to ride in the same car with the Vice President, Mrs. Yarborough and Lady Bird John. The Senator refused to ride in the car and rode instead in another one. The President was unhappy. Because of the hit Mrs. Kennedy was making in San Antonio, the male reporters were anxious to get a description, an accurate description, of what she was wearing. And so the stewardesses on the Pan-Am press plane helped us quite a bit, and so did Marianne Means of Hearst. Certainly not to be forgotten in San Antonio was the recollection of Albert Thomas of Houston, standing on the apron of the runway, waiting for the President to arrive, with Jack Brooks. Mr. Thomas, who was only to be the guest of Honor at President Kennedy's address to be made that evening in Houston, had been left off the President's plane when it left Washington. What happened was (I have notes on this), the Air Force placed Albert Thomas on Air Force 2 with the rest of the rest of the Congressmen. He said that happened because the generals were in charge of it instead of the sergeants. It was another political backfire as the Presidential tour got under way in Texas. When the speech was concluded in San Antonio, as the reporters hurried back into the press buses, and the Congressmen got into their open cars, the President and his lady remained at the side of the platform from which the President had spoken. They let themselves be besieged by people anxious to shake their hands and ask for autographs. Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy remained there several minutes, completely inundated by people happy to see them up close. It was late in the afternoon of Thursday when our big plane lumbered into the skies over Houston, circling the city and setting down at the airport. We land just moments before Air Force 2. The crowd there was sizable. It ran into the several hundreds. It was not typical Houston weather. It was not very humid at all. It was balmy, as it had been in San Antonio. It obviously had been a warm afternoon. There was a roped off area for reporters and photographers to stand, facing the reception line, and as soon as the President and his party had passed through the reception line, I ducked under the rope and went to the place where Senator and Mrs. Yarborough were standing. On my way, I passed by the car set aside for Vice President and Mrs. Johnson. Mrs. Johnson gave me a big friendly wink and a big "hi." The Senator and his wife were standing two cars back. The Senator was looking terribly uncomfortable. I asked him about the reports that he had refused to ride with the Vice President in San Antonio. "That's a mistake," he said. Having just said it, he looked even more uncomfortable than as a man-- an official of the motorcade-- came up to him and said: "Senator, you are scheduled to ride with the Vice President, You and Mrs. Yarborough." "That must be yesterday's schedule," said the Senator. He said: "There have been some changes."

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I think you'll find there's another schedule." And the man began to protest somewhat helplessly with the Senator. But just then, A Texas House member came along, from further back in the motorcade cars, I think it was Albert Thomas, and said to the Senator that there was another place for him and Mrs. Yarborough to ride (check seating in Houston motorcade). There was no more trouble with the man and his motorcade list. There never were many anti-Kennedy signs in Texas. I have notations on most of those seen at the sides of the streets. However, there were even fewer in Houston than there had been in San Antonio. The long ride in from the airport to downtown Houston was very pleasant and at times the sides of the road were quite packed with people. The mezzanine of the Rice Hotel was adequately set up for the press. There was a large room with a bar in it and a table laden with fine things to eat. I went to a nearby room, though, having first talked to some of the people on the Houston Press, and went to work in a room which typewriters and good press facilities set up. I wrote and then dictated a story to Washington. The story was the story of the day. It was the story of political backfires and bad timing on the Presidential tour. Originally the President was scheduled to leave the Rice Hotel for the Albert Thomas dinner at 8:30 (check). However, it was announced after we got to the Rice Hotel, by Presidential press aide Malcolm Kilduff (Fierre's second assistant who was handling all press chores on the trip), that Mrs. Kennedy would make an appearance with her husband on the mezzanine of the Rice at a meeting of the LULACs (check). The President and his lady arrived there about 8:40. They were running late. The Governor was among those who had spoken to the members of the LULACs in the room before the President and Mrs. Kennedy arrived. Mrs. Kennedy's voice was thin. It was cultured. But with both of those, it was also very warm as she spoke in Spanish to the LULACs and they replied in kind with a tumultuous ovation. Since the press was crowded into a position behind the platform and off to the platform's side in the room, at the door through which the President and Mrs. Kennedy would arrive, I got away from the crowd and walked down the hallway on the mezzanine floor and was standing against the wall, waiting for the Kennedys, as they walked past me. The President turned to me, smiled and said "hello." The tenor of the trip seemed to change from the moment Mrs. Kennedy made her brief her brief remarks in Spanish. We hurried to the coliseum, which is about six blocks away from the Rice Hotel, and the President was greeted by a great ovation there. The trip was now a happy one. The President brought down the house with what appeared to be a slip of the tongue, when he described a payload in the NACA operations going off into space from the station in Houston as being "payroll." The diaz at the coliseum was elevated. Looking at it from the front, from where all the dinner viewers could see it, it appeared as though the people at the diaz were seated in a normal way, but actually, below and behind the diaz-- there were steps leading down to an area obscured from public view. It was curtailed off. In that area, stood the President's protectors-- the members of the Secret Service-- incase a fanatic tried to come up from behind. It was a basic protective step, but one which the public really doesn't realize is in effect. Jiggs Fauver stayed behind with us, in order to give the press enough time to file stories by telephone and overhead. The Presidential party and attendant Congressmen flow off in Air Force 1 and 2. We left about an hour after they did. (check prior story, before trip, when Pierre at briefing, tried to convince White House reporters this was a non-political trip, even to the Albert Thomas dinner, which broke up the reporters). A trip like this is a drinking trip. When we got on the plane at Andrews, even before the plane began to taxi, bloody mugs were handed out all around, and that was at about 10:30 in the morning. The reporters did a little bit of drinking and whatever work was essential on each phase of the flight. You are keyed up. You are on the go. The drinks are pick-me-ups. Nobody gets drunk, even when the drinking gets heavier late in the day. We arrived at Carswell air force base in Fort Worth

and went by bus to the Hotel Texas. The President had arrived there about an hour before us. There still were many people in the streets at the side of the hotel and the lobby itself was packed. It was 12:45 a.m. by the time I got up to my room and got my luggage. I had fully intended to go to the Press Club, accepting several invitations from people in the lobby-- old friends-- and especially then to go on to the Cellar. I had promised to take Felton West to the Cellar. But I saw another pair of old friends on the fifth floor, as I was going to my room-- Bill Fawcett and his wife. They asked me to stop off and have a cup of coffee with them in the coffee shop on the lobby floor, first. We sat at a table with Congressman Jim Wright, Texas Attorney General Waggoner Carr and Mrs. Carr. Also present was Cliff Carter of the Vice President's staff. Ralph Yarborough was upstairs in his quarters, holding a closed meeting with his liberal supporters. (He also was called in by the President and told that if he did not ride with Lyndon Johnson the next day in Dallas, he could walk.) Pretty soon the Governor came into the coffee shop and sat down at a table two tables away from ours and he began holding forth in a conversation with a small group of reporters, off the record. He was asked about politics in Texas and was asked extensively about the rift between the liberal and conservative forces. During this conference, he explained that historically a man, if he wanted to get into politics at all in Texas, would be a Democrat until only the most recent of years (roughly after 1955), and that there were many shades of Democrats. What appeared to be a major fight to reporters from the East actually was standard procedure in Texas. Besides belittling the rift, among Democrats, he also said that Barry Goldwater of Arizona had reached a zenith in Texas and that the election next year would certainly be a close one but that President Kennedy would ultimately win. The Governor went back upstairs shortly after two o'clock in the morning. Henry Gonzalez was another Congressman in the coffee shop talking to his friends. Felton West came in and had bacon and eggs, and asked if I would go with him to the Cellar. I told him I'd had a little too much of a day, so he went on by himself. By dawn the skies were weepy. The President originally was supposed to speak to a large Chamber of Commerce breakfast on the mezzanine of the Hotel Texas. But there had been so much insistence on the part of people in Fort Worth from all walks of life-- Jim Wright had prevailed upon the President earlier in the week to step outside and be seen at least by the crowd. The President agreed to go even further and said that he would speak before the breakfast in the parking lot across the street from the Hotel Texas. Hundreds packed into the area. Though it was raining, they began seeking good standing room positions even before dawn. With Jackie again getting a wonderful ovation, the President departed from his text, inside the hotel, saying he felt as he had he had felt in Paris. That he was the man who was Mrs. Kennedy's husband. Governor Connally called a press conference to be held in another room on the mezzanine as soon as the President's address at the breakfast was ended. During that press conference he answered for the record many of the same questions which had been asked of him off the record earlier in the morning in the coffee shop. The Governor's press conference had not been on the agenda previously, and so we didn't have much time then to get to the press buses and depart in the motorcade for Carswell air force base, and an unusual flight-- from Fort Worth to Dallas. The side entrance, the 8th Street entrance at the Hotel Texas, was so packed with people waiting for President and Mrs. Kennedy to come out that door, I decided to go out the main entrance, the Main Street entrance, and work my way around. As I was going around, I paused to shake hands with several old friends, faces which I hadn't seen in the past year and a half, two years or longer. I worked my way out to the middle of 8th street, shook hands with Paul Rosenfield briefly as I passed by him, and was still turned around smiling at him when my foot stepped into a large pile of horse manure. It was no longer raining. In fact the sun was out by now. I had my raincoat on my arm and held an envelope full of notes, and my portable typewriter, as I slipped in the manure. The fall was

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broken by my left hand which landed squarely in the pile of stuff. This was next to the President's car. This was a matter of great delight to the Texas Congressmen who were on hand. A number of them-- four or five anyway-- got out of their cars and came over to me. Henry Gonzalez and Olin Teague both making quite a point of the fact that no matter where I go, I step in it. Malcolm Kilduff, the assistant to Pierre Salinger, rushed up to me and said angrily that I was not going to be able to get on the press going out to Carswell Air Force Base. He said you'll have to sit on top of the press bus unless you can somehow wash that smell off. Kilduff was in a great mood that morning, because he had been among those who had gone to the Collar during the early morning hours. The President's departure route, going to Carswell, had caused quite a stir in Fort Worth. We went out Henderson Avenue to Jacksboro Highway to White Settlement in the hanky tonk region. One of the White House reporters spotted a couple of women standing alongside the road as we were on our way to Carswell and said: "Men, I ~~xxxx~~ think we've just passed a couple of hustlers. No, No, it couldn't be this early in the morning. Couldit? " Being in Fort Worth was just as I'd feared it would be. I got a look at faces just in passing. One example was a large fork lift brought to the side of the road as we were preparing to turn off Jacksboro onto White Settlement. Sitting on the fork lift were Harry Rubin and George Levitan. They were elevated to about a two-story level. They were sitting up there, laughing and waving. I had been married in Mr. Levitan's house 11 years earlier. It had been raining in Dallas earlier in the morning also. As we flew in, making one large circle in a 10-minute flight, the sun was out. The crowd ~~xx~~ at Love Field was by far the largest we had seen. Once down, the President and Mrs. Kennedy broke ranks and walked along a wire fence shaking hands with dozens and dozens of people, and it seemed almost immediately as if the people in Dallas were out to convince the President and his wife that they wanted no part of the Stevenson affair or the affair a couple of years ago (1960) with Vice President and Mrs. Johnson (then Sen. majority leader) downtown. The crowds that lined the motorcade route, going downtown first and then out to the Trade Mart, were ~~ixrxix~~ larger than they had been in Houston, although Houston has more people. This was due in part largely to the fact that this was lunchtime. It was on our minds-- the feeling that there could be some sort of violence, or a show of aggravation toward the President or the Administration. The reporters on the press bus (I was on the second of the two press buses this time) were talking about the fact that we were due to go past Gen. Edwin Walker's house as we went down Lemon Ave., but that proved to be false. However that consumed quite a bit of time in the discussion among the reporters. They were also taken with the fact that there were mighty few anti-Kennedy signs along the motorcade route. One of the signs was : John Kennedy in 1964. And on the other side, it said: Barry Goldwater in 1964. As we turned into the downtown canyon, there was just a whale of a lot of people. It was later estimated that a quarter-million people were on hand to see the Presidential party, counting those at the airport and those lining the route leading into downtown, as well as downtown itself. They were standing sometimes 10 deep at the curb, especially in the Akard and Ervay areas of Main Street. I had a window seat. There was no one sitting next to me. There was a man sitting directly behind me at a window seat (see notes for his name). He was talking to me about President Kennedy's plans with the Democratic National committee. Now, this man should not have been with the White House Press group. He rode on the press plane and was designated as a member of the White House staff. However, he was just taking a freeloader ride because he was going to vacation in Oklahoma. (I was exercising the Washington cocktail party technique with him. I was listening to what he said, I was thinking that he would be a subject for an expose ~~xxx~~ piece because of his ride at taxpayer expense. I was looking out the window for friends on the crowds on the packed streets. A three-way activity while giving the appearance of just listening.) He was a member of the Democratic Natl Committee.

I saw two faces of old friends as we passed on Main Street in the vicinity of the Times Herald, to the north on Field. I saw Charlie Gates and the business columnist. The man was saying that it wasn't public knowledge yet but it would be announced fairly soon, President Kennedy was going to make a fund-raising appearance in each ~~stx~~ of the 50 states. His appearance in Austin scheduled for later that day would be the first. Texas would be the first, and 49 more would be conducted, leading up to the campaign of 1964. We were then in front of the Dallas County Jail Building, emerging around the corner, onto Houston Street which is bordered on the left by Dealey Plaza (on the west, the county jail being on the east). (the man behind me was going to take a vacation; a hunting trip into Oklahoma, I believe. Check notes.) Precisely at that moment, I heard two shots in rapid succession, separated by about four seconds. The first shot, I did not hear for we must have been still coming just around the corner when it happened. There was not instantaneous concern. A reporter sitting across the aisle from me, who was banging out a story of the President's speech to be made at the Trade Mart moments later. He was working from a prepared text. Scarcely looked up. Some of the reporters said that it had been a pair of backfires despite the loudness of them. However, I looked onto the grassy hill near the triple overpass at the end of Dealey Plaza (the northwest end) and I saw a woman in a green dress struggling to run up the hill. I saw a man following her quickly and knocking her down. He lunged and grabbed her at the waist and pulled her down to the ground. It seemed to me she had fired the shots I had just heard because by now I was convinced they had been shots. There was an emotional outburst on the bus right at that point. We saw much panic on the grass at Dealey Plaza. I saw a man drop to his knees, huddling two children-- two small children-- pounding the ground with a fist. To our right, on the other side of the bus, people were still standing, waving flags, smiling cheering, not realizing what had happened in the handful of seconds just past. Our bus moved a few feet more and the faces of the people were changed. There were people by now screaming, pushing, beginning to run. We took off at a high rate of speed. The reporters in the bus were yelling to be allowed to get off the bus. I could see the photographers' pool car stopped, just at the far end, under the triple overpass, as we reached that point. Photographers were scrambling out, running back toward the Texas School Book Depository Bldg. It did not occur to any of us, concretely, that moment or during the hectic ride to the Trade Mart that anything specifically had happened to the President. It seemed to us perhaps that someone in the crowd had been hurt, or that the Secret Service had seen fit to fire on somebody for one reason or another. No one voiced any opinion that the President had been hit. We sat almost silently as the bus took us at a high rate of speed out Stemmons, having swung onto Stemmons from the triple overpass, I would say at about between 60 and 75 miles per hour. Those people we passed-- at the side of Stemmons-- had a strange look, a doubtful look, a look of surprise and disappointment. We didn't know that the President wasn't ahead of us. Those people did and they didn't know what had happened. We brought to the side of the Trade Mart. We were emptied out of the buses. It was then we realized that something tragic really had happened because we were there all alone. We burst into a small, side doorway of the Trade Mart. A policeman, or two policemen stationed there, didn't want to let us in. We insisted. When we got past a small lobby and got inside, on the edge of this massive hall where hundreds of luncheon diners were waiting for the arrival of the President, we realized (with soft music playing and the rustle of plates and silverware) that no one in that massive place knew yet that anything had gone wrong. (appeared to know). We asked about press facilities. We didn't ask. We were excited. We were demanding. We told to go to a press room on the fourth floor. We expected there to get an announcement. We ran up the moving stairs of an escalator (it seemed plausible that when we got there, we would be ushered into a balcony area, reserved for the press, so we could see the President make his speech and know that he was all right. We thought perhaps someone else might have been hit or nearly hit).

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When we got to the press room on the fourth floor, we found facilities there for telegraph. There were no phones available that we noticed. If there was a phone, it was in use. We charged back down again, down the escalator, two, three steps at a time. People on the edge of the luncheon audience saw us running around and laughed at us. They thought we were perhaps what they had pictured to be the harried, hustling, hurrying White House press-- Eastern reporters, unable to relax like Texas reporters perhaps-- as if they pitied us for not relaxing as one should do in Texas. One of the reporters had the presence of mind to call the police station instantly (where my presence of mind was, I don't know. I knew the town, the police, the newspapers.) I saw reporters clogging a small bank of phones. I assumed they were phoning their papers to tell their city desks that there had been shots and something had gone wrong. I didn't know why they were phoning when we had no knowledge of what had happened. It was my all-time prize mistake in judgment. The reporter who got through to the police, turned to us. He spoke calmly, so the rest of us could understand clearly, but not loudly, so as not to panic anyone passing by. He said Chief Stevenson (actually a sub-chief under Chief Curry) told him that the President had been shot and had been taken to Parkland (Memorial) Hospital. With that, I hollered at friends of mine from the press corps and told them to follow me, because I knew the area and could get to Parkland quickly (how, I didn't know). I expected to charge out and get a cab. If a cab even had been there, anyone could have gotten in and asked to be taken to Parkland. You didn't have to know the area for that. A bystander-- I never did find out his name-- said if we needed a car, he had one. I hollered at a couple more people. I think there were seven of us altogether. We ran to his car. It was a station wagon. We piled in. He took us from the Trade Mart to Parkland at breakneck speed, at times going against traffic having his horn wide open. The President had been fatally shot at 12:31. At 12:55 we were at the hospital. The only reporters there ahead of us were those four in the pool car which had been up close to the President. The man in the station wagon drove us to the emergency entrance. As we jumped from his station wagon, we were scant feet away from the President's car. The two right-hand doors of the car were open. There were crushed red roses on the back seat. There was a pitiful trail of blood, leading from the backseat of the car to the sidewalk at the emergency entrance. Standing right there, looking at it, as if unable to move-- transfixed-- was Senator Yarborough. I talked to him, asked him what happened. By and large he told me it was something too horrible (see notes). The Senator's voice was husky and quavering. I managed to get into the hospital with a policeman's help. The officer had seen me talking to the Senator. I showed my White House card. I was never more insistent in my life about having to get into a place. He escorted me inside. I got a phone immediately across from the emergency surgery area door. I was the first reporter into the hospital, aside from the four pool men who already were in and on phones. I called Washington and was dictating a first-person account. The wire service were minutes ahead of me. I concentrated on Yarborough's feelings of sight and sound. I saw the priest go into the emergency area, the door being guarded by a somber-looking Secret Service man with a small white button in his lapel, designating his role as a Secret Service man. I saw Mrs. Johnson, shaken, white, being escorted out of the area, supported by the arms of two men. She looked as if she would be ill in another moment. I finished phoning, went again into the hallway. Albert Thomas and Henry Gonzalez were standing together near the main emergency entrance doorway, leading to the outside. I asked if they could tell me anything more. Neither one seemed able to talk. Albert Thomas, who only the evening before had been so lavishly praised by the President at the Houston testimonial dinner, and who had been urged earlier in the year by the President not to retire from Congress at the end of 1964 because of ill health, was able to tell me that a neurosurgeon had been brought in. I realized then that the President had been shot in the head (a fact that most of the nation already knew because the pool reporters saw the head wound at about 12:30, when the President was brought to the hospital emergency entrance.

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At that moment, Malcolm Kilduff, a tragically changed person from what he had been the last time I'd talked to him, in Fort Worth less than three hours earlier, came walking briskly past my rear and said he had an announcement to make and to follow him. Merriman Smith of JPI and a couple of other reporters (Al Gromley of the Oklahoman Washington Bureau was one) came along at the same time. We went out the emergency entrance, turned to our left, walked onto the grass, turned left again around a corner of the building, walked up a slight grassy hill, climbed over a short fence rail and went into another entrance of the Hospital. Heading toward a stairway, I felt a tug at the back of my coat. This was the Jack Ruby incident. Going up the grassy hill, Merriman Smith was pleading and demanding that Kilduff tell us then and there what the announcement would be. Kilduff strode quickly and said we would have to wait. Kilduff's face was grayish when we got into a second-floor classroom. It was jammed with reporters. He stood behind the desk at the head of the classroom, in front of a wall blackboard, his fingers extended, spread on the desk-top, supporting him, wetness rolling down his face. Tears or sweat. He made the announcement in measured tones, his voice verging on breaking down toward the end of it. There was an immediate rush for telephones. He said there would be a further statement in another 10 minutes or so. He fixed the time of the President's death at "about 1 p.m." I went off an office down the hall and placed a call to Washington. It was difficult getting a line out of the hospital. The nurses in this office-- there were a handful-- seemed to be stunned-- and they looked at each other dreadfully as they listened to my conversation to Washington. A western union man who had been with us since we came down from Fort Andrews Air Force Base came into the office. A nurse asked him about a report that a Secret Service agent had been killed out on the street. He said that it was true. This was one of the immediate rumors which sprung up. It took several days for this particular rumor not to be believed in Dallas itself (fellow in Jaggars-Chiles-Stovall who got it from a friend who got it from a postman supposed to have been at the death scene that the shot and bleeding SS man was picked up and whisked away and it was all hushed up. Why? I asked. Because they even have to die in secret, he said.) He and others hinted that maybe the SS man was in on the plot to kill the President.) My office, by now, primarily was interested in what would happen to Lyndon Johnson. Would he remain in Dallas for minutes, hours, a day perhaps, or even for the weekend? It was a matter of from where the U.S. would be run. The office would send Jack Steele to Dallas to be with me in the event that the Vice President would remain for any length of time at all. Steele was already home, packing. (When I walked outside at about 1:25 with Kilduff, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson were going out, too, under heavy guard. They looked wretchedly grim. LBJ thought the chances were good that he too would be a target in the next few minutes.) Steele would be covering the events surrounding the new president. I would be covering the police angle. It was curious to me, when Egger said that, I had given no thought as to who did this thing or why, though more than an hour's time now had elapsed, except for the feeling of revulsion I had for the Dallas rightwing extremists ~~ix~~ when I learned in the Trade Mart that Kennedy had been shot. I fought back words I want to scream, while running for that station wagon. God damn you, Dallas. Smug Dallas. God damn you. It was all the worse because sat in the Trade Mart in a gay and festive mood. By now, the classroom, the makeshift press headquarters, was jammed. It was as if city editors had reached out and hurled people into the hospital. There was Bob Galt, the bowling writer, Elston Brooks, the entertainment columnist, Latryl Layton, the society editor-- all good and capable anyway, but oddly gathered. These were people I knew well and hadn't seen in at least 18 months. We looked through each other. Nothing much showed on the outside. ~~ixixixix~~ The reporters were bleeding internally with tears. They dripped into the stomach. They splattered in their ~~wixxpx~~ and made puddles of grief. A doctor came into the room-- at least everybody thought it was a doctor. It was Bill Stinson, ~~an emergency surgery on Connally~~. AS he came in Kilduff almost pinned him to the blackboard and said to him two times: "One O'clock. One o'clock."

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(description of Kilduff making his first announcement at 1:30, standing behind the desk-- it was not so much the whiteness in his fingers as he pressed them on the desk top, or the look on his face. It was the color of his eyes. They are a rich blue. But they were now pale, the blue and whiteness running together in a milky way.) Although Stinson explained immediately that he was not a doctor, the first questioners, perhaps the first two or three, called him doctor as they addressed him. Stinson came with the announcement that the Governor was in extremely serious condition, but would live. Julian O. Reed, doing public relations for the Governor (on hand since the San Antonio stop) explained on the blackboard for reporters where the Governor and Mrs. Connally and the President and Mrs. Kennedy were sitting in the car. They took a couple of different tries-- with the help of Bill Stinson-- in getting the seating arrangement down right for the reporters. Stinson described the Governor's wounds. There was an announcement that a pool car was needed to go out to Love Field, and since there was no explanation in depth as to why only a handful of reporters left, I ran down the stairs with them. I decided, by the time I got downstairs that without knowing what the purpose was, it would be foolhardy to go out. This pool car was the one which went out to attend the swearing in of the new President in Air Force One. I talked to Henry Gonzalez, outside the hospital. He was clutching a paper bag, and barely able to talk. He said the the bag contained the personal effects of Gov. Connally. He said he had just seen Mrs. Kennedy leave with the body of the President. He had helped her into the hearse. Returning to the upstairs press headquarters, after talking with Sen. Yarborough, Mayor Earle Cabell and other Texas Congressmen, I found the two doctors who had worked on the President-- one on his head and one on his throat-- were describing the condition of the President as they found it and as they had worked on it. They spoke almost entirely without emotion and answered each question, except that they obviously-- pinched by the pressure-- didn't understand the relentless probing of reporters, hammering questions in an effort to get every last detail and get it reduced to the simplest of terms. The two were almost cutting in their answers. Jiggs Fauver announced that soon we would be going to Love Field. Kilduff was no longer there in the press room. I was concerned with getting my luggage off the plane because I knew I would be staying at least for some hours. We entered the press buses and received a police escort going out. There were already (clock time) scores and scores of people standing, staring at the hospital, as if they could see something, as if something could be done. It was the same at Love Field when we arrived there, except that people were much farther back from being able to see anything than they were at the hospital. Our bus was held at the edge of the runway because the engines of Air Force One were being revved. The plane was beginning to taxi. As soon as it taxied into a position ready for takeoff, one of the members of the press corps from the Love Field pool (Sid Davis-- Westinghouse) ran up to us and stood on the hood of ~~the~~ a car and explained everything that happened during the swearing-in inside the plane, just moments before. I then went to the Pan-Am press plane and got my bag off. The stewardesses looked odd. I then went into the Love Field Terminal and phoned my office in Washington. (explain difference between Scripps-Howard and wire service). I told my office was heading for the jail downtown and that Lyndon was sworn in and was heading back. I rode downtown with Andy Hanson, photographer for the Dallas Times Herald and with Bob Hollingsworth, my former city editor on the Times Herald who now was the paper's Washington Correspondent and had pulled his bag off the plane, too. We had the radio on, going downtown, and it was

the first I'd heard that a man named Lee Harvey Oswald had been arrested and that a policeman had been shot down dead, and that Oswald had a history on the extreme left, rather than on the extreme right. This was by now about 3:15 (check notes), or about 2 hours, 45 minutes after the President was shot and two hours after Oswald was captured (nearly two hours) in the Texas Theater. I got out of the car outside the Times Herald Bldg and stood on a corner on Elm Street, trying to find a cab and there were none. Waiting 10 minutes, I set out with my bag, portable typewriter, coat and envelope of notes for the Dallas police station, a distance amounting ~~xxx~~ to the west-to-east length of downtown Dallas, about a mile (the area of downtown which hold all the large buildings). I checked into the White Plaza Hotel, put my belongings into a 10th floor room and went immediately to the police station across the street (city-corner on Harwood). There was no excitement downtown. There was no outward emotion. There was no weeping. There were no speeches. People were in the streets, waiting in line for buses, in their cars, walking. There were grim looks almost everywhere. Stores were open. I had trouble getting onto the third floor of the police station. I had to show my credentials in order to be allowed into the hallway which by now was clogged with reporters-- a new set of reporters, for only a few of us took our belongings off the press plane and stayed. Most were going back to Washington. I only had two recollections of Lee Harvey Oswald. The first one was in 1960, while I still was on the Fort Worth Press. He was a fellow who had been in the Marine Corps, I'd remembered and had gone to Russia, I'd remembered. Kent Biffle had arranged a three-way telephone conversation in 1960 among himself, Oswald in Russia and Oswald's mother in Fort Worth. Now, it took several hours to arrange the call trans-Atlantically and trans-continentially and get the call into Russia to where Oswald was. At times it seemed it would be impossible to get the call through, but at last the call was ready and Mrs. Oswald was on her line in her home and Kent Biffle, sitting directly across from me at the Press city desk, was on his phone, and here came Oswald on his phone in Russia. As soon as Oswald found out that it was his mother on the phone in Fort Worth and it was a newspaperman who had set this thing up, so she could talk to her son, Oswald hung up. All those hours down the drain. The other recollection I had was that at some point last year there were stories in the papers that Oswald was coming home. I clipped out a story from the Fort Worth Press stating that he was due home at such and such a time. I thought that should he come to Washington to straighten out his papers or his affairs, ~~xxx~~ I would want to talk to him. But to my knowledge, he never did come to Washington. There were dozens of reporters clogged in that hallway, which stretched from an entrance way where the elevators (two of them) opened up on the third floor, to the press room at the end of the corridor. In between, starting at the entrance way area was a door which led to an elevator going to the jail cells upstairs where Oswald was being kept at intervals. A couple of doors down on the same side, the right-hand side (east side) was the homicide office, where Capt. Will Fritz holds forth. Next door was forgery & robbery, then auto theft, then the press room. That hallway was to remain clogged with the humanity of reporters for the next three days. The hallway was about 25 yards long from entrance way to press room (the southwest wing of the third floor is what it was). I stayed pretty much in touch with my office in Washington-- perhaps three phone calls-- until shortly after midnight when the Oswald press conference was held in the police assembly room. One old acquaintance who I saw was Vince Drain of the FBI and in subsequent conversations as the hours wore on, Vince told me that he was flying the two Oswald guns to Washington sometime during the night or early morning hours. I

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also learned from Vince that there had been two bullets which had hit the President. I assembled these and other facts for a story for Saturday's papers and in subsequent conversations with Chuck Eger in Washington, I tried to put the germs of a story together but Eger felt the story would become clearer as time went on-- it would take more facts which would have to hold up for Saturday. My facts were fine for spot news. They were new. They were good scoops. But they wouldn't up through Saturday. I was working hours ahead of the news now, as a goal for a story. At intervals, Oswald's wife was brought in and his mother, and his two small children, along with Mrs. Ruth Paine to do the interpreting, and her two children. Oswald himself was led at intervals between the elevator-cell floor and Fritz's door. Each time Oswald passed through the hallway, an aisle was cleared wide enough for him to walk, with no extra room. His hands were manacled. He grimly refused to answer questions. Each time Fritz moved from one doorway to the other, when he did not have the prisoner in tow, he was deluged by reporters so thickly gathered around him that he could not be heard beyond the first tight ring of ears around him. People flat against him. Besides, Fritz speaks in a low, rather gravelly voice. A custom was begun almost immediately that the reporters up close would pass the word to reporters behind them. With the number of radio and television people, reporters were being interviewed by other reporters with microphones. During the evening hours, at least one planeload of reporters from the East arrived. New York City and Washington primarily. These included foreign correspondents of foreign newspapers, stationed in the U.S. Chief Curry was more than aware of their presence, and so he held what possibly is one of the most unusual press conferences in police history. In the police assembly room, in the basement, past midnight. At about 12:15 a.m., Oswald was led in. Reporters and photographers had been pre-warned that any movements toward Oswald-- any unusual movements-- any flurry of shouted questions (such as had been going with poor Capt. Fritz) (reporters shouting, yelling, hollering questions, drowning out other questions, drowning out the answers)-- Oswald would be led out immediately. This press conference was something akin, I guess, to something you might conjure up for the Middle Ages. Some thing like a press conference in ancient Rome. After it was over, I typed out a story and phoned it in. It was about 2 a.m. (3 a.m. Washington time). The majority of our staff in Washington was still at work. If I had any apprehension before other reporters did in the bus in the motorcade in Dallas that something had happened to the President when the shot sounds were heard, it was because it was my first Presidential trip and I was more apprehensive perhaps about everything that happened or was about to happen than the veterans. Saturday morning after getting up and having breakfast-- my first solid meal since a good hot lunch on the press plane two days earlier-- (there had been no time or no desire to eat in the eventful hours since then. I felt a substantial weight loss immediately. As I write this (Dec. 28, five weeks later, from notes I taped on a recorder two weeks earlier) I still have not gained back to the weight I was at the start of the trip, Nov. 21). I noticed during the days that followed in Dallas, I had little desire to eat much, and rarely ate more than twice a day, though my work hours often were from early morning until about 9 p.m.; most of it on the constant go). I went next door to the hotel Saturday morning, to Titehe-Coettinger's and bought a couple of shirts, some underwear and socks, brought them to my room and went back to the police station. Chief Curry I think had been interested in showing the new reporters who'd come down from the East Friday night the fact that Oswald was unharmed, except for his skirmish in the

KANTOR EXHIBIT No. 4--Continued

Texas Theater in Oak Cliff while he was trying to resist arrest. Curry was anxious to show that there was no police brutality (perhaps anticipating such a complaint by Oswald in the course of seeking a confession). The Dallas police department was on show for the entire world, especially with television and radio facilities being set up on the third floor. We were not confined to the press room for writing and telephoning, because very few people could fit into the press room. There were three telephones and two desks, as well as a couch, with two typewriters in the room. Police offices on the third floor were overflowing with reporters working on typewriters and using telephones through that whole weekend. The whole dayx was spent in the police station Saturday and almost entirely on the third floor. The questioning of Oswald resumed. There were more rumors. There were more questions shouted continually at Capt. Fritz, who looked tired but who was used to putting long hours to crack a good case. Early Saturday evening, Capt. Fritz said that based on his experience, Oswald will never admit the crime of killing the President. He said, based on his information, though, there is no other suspect besides Oswald and that Oswald was the man who had murdered the President. Not long after, about 8:15 p.m., Saturday, Chief Curry made the announcement that later was to come back and haunt him. He gathered--or merely stepped out into the hallway on the third floor and didn't have to gather-- the press. You could barely breathe in that crowd around the chief. It formed about him in a flash. He maneuvered into a position before the network TV cameras. The crowd there was so large that one reporter was making his notes on the back of Chief Curry. He had his notepad placed on the right shoulder blade of the Chief and was writing as the Chief talked. The Chief said there would be no further questioning of Oswald during the night. He said Oswald would not be transferred to the county jail during the night. He assured us that if we were to arrive by 10 a.m. the next day, we would be able to see for ourselves the transfer of Oswald to the County Jail. He did not guarantee that the transfer would take place at 10 o'clock but he said that we would have time ~~fix~~ to see it if we were there by 10. Discussing this among ourselves immediately after the Chief made his statement, it was generally concluded that Oswald would indeed be transferred during the night. We fully expected it. I don't know of anyone who was planning to have his feelings hurt if such a middle-of-the-night move~~x~~ happened. (next notes-- include Ruby's appearances Friday and Saturday night, the chicken letters, the overwhelmed reporters staring at each other)

KANTOR EXHIBIT No. 4--Continued

By Saturday night, the executive offices of the police department on the other end of the third floor corridor (the southeast wing) were filling up rapidly with mail, telegrams from all parts of the country. Telephone calls were being noted on legal-sized paper note pads. There was correspondence and phone calls from many parts of the world. From Australia. From England. From other countries. Some was in nature of criticism of the Dallas police department for allowing the assassination of the President to happen in Dallas. Some came from amateur sleuths. Sweet old ladies in Des Moines and so forth, who had their own theories as to how to trap Oswald into the admission that he was the assassin, or how to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that he was it, whether he'd ever admit it or not. One letter suggested that the police examine Oswald's teeth. The remains of fried chicken-- the chicken bones themselves-- were found by the cardboard boxes at the sixth floor window of the Texas School Book Depository Bldg. Whoever had eaten that lunch would have traces of fried chicken between his teeth. Another suggestion was that Oswald's stool should be carefully examined. This might have branded Oswald forever in the history books as the chicken shit killer of President Kennedy. In 17 years as a reporter, I had found myself in a number of curious situations, but none quite like this. I've never been in a place where reporters frequently stood staring at each other or sat staring at each other at interludes, uttering only one or two words at each other, such as: In-cred-ible, or unbelievable. There was exhaustion in the faces of the reporters. There was an atmosphere of despair, despite the quick pulse of action that throbbed the third floor hallway, hour after hour. By the second day especially, Saturday, the effects of the assassination had set in. It was, even among the reporters who were working hard and were fully occupied, it was hard to accept that which had happened. We were strangely isolated. I didn't know whether Connally was alive or if he were alive, how he was doing. I didn't know if Air Force One ever landed in Washington, or was President Johnson in seclusion. I didn't know what happened to President Kennedy's remains except that they had been headed for Bethesda Naval Hospital, a few blocks from my home. I didn't know what life existed two blocks beyond the police station. I wasn't calling any friends. There was no time. More, there was no thought of them. My office had called my wife Friday and told her I wasn't coming home immediately. I still hadn't talked to my wife. I called her late Saturday morning. She was out with the children. I talked instead to my mother who lives in Washington. I was wholly interested in any movement, any thought, any word on that third floor. I talked to my wife briefly Saturday evening from the Dallas police station, told her little and didn't ask for any news beyond how she and the children were doing. For me, at least, the third floor of that 50 year old building, newly, tastefully done over on the inside, was the only place where life existed in the world. I didn't ask my office for any other news. I doubt if there was a reporter there who had not been at one time or another on a police beat. It was a return to that type of story again, except that any police story before, for any of us, was just a preparation for this one. There were many questions still to be asked of Oswald. Many tests yet to be given to him. In an effort to unravel the mystery of why John Kennedy was murdered. But of all the tests to be denied by the next day's brutal slaying of Oswald was one that was inevitable-- a psychiatric test. When aroused, I wondered, would Oswald slam his fist on the table three times, shout a word three times in anger, kick at a door three times. There had been three shots fired into the President's car. There had been three shots fired into Officer J.W. Tippit (ask a psychiatrist what a series of 3 means).

Late Saturday for our Sunday papers, I did a piece on Detective Capt. Will Fritz, his background and his role in the job of breaking the case, along with the difficulties Fritz faced, as an occasional question from an FBI man or an assistant district attorney burst the bubble that Fritz had been carefully building around Oswald. Fritz strikes you as being of the Charlie Chan school. His expression is immobile. It rarely changes. He shows few emotions. He is very even man under great stress. It was possible, during the course of Friday and Saturday to walk into the chief's office, talk with him or a high-ranking assistant. By Saturday it was clear to the reporters that there were no other prime suspects in jail and no other prime suspects being sought, for the crime itself. When Oswald was led down the jammed corridor, the reporters nearest him often would holler: Why did you kill the President? Why did you kill the President? Reporters rarely are that emotional. I never saw it before, except in a press box at a college football game, among provincial sports writers who can't keep themselves from rooting for the home team. One time Oswald shouted back that he was being denied his basic rights to have a shower. His basic hygienic rights, as he put it. Chief Curry appeared touchy about this. He soon told reporters that Oswald could have a shower any time he needed one in the regular jail shower room. Another time, Oswald shouted for attorney John Abt, who frequently handles cases for Communists in America, John Abt of New York City. Get me Abt. Oswald wanted Abt for his attorney. Another time, a reporter shouted a question at Oswald, asking why Oswald had written to Connally when Connally was Navy Secretary, asking Connally to get his discharge from the Marine Corps changed to an honorable discharge. Oswald hollered back over his shoulder, as he was led into the jail elevator doorway: I don't know what kind of newspaper reports you are getting but these are not true. He was defiant. He looked alert at all times. In his profile, he was sharp-featured. Full-faced, he had a cunning look. He looked like Bobby Darin in the full face. That fact ~~xxxx~~ shaped my opinion of what Oswald was like in his looks. Two months earlier (check dates) in Washington, I had witnessed the riots of the young Communist sympathisers who had gone to Cuba against State Department orders-- the riots inside and out of the House Un-American Activities Committee hearing room, and attended their own nighttime rally which was undermined by George Lincoln Rockwell's nazis. Two days of riots. Their timing was precise as they were carried off by police individually. They appeared to wait until they got into the best camera angles and before enough reporters to scream and become martyred. This was Lee Harvey Oswald. He was living the part of a martyr. I don't recall ever before having such a consuming desire to go out and get drunk as I did Saturday night. I hoped that somewhere a package store would be open or somewhere perhaps a bar would be open where I could sit quietly and take care of this need. To my astonishment, I found many bars open downtown. In one, four doors down from the city's main intersection of Commerce and Akard, a block from where hundreds had stood at Main and Akard just the day before to cheer the President in his last moments alive, I went in. I found the juke box playing, people dancing, people at the bar laughing. It was Saturday night and the place was open for business. I walked past the Carousel, the Jack Ruby place, and as he had mentioned to me the day before, it was closed. Two other nearby strip joints, however, were open. I went into one and stayed a few minutes. Business was off. I will say that. But there were happy drunks there, barking at the gals to take it all off. Though I went several places and put as many beers down into me as I could hold, I could not begin to get drunk. I found myself wishing only now that every bar in town were closed.

KANTOR EXHIBIT No. 4--Continued

Earlier Saturday night, it must have been about 6 o'clock, I was aware that a boxful of sandwiches had been placed in the press room. They were good cold meat sandwiches and the reporters made short work of them though I didn't take one. I didn't know how they got there. It was the next afternoon that I learned that Jack Ruby had brought them in. It also was the next afternoon that I learned that Jack Ruby had been in the police assembly room Friday night with the reporters who stood on tables and the photographers who bunched into the plainclothes guards at the front of the room surrounding Oswald. Sunday afternoon, District Attorney Henry Wade was to say to the press that Jack Ruby was present Friday night during that strange press conference "I understand," or "I am told." A New York City radio reporter, Ike Pappas, corrected Henry and said that he (Pappas) had been talking with Ruby in the assembly room and Ruby had given him a card and had invited ~~xx~~ him to be his guest in the Carousel when it ~~xxxx~~ reopened. Pappas still carried the card in his wallet. Said that he brought Ruby over to the District Attorney and that the D.A. seemed to know Mr. Ruby. Henry smiled but gave no answer (after first saying that Ruby was mistaken for being a reporter). In fact, starting with Sunday afternoon, you no longer could find a policeman in town who said that he knew Ruby or, if he knew Ruby, that he liked Ruby. Thought I'd been checked for identification the first time I got on the third floor Friday afternoon, at such times as I went up and down the elevators from then on through Saturday night, I was never asked again to show identification. It wasn't because I was recognized, it was because there were so many reporters milling around-- so many new faces, so many people arriving from all sorts of distant points in America. Dallas was caught flat-footed. Dallas still was a polite place to be and the police were cooperating as much as possible. Much more than would be expected, certainly. Also, as I spoke to others on the telephone-- Oswald's employer, Oswald's housekeeper-- they were polite and agreeable to answer everything that they could. Being there, seeing the assassination scenes of President Kennedy and Lee Harvey Oswald unfold before my eyes through the long weekend, was exceedingly strange because of the isolation. Millions and millions of people were watching the events and subsequent events on television screens and hearing them on radio sets. I saw nothing on TV, heard nothing on radio and didn't know what was happening beyond where I was. It was much like fighting a battle in a war. People back home read extensive reports of the extent of the battle and its meaning in relationship to the rest of the war, while the foot soldier there has no idea what anything means beyond that piece of ground which he can see. I was in fact so certain Sunday morning that Oswald had been moved during the night to county jail that I slept late, showered, had a leisurely breakfast, read two Sunday newspapers while eating, and looked out the hotel window for the first time, after finishing eating in the first floor restaurant, and to my surprise saw people waiting outside the city jail. I knew then that Oswald had not yet been transferred. It was now about 10:40 a.m. I left my newspapers at the hotel desk, went across the street, up to the third floor, found that there were not many people there, took an elevator to the basement, which was the starting point of the transfer. There, I encountered difficulty. A uniformed officer asked for my identification. (I went over all of this later on for the Dallas police and the FBI at their requests) I showed the officer my White House press pass. That meant nothing to the officer. He called a detective over. The detective said my identification was perfectly all right. Had he too turned me down, I would have fished out my Dallas police and Texas Dept. of Public Safety press credentials. They were outdated. ~~4~~

I was allowed to join the rest of the reporters. I saw Bob Fenley of the Dallas Times Herald standing in the office of the basement, used to book incoming prisoners. I took up a position with him and Capt. Jones of the Dallas police came along subsequently and told us we'd have to vacate that area. Along with us were a handful of reporters, plus one network television camera setup. I think CBS. They were taking extra precautions of course. Taking no chances. They wanted all reporters and cameras in one area, where they could keep a close eye on them when Oswald appeared. He would be coming down the jail elevator into the booking office, through there and out into the basement driveway area. I urged Bob to move very slowly. We did. In fact we were the last to leave. I was in hopes that while we were delaying, Oswald would be moved down the elevator. We didn't miss it by much. We got into the driveway area and were there not more than four minutes I guess when someone shouted here he comes. Fenley and I stayed togeth during this whole period of time. (diagram) It never was official and may never become official but the police apparently, according to what they themselves later were saying unofficially, were planning not to take Oswald in the armored vehicle that was waiting at the end of the Commerce Street ramp. Instead they would put him into one of the two cars, the green one or white one which were driven into position at the last moment, and rush him out the Main Street ramp, using the armored car as a decoy. They were apprehensive about an attempt on Oswald's life. They expected this could occur outside the police station or en route through the downtown streets or at the arrival point at the county jail. Capt. Fritz had intimated the day before that he was against the transfer. Since this was a Dallas city police matter, it would make it difficult to transport witnesses back and forth and Oswald back and forth for continuous questioning and tests and so forth. I felt certain that more shots would be fired after Ruby fired his weapon. Not necessarily as part of a plot or anything like that. There was mass confusion for at least a minute-- one of those minutes in which an eternity of thought and movement occurs. The police were agitated. Capt. Jones shouted to a uniformed guard at the Main St. end of the ramp-- no one leaves this place. The guard swiveled into a gun-firing position, aiming down into us. I saw one detective, after wrestle to the concrete floor and dragged into the booking office (where Oswald was carried) by a small platoon of police-- this detective's eye red and wet, due to the utter frustration of the thing. Fenley and I ~~xxx~~ did what the other reporters did, depending on where they were standing when the shooting occurred, tried to run, foolishly I guess, but that's where the story was, tried to run to where the man who had done the shooting was brought down to the concrete. We tried to move from there into the booking office. A plain-clothed officer, studying us as if we may have planned to do some shooting ourselves, ordered us not to move and ordered us back against the driveway area railing. We were bunched and crowded. We were shouting and the officers were shouting and they would not let us move. The police were caught in their own trap now. The two cars and the armored car were blocking the attempts of an ambulance to get in to remove Oswald to Parkland Hospital. When the ambulance was brought in, it was brought to the point where Fenley and I stood. Oswald was carried out of the booking office on a stretcher and was placed inside the ambulance, his head exactly at the point where I was standing, looking in at him. He looked gravely injured. His mouth was open, rigidly. His face was a pasty gray. His ~~xxx~~ nose pointed upward then it bobbed toward his left shoulder. Then ~~xxx~~ again. I thought a policeman had shot Oswald. During the first ~~xxx~~ believe there were policemen there who believed a reporter had shot Oswald. About 12 minutes elapsed before we could move into the

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public elevator area of the basement, told to go to the third floor where Chief Curry would have statements to make. We were not asked for identification upon getting to the third floor, but the executive wing of the third floor for the first time was blocked off by three uniformed officers, standing shoulder to shoulder. Fenley and I took up a position in front of the three and there we waited. As it turned out Chief Curry had nothing to say to the press and made no move from his office for two hours. But we stood in one place the whole time. (check notes for exact amount of time). Meanwhile two detectives who had been less than a foot away from Oswald when he was shot talked to us about what they saw and did. (according to the masterpiece photos by Jack Beers and Bob Jackson, one of the detectives, standing immediately on Oswald's right, didn't see Ruby making the fatal lunge. The other was Jack Combest, who reacted with a shout instead of physical action, as Ruby brushed past his arm in making the lunge.) Bob Jackson was standing with us during the wait for Curry's announcement. He didn't know he had the picture that probably is a Pulitzer Prize winner and will certainly become an all-time classic in American photo journalism. He, like Beers, fired his camer at that moment because he thought Ruby was a radio reporter, thrusting a ~~xx~~ slender hand microphone at Oswald. Jackson shot his picture before the "radio man" blocked his line of vision. When Curry was ready, he came from his office without a word. By the look on his face, it was instantly easy to tell that the entire complexion of this story was now changed. We followed him down into the police assembly room. I rode in the same elevator with him. He said nothing. He took up a position in the front of the room. There were delays while cameramen got into position and while the television people got set up exactly the way they wanted to, and then it was very disappointing. The chief spoke for a matter of seconds. Less than a minute. His announcement was that Lee Harvey Oswald had expired at 1:07 p.m. He said he had no further statements at this time. He started to unhook the "wire necklace" which held a small microphone on his tie at the breastplate. He was deluged with requests to repeat what he had just said for the television cameras. He was deluged with questions from reporters, shouting again. He did say he felt that Oswald was the guilty man. He was obviously physically unable to say anything more. He was the very picture of a despondent man. Here was a picture of profound sadness-- the face of Jesse Curry. The boner of the Dallas police department would rank now with the building of the Maginot Line by the French to keep the Germans from marching into their country during World War II, when the Germans merely went around the thing. Remember the picture of Frenchmen crying in the streets of Paris then. Only the tears were missing from the tragedy on Curry's face. We learned that great cheers went up from the hundreds of people standing outside the Dallas county jail at the other end of downtown, when it was announced to them that Oswald would not be coming for he had been shot in the police station. I have spoken to other people since who have witnessed the shooting on television. They said their first reactions were ones of great happiness. I think it took many people many minutes to realize the gravity of the murder of Oswald. In the police case of John Wilkes Booth, there was ~~xxxxxxx~~ little doubt about Booth's reasons for murdering a President. There was extreme doubt about whether Booth was subsequently killed or lived on for many years after. It was an opposite police case now. There was no doubt that the man charged with the murder of President Kennedy was now dead but the mystery would be why he shot and killed a President. Through the afternoon as the attorneys and prospective attorneys came-- there was Droby, and Droby's wife at home with the anonymous threat on her life, there was Tom Howard. There were Martin

(Jim Martin) and Fred Bruner. There was George Senator who came in, talkatively, holding an expansive press conference for 10 minutes before the police realized he was there and they whisked him away for questioning. There was Mrs. Eva Grant, grimly, sadly, shakenly, still recovering from major surgery. She was overcome, unable to talk with the mad pack of reporters who by now were like the (find word), the antagonistic free-lance photographers of Rhome. There was an utterly heart-broken Capt. Will Fritz. There was an unsmiling, tight-lipped Jack Ruby now being led down the corridor through the packed humanity of reporters, just as Oswald had walked the bony path in the hours before. And there was overwhelming revulsion. I felt the internal bleeding of tears agin, as there had been in the hospital two days earlier. This would be the easiest story of all for me to write now. It was the story of seeing a onetime friend of mine kill the man charged with killing the President. A story of recollections of what Jack Ruby was all about as I remembered him from my newspaper days in Dallas. There was a second story to write that evening also, based on the statements of Henry Wade. Vince Drain of the FBI was back from Washington with the two Oswald weapons. He arrived in the police station about 20 minutes after Oswald was killed. By Sunday evening, in the police assembly room, Henry Wade made a detailed statement of the "hard" facts uncovered by the FBI in their laboratory studies of the weapons in Washington. I accompanied Henry down the stairs. We didn't take the elevator. He gave out at least one piece of erroneous information during his press briefing, which went all over the world and was believed-- which was that Oswald's fingerprints were on the metal baseplate of the rifle which had killed the President. Instead, Oswald's fingerprints were found on the paper wrapping which had been around the gun. Wade had been asked by the FBI and the Dallas police not to make a long public statement regarding the facts uncovered by the FBI, but he went ahead anyway. Friction sprung up among the police elements, their feelings already frayed in the wake of the national tragedy. By Sunday night, despite the darkness, there were cars from Dallas, cars from all over Texas, cars from the nearby states driving slowly past the place where the President had been shot. A macawber procession of cars that lasted long into the night. Traffic was backed up for blocks. The procession would last for days. By Monday, I got beyond the White Plaza Hotel-- police station Harwood corner area in daylight for the first time. I went to the Dallas county jail and was able to see from there the flowers mounting at the side of the street at the spot of the Kennedy assassination. When I walked to that spot, someone standing there had a portable radio and taps was being sounded in Arlington Cemetery for the President as he was being laid to rest. At that moment, people in Dallas on a sunny, clear day, were laying more simple bunches of flowers and more wreaths on the grass where I stood. As I had known Chief Curry ~~xxxx~~ I knew Sheriff Bill Decker and his assistants. But there was a different atmosphere. Decker welcomed reporters into his office, but was very firm in his demarkation of rules. In this next two week period, I was to do a lot of walking, a lot of traveling into the areas where Ruby and Oswald had lived. I was to talk to many people downtown and in outlying areas whose paths had crossed with the two infamous men. I was to spend very little time-- a matter of minutes and all of that on the telephone-- with my old acquaintances. Social friends whom I knew well. Two people I did take time to see were attorneys. One because he was in on the very beginnings of the court of Inquiry announced by Texas Atty Gen. Waggoner Carr-- David A. Witts. The other attorney is Pete White, a longtime friend who had a mutual friends of our, and FBI agent (Drain) to dinner on night. Pete talked

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about his preparations for the defense of the young man who is charged spitting on Adlai Stevenson (get date in 1963 and name). Pete said his planned defense now was blown up in the air. He had planned to lay the blame on the Dallas newspapers for creating the atmosphere which made the spitting incident a natural event for the young man. The essence here of Dallas is not among those who were terribly crushed and ashamed, nor is it among the other extremists who had no remorse and felt Dallas was in no way responsible. It was in the vast middle ground-- where I found the people anxious to return to normal as soon as possible in order to have a good Christmas season at the store counters and a healthy mercantile city again. Shopping was off, Monday through Thanksgiving Day. (look to notes for examples) Included here should be the remarkable city council session of Tuesday in which Mayor Cabell and his views (I have those views, his speech) were drowned out by councilmen demanding that a monument be erected in Dallas for President Kennedy-- a physical monument-- missing the point which Cabell was trying to make.



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