

Mr. BELIN. Now, Mr. Romack, you have the right, if you want, to come back down here after these notes of the court reporter are typed, to read the type-written transcript and sign it, or you can waive reading it and signing it and just have her send it directly to Washington, whatever you want to do. It makes no difference with us.

Mr. ROMACK. I will waive.

Mr. BELIN. You want to waive it then?

Mr. ROMACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. Again we want to thank you very much.

Mr. ROMACK. You are quite welcome.

TESTIMONY OF LEE E. BOWERS, JR.

The testimony of Lee E. Bowers, Jr. was taken at 2 p.m., on April 2, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Joseph A. Ball, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. BALL. Will you stand and be sworn, Mr. Bowers?

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

Mr. BOWERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Will you state your name, please.

Mr. BOWERS. Lee E. Bowers, Jr.

Mr. BALL. And what is your residence address?

Mr. BOWERS. 10508 Maplegrove Lane.

Mr. BALL. Dallas, Tex.

Mr. BOWERS. Dallas.

Mr. BALL. And would you tell me something about yourself, where you were born, raised, and what has been your business, generally, or occupation?

Mr. BOWERS. I was born right here in Dallas, and lived here most of my life except when I was in the Navy, at the age of 17 to 21, and I was away 2 years going to Hardin Simmons University, also, attended Southern Methodist University 2 years, majoring in religion. I worked for the railroad 15 years and was a self-employed builder, as well as—on the side. And the first of this year when I went to work as business manager for Dr. Tim Green who operates this hospital and convalescent home and rent properties.

Mr. BALL. What railroad did you work for?

Mr. BOWERS. Worked for the Union Terminal Co. with the 8 participating railroads.

Mr. BALL. And on November 22, 1963, were you working for the Union Terminal Co.?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes.

Mr. BALL. What kind of work were you doing for them?

Mr. BOWERS. I was tower man in the north tower, Union Terminal, operating the switches and signals controlling the movement of trains.

Mr. BALL. Through railroad yards?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes.

Mr. BALL. What were your hours of work?

Mr. BOWERS. 7 to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Mr. BALL. Now, do you remember what is the height of—above the ground at which you worked in the tower?

Mr. BOWERS. It is second story, it is 14 feet, 12 or 14 feet.

Mr. BALL. You worked about 14 feet above the ground?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes.

Mr. BALL. And the tower was arranged so that you could see out?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; it is windows except for posts that—posts on each corner. It is windows on all four sides.

Mr. BALL. Where is that located with reference to the corner of Elm and Houston?

Mr. BOWERS. It is west and north of this corner, and as to distances, I really don't know. It is within 50 yards of the back of the School Depository Building, or less.

Mr. BALL. Did you say that it is built on higher ground, the base of the tower on higher ground than around Houston and Elm?

Mr. BOWERS. Approximately the same.

Mr. BALL. Same? It is higher ground than Elm as it recedes down under the triple underpass?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes, sir; considerably.

Mr. BALL. And the base of your tower is about the same height as the triple underpass, isn't it?

Mr. BOWERS. Approximately.

Mr. BALL. Now, can you tell me why you refer to that as a triple underpass? In our conversation here before you were sworn your description—you described it as a triple underpass.

Mr. BOWERS. It is just a local connotation for it since there are three streets that run under it.

Mr. BALL. I see. And how many sets of tracks do you control from your tower?

Mr. BOWERS. There are about 11 tracks in the station and 2 freight tracks.

Mr. BALL. That would be 13 tracks that is, the tracks altogether, that pass in front of your tower?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; of course where the tracks converge and cross and split off to various railroad yards—

Mr. BALL. And the tracks are to the north and west of your tower, aren't they?

Mr. BOWERS. Well, the tracks are west, but they proceed in all directions, I mean, they are both north and south.

Mr. BALL. Now, you were on duty on November 22, 1963, weren't you?

Mr. BOWERS. That's correct.

Mr. BALL. Close to noon, did you make any observation of the area around between your tower and Elm Street?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; because of the fact that the area had been covered by police for some 2 hours. Since approximately 10 o'clock in the morning traffic had been cut off into the area so that anyone moving around could actually be observed. Since I had worked there for a number of years I was familiar with most of the people who came in and out of the area.

Mr. BALL. Did you notice any cars around there?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; there were three cars that came in during the time from around noon until the time of the shooting.

Mr. BALL. Came in where?

Mr. BOWERS. They came into the vicinity of the tower, which was at the extension of Elm Street, which runs in front of the School Depository, and which there is no way out. It is not a through street to anywhere.

Mr. BALL. There is parking area behind the School Depository, between that building and your tower?

Mr. BOWERS. Two or three railroad tracks and a small amount of parking area for the employees.

Mr. BALL. And the first came along that you noticed about what time of day?

Mr. BOWERS. I do not recall the exact time, but I believe this was approximately 12:10, wouldn't be too far off.

Mr. BALL. And the car you noticed, when you noticed the car, where was it?

Mr. BOWERS. The car proceeded in front of the School Depository down across 2 or 3 tracks and circled the area in front of the tower, and to the west of the tower, and, as if he was searching for a way out, or was checking the area, and then proceeded back through the only way he could, the same outlet he came into.

Mr. BALL. The place where Elm dead ends?

Mr. BOWERS. That's right. Back in front of the School Depository was the only way he could get out. And I lost sight of him, I couldn't watch him.

Mr. BALL. What was the description of that car?

Mr. BOWERS. The first car was a 1959 Oldsmobile, blue and white station wagon with out-of-State license.

Mr. BALL. Do you know what State?

Mr. BOWERS. No; I do not. I would know it, I could identify it, I think, if I looked at a list.

Mr. BALL. And, it had something else, some bumper stickers?

Mr. BOWERS. Had a bumper sticker, one of which was a Goldwater sticker, and the other of which was of some scenic location, I think.

Mr. BALL. And, did you see another car?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes, some 15 minutes or so after this, at approximately 12 o'clock, 20 to 12—I guess 12:20 would be close to it, little time differential there—but there was another car which was a 1957 black Ford, with one male in it that seemed to have a mike or telephone or something that gave the appearance of that at least.

Mr. BALL. How could you tell that?

Mr. BOWERS. He was holding something up to his mouth with one hand and he was driving with the other, and gave that appearance. He was very close to the tower. I could see him as he proceeded around the area.

Mr. BALL. What kind of license did that have?

Mr. BOWERS. Had a Texas license.

Mr. BALL. What did it do as it came into the area, from what street?

Mr. BOWERS. Came in from the extension of Elm Street in front of the School Depository.

Mr. BALL. Did you see it leave?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; after 3 or 4 minutes cruising around the area it departed the same way. He did probe a little further into the area than the first car.

Mr. BALL. Did you see another car?

Mr. BOWERS. Third car, which entered the area, which was some seven or nine minutes before the shooting, I believe was a 1961 or 1962 Chevrolet, four-door Impala, white, showed signs of being on the road. It was muddy up to the windows, bore a similar out-of-state license to the first car I observed, occupied also by one white male.

Mr. BALL. What did it do?

Mr. BOWERS. He spent a little more time in the area. He tried—he circled the area and probed one spot right at the tower in an attempt to get and was forced to back out some considerable distance, and slowly cruised down back towards the front of the School Depository Building.

Mr. BALL. Then did he leave?

Mr. BOWERS. The last I saw of him he was pausing just about in—just above the assassination site.

Mr. BALL. Did the car park, or continue on or did you notice?

Mr. BOWERS. Whether it continued on at that very moment or whether it pulled up only a short distance, I couldn't tell. I was busy.

Mr. BALL. How long was this before the President's car passed there?

Mr. BOWERS. This last car? About 8 minutes.

Mr. BALL. Were you in a position where you could see the corner of Elm and Houston from the tower?

Mr. BOWERS. No; I could not see the corner of Elm and Houston. I could see the corner of Main and Houston as they came down and turned on, then I couldn't see it for about half a block, and after they passed the corner of Elm and Houston the car came in sight again.

Mr. BALL. You saw the President's car coming out the Houston Street from Main, did you?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; I saw that.

Mr. BALL. Then you lost sight of it?

Mr. BOWERS. Right. For a moment.

Mr. BALL. Then you saw it again where?

Mr. BOWERS. It came in sight after it had turned the corner of Elm and Houston.

Mr. BALL. Did you hear anything?

Mr. BOWERS. I heard three shots. One, then a slight pause, then two very close together. Also reverberation from the shots.

Mr. BALL. And were you able to form an opinion as to the source of the sound or what direction it came from, I mean?

Mr. BOWERS. The sounds came either from up against the School Depository Building or near the mouth of the triple underpass.

Mr. BALL. Were you able to tell which?

Mr. BOWERS. No; I could not.

Mr. BALL. Well, now, had you had any experience before being in the tower as to sounds coming from those various places?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; I had worked this same tower for some 10 or 12 years, and was there during the time they were renovating the School Depository Building, and had noticed at that time the similarity of sounds occurring in either of those two locations.

Mr. BALL. Can you tell me now whether or not it came, the sounds you heard, the three shots came from the direction of the Depository Building or the triple underpass?

Mr. BOWERS. No; I could not.

Mr. BALL. From your experience there, previous experience there in hearing sounds that originated at the Texas School Book Depository Building, did you notice that sometimes those sounds seem to come from the triple underpass? Is that what you told me a moment ago?

Mr. BOWERS. There is a similarity of sound, because there is a reverberation which takes place from either location.

Mr. BALL. Had you heard sounds originating near the triple underpass before?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; quite often.

Because trucks backfire and various occurrences.

Mr. BALL. And you had heard noises originating from the Texas School Depository when they were building there?

Mr. BOWERS. They were renovating. I—did carpenter work as well as sand-blasted the outside of the building.

Mr. BALL. Now, were there any people standing on the high side—high ground between your tower and where Elm Street goes down under the underpass toward the mouth of the underpass?

Mr. BOWERS. Directly in line, towards the mouth of the underpass, there were two men. One man, middle-aged, or slightly older, fairly heavy-set, in a white shirt, fairly dark trousers. Another younger man, about midtwenties, in either a plaid shirt or plaid coat or jacket.

Mr. BALL. Were they standing together or standing separately?

Mr. BOWERS. They were standing within 10 or 15 feet of each other, and gave no appearance of being together, as far as I knew.

Mr. BALL. In what direction were they facing?

Mr. BOWERS. They were facing and looking up towards Main and Houston, and following the caravan as it came down.

Mr. BALL. Did you see anyone standing on the triple underpass?

Mr. BOWERS. On the triple underpass, there were two policemen. One facing each direction, both east and west. There was one railroad employee, a signal man there with the Union Terminal Co., and two welders that worked for the Fort Worth Welding firm, and there was also a laborer's assistant furnished by the railroad to these welders.

Mr. BALL. You saw those before the President came by, you saw those people?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; they were there before and after.

Mr. BALL. And were they standing on the triple underpass?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; they were standing on top of it facing towards Houston Street, all except, of course, the one policeman on the west side.

Mr. BALL. Did you see any other people up on this high ground?

Mr. BOWERS. There were one or two people in the area. Not in this same vicinity. One of them was a parking lot attendant that operates a parking lot there. One or two. Each had uniforms similar to those custodians at the courthouse. But they were some distance back, just a slight distance back.

Mr. BALL. When you heard the sound, which way were you looking?

Mr. BOWERS. At the moment I heard the sound, I was looking directly towards the area—at the moment of the first shot, as close as my recollection serves, the car was out of sight behind this decorative masonry wall in the area.

Mr. BALL. And when you heard the second and third shot, could you see the car?

Mr. BOWERS. No; at the moment of the shots, I could—I do not think that it was in sight. It came in sight immediately following the last shot.

Mr. BALL. Did you see any activity in this high ground above Elm after the shot?

Mr. BOWERS. At the time of the shooting there seemed to be some commotion, and immediately following there was a motorcycle policeman who shot nearly all of the way to the top of the incline.

Mr. BALL. On his motorcycle?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes.

Mr. BALL. Did he come by way of Elm Street?

Mr. BOWERS. He was part of the motorcade and had left it for some reason, which I did not know.

Mr. BALL. He came up—

Mr. BOWERS. He came almost to the top and I believe abandoned his motorcycle for a moment and then got on it and proceeded, I don't know.

Mr. BALL. How did he get up?

Mr. BOWERS. He just shot up over the curb and up.

Mr. BALL. He didn't come then by way of Elm, which dead ends there?

Mr. BOWERS. No; he left the motorcade and came up the incline on the motorcycle.

Mr. BALL. Was his motorcycle directed toward any particular people?

Mr. BOWERS. He came up into this area where there are some trees, and where I had described the two men were in the general vicinity of this.

Mr. BALL. Were the two men there at the time?

Mr. BOWERS. I—as far as I know, one of them was. The other I could not say.

The darker dressed man was too hard to distinguish from the trees. The one in the white shirt, yes; I think he was.

Mr. BALL. When you said there was a commotion, what do you mean by that? What did it look like to you when you were looking at the commotion?

Mr. BOWERS. I just am unable to describe rather than it was something out of the ordinary, a sort of milling around, but something occurred in this particular spot which was out of the ordinary, which attracted my eye for some reason, which I could not identify.

Mr. BALL. You couldn't describe it?

Mr. BOWERS. Nothing that I could pinpoint as having happened that—

Mr. BALL. Afterwards did a good many people come up there on this high ground at the tower?

Mr. BOWERS. A large number of people came, more than one direction. One group converged from the corner of Elm and Houston, and came down the extension of Elm and came into the high ground, and another line—another large group went across the triangular area between Houston and Elm and then across Elm and then up the incline. Some of them all the way up.

Many of them did, as well as, of course, between 50 and a hundred policemen within a maximum of 5 minutes.

Mr. BALL. In this area around your tower?

Mr. BOWERS. That's right. Sealed off the area, and I held off the trains until they could be examined, and there was some transients taken on at least one train.

Mr. BALL. I believe you have talked this over with me before your deposition was taken, haven't we?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes.

Mr. BALL. Is there anything that you told me that I haven't asked you about that you think of?

Mr. BOWERS. Nothing that I can recall.

Mr. BALL. You have told me all that you know about this, haven't you?

Mr. BOWERS. Yes; I believe that I have related everything which I have told the city police, and also told to the FBI.

Mr. BALL. And everything you told me before we started taking the deposition?

Mr. BOWERS. To my knowledge I can remember nothing else.

Mr. BALL. Now, this will be reduced to writing, and you can sign it, look it over and sign it, or waive your signature if you wish.

What do you wish?

Mr. BOWERS. I have no reason to sign it unless you want me to.

Mr. BALL. Would you just as leave waive the signature?

Mr. BOWERS. Fine.

Mr. BALL. Then we thank you very much.

TESTIMONY OF B. J. MARTIN

The testimony of B. J. Martin was taken at 10:10 a.m., on April 3, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Joseph A. Ball, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. BALL. Will you stand up, please, and be sworn?

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give before this Commission shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. MARTIN. I do.

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

Mr. MARTIN. B. J. Martin.

Mr. BALL. And what is your residence address?

Mr. MARTIN. 11830 Flamingo Lane, Dallas.

Mr. BALL. What is your occupation?

Mr. MARTIN. I am a police officer.

Mr. BALL. With the Dallas Police Department?

Mr. MARTIN. Yes.

Mr. BALL. How long have you been with the Police Department?

Mr. MARTIN. It will be 11 years in June.

Mr. BALL. Tell me something about yourself, when you were born and where you were raised and where you went to school?

Mr. MARTIN. I was born in Maud, Okla., Seminole County—went to school—high school at Maud, Okla., and entered the Navy in 1948, from there and was discharged in 1952 and lived at Compton, Okla., for approximately a year, and then returned to Dallas and was employed in the Police Department in June 1953.

Mr. BALL. And were you employed as a motorcycle officer at that time?

Mr. MARTIN. No, sir; I was employed as an apprentice policeman and worked in the radio patrol division.

Mr. BALL. You are not a motorcycleman?

Mr. MARTIN. Yes.

Mr. BALL. How long have you been a motorcycle officer?

Mr. MARTIN. Let's see, 8 years in January.

Mr. BALL. On November 22, 1963, did you have some special assignment?

Mr. MARTIN. Yes, sir; I was assigned to the motorcade of President Kennedy.

Mr. BALL. And you went out to Love Field, did you?

Mr. MARTIN. Yes, sir; we made detail about 7 o'clock that morning and was assigned, I don't recall now just what time—it was about 30 minutes before his plane was to arrive at Love Field.

Mr. BALL. And in the motorcade what was your position?

Mr. MARTIN. I was assigned to ride on the left-hand rear side of President Kennedy.

Mr. BALL. And were you riding alone there, or was another officer riding with you?