

## CHAPTER II

### The Assassination

**T**HIS CHAPTER describes President Kennedy's trip to Dallas, from its origin through its tragic conclusion. The narrative of these events is based largely on the recollections of the participants, although in many instances documentary or other evidence has also been used by the Commission. Beginning with the advance plans and Secret Service preparations for the trip, this chapter reviews the motorcade through Dallas, the fleeting moments of the assassination, the activities at Parkland Memorial Hospital, and the return of the Presidential party to Washington. An evaluation of the procedures employed to safeguard the President, with recommendations for improving these procedures, appears in chapter VIII of the report.

#### PLANNING THE TEXAS TRIP

President Kennedy's visit to Texas in November 1963 had been under consideration for almost a year before it occurred. He had made only a few brief visits to the State since the 1960 Presidential campaign and in 1962 he began to consider a formal visit.<sup>1</sup> During 1963, the reasons for making the trip became more persuasive. As a political leader, the President wished to resolve the factional controversy within the Democratic Party in Texas before the election of 1964.<sup>2</sup> The party itself saw an opportunity to raise funds by having the President speak at a political dinner eventually planned for Austin.<sup>3</sup> As Chief of State, the President always welcomed the opportunity to learn, firsthand, about the problems which concerned the American people.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, he looked forward to the public appearances which he personally enjoyed.<sup>5</sup>

The basic decision on the November trip to Texas was made at a meeting of President Kennedy, Vice President Johnson, and Governor Connally on June 5, 1963, at the Cortez Hotel in El Paso, Tex.<sup>6</sup> The President had spoken earlier that day at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., and had stopped in El Paso to discuss the proposed visit and other matters with the Vice President and the Governor.<sup>7</sup> The three agreed that the President would come to Texas

in late November 1963.<sup>8</sup> The original plan called for the President to spend only 1 day in the State, making whirlwind visits to Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston.<sup>9</sup> In September, the White House decided to permit further visits by the President and extended the trip to run from the afternoon of November 21 through the evening of Friday, November 22.<sup>10</sup> When Governor Connally called at the White House on October 4 to discuss the details of the visit, it was agreed that the planning of events in Texas would be left largely to the Governor.<sup>11</sup> At the White House, Kenneth O'Donnell, special assistant to the President, acted as coordinator for the trip.<sup>12</sup>

Everyone agreed that, if there was sufficient time, a motorcade through downtown Dallas would be the best way for the people to see their President. When the trip was planned for only 1 day, Governor Connally had opposed the motorcade because there was not enough time.<sup>13</sup> The Governor stated, however, that "once we got San Antonio moved from Friday to Thursday afternoon, where that was his initial stop in Texas, then we had the time, and I withdrew my objections to a motorcade."<sup>14</sup> According to O'Donnell, "we had a motorcade wherever we went," particularly in large cities where the purpose was to let the President be seen by as many people as possible.<sup>15</sup> In his experience, "it would be automatic" for the Secret Service to arrange a route which would, within the time allotted, bring the President "through an area which exposes him to the greatest number of people."<sup>16</sup>

## ADVANCE PREPARATIONS FOR THE DALLAS TRIP

Advance preparations for President Kennedy's visit to Dallas were primarily the responsibility of two Secret Service agents: Special Agent Winston G. Lawson, a member of the White House detail who acted as the advance agent, and Forrest V. Sorrels, special agent in charge of the Dallas office.<sup>17</sup> Both agents were advised of the trip on November 4.<sup>18</sup> Lawson received a tentative schedule of the Texas trip on November 8 from Roy H. Kellerman, assistant special agent in charge of the White House detail, who was the Secret Service official responsible for the entire Texas journey.<sup>19</sup> As advance agent working closely with Sorrels, Lawson had responsibility for arranging the timetable for the President's visit to Dallas and coordinating local activities with the White House staff, the organizations directly concerned with the visit, and local law enforcement officials.<sup>20</sup> Lawson's most important responsibilities were to take preventive action against anyone in Dallas considered a threat to the President, to select the luncheon site and motorcade route, and to plan security measures for the luncheon and the motorcade.

### Preventive Intelligence Activities

The Protective Research Section (PRS) of the Secret Service maintains records of people who have threatened the President or so con-

ducted themselves as to be deemed a potential danger to him. On November 8, 1963, after undertaking the responsibility for advance preparations for the visit to Dallas, Agent Lawson went to the PRS offices in Washington. A check of the geographic indexes there revealed no listing for any individual deemed to be a potential danger to the President in the territory of the Secret Service regional office which includes Dallas and Fort Worth.<sup>21</sup>

To supplement the PRS files, the Secret Service depends largely on local police departments and local offices of other Federal agencies which advise it of potential threats immediately before the visit of the President to their community. Upon his arrival in Dallas on November 12 Lawson conferred with the local police and the local office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation about potential dangers to the President. Although there was no mention in PRS files of the demonstration in Dallas against Ambassador Adlai Stevenson on October 24, 1963, Lawson inquired about the incident and obtained through the local police photographs of some of the persons involved.<sup>22</sup> On November 22 a Secret Service agent stood at the entrance to the Trade Mart, where the President was scheduled to speak, with copies of these photographs. Dallas detectives in the lobby of the Trade Mart and in the luncheon area also had copies of these photographs. A number of people who resembled some of those in the photographs were placed under surveillance at the Trade Mart.<sup>23</sup>

The FBI office in Dallas gave the local Secret Service representatives the name of a possibly dangerous individual in the Dallas area who was investigated. It also advised the Secret Service of the circulation on November 21 of a handbill sharply critical of President Kennedy,<sup>24</sup> discussed in chapter VI of this report. Shortly before, the Dallas police had reported to the Secret Service that the handbill had appeared on the streets of Dallas. Neither the Dallas police nor the FBI had yet learned the source of the handbill.<sup>25</sup> No one else was identified to the Secret Service through local inquiry as potentially dangerous, nor did PRS develop any additional information between November 12, when Lawson left Washington, and November 22. The adequacy of the intelligence system maintained by the Secret Service at the time of the assassination, including a detailed description of the available data on Lee Harvey Oswald and the reasons why his name had not been furnished to the Secret Service, is discussed in chapter VIII.

### The Luncheon Site

An important purpose of the President's visit to Dallas was to speak at a luncheon given by business and civic leaders. The White House staff informed the Secret Service that the President would arrive and depart from Dallas' Love Field; that a motorcade through the downtown area of Dallas to the luncheon site should be arranged; and that following the luncheon the President would return to the airport by the most direct route. Accordingly, it was important to

determine the luncheon site as quickly as possible, so that security could be established at the site and the motorcade route selected.

On November 4, Gerald A. Behn, agent in charge of the White House detail, asked Sorrels to examine three potential sites for the luncheon.<sup>26</sup> One building, Market Hall, was unavailable for November 22. The second, the Women's Building at the State Fair Grounds, was a one-story building with few entrances and easy to make secure, but it lacked necessary food-handling facilities and had certain unattractive features, including a low ceiling with exposed conduits and beams. The third possibility, the Trade Mart, a handsome new building with all the necessary facilities, presented security problems. It had numerous entrances, several tiers of balconies surrounding the central court where the luncheon would be held, and several catwalks crossing the court at each level. On November 4, Sorrels told Behn he believed security difficulties at the Trade Mart could be overcome by special precautions.<sup>27</sup> Lawson also evaluated the security hazards at the Trade Mart on November 13.<sup>28</sup> Kenneth O'Donnell made the final decision to hold the luncheon at the Trade Mart; Behn so notified Lawson on November 14.<sup>29</sup>

Once the Trade Mart had been selected, Sorrels and Lawson worked out detailed arrangements for security at the building. In addition to the preventive measures already mentioned, they provided for controlling access to the building, closing off and policing areas around it, securing the roof and insuring the presence of numerous police officers inside and around the building. Ultimately more than 200 law enforcement officers, mainly Dallas police but including 8 Secret Service agents, were deployed in and around the Trade Mart.<sup>30</sup>

### The Motorcade Route

On November 8, when Lawson was briefed on the itinerary for the trip to Dallas, he was told that 45 minutes had been allotted for a motorcade procession from Love Field to the luncheon site.<sup>31</sup> Lawson was not specifically instructed to select the parade route, but he understood that this was one of his functions.<sup>32</sup> Even before the Trade Mart had been definitely selected, Lawson and Sorrels began to consider the best motorcade route from Love Field to the Trade Mart. On November 14, Lawson and Sorrels attended a meeting at Love Field and on their return to Dallas drove over the route which Sorrels believed best suited for the proposed motorcade.<sup>33</sup> This route, eventually selected for the motorcade from the airport to the Trade Mart, measured 10 miles and could be driven easily within the allotted 45 minutes.<sup>34</sup> From Love Field the route passed through a portion of suburban Dallas, through the downtown area along Main Street and then to the Trade Mart via Stemmons Freeway. For the President's return to Love Field following the luncheon, the agents selected the most direct route, which was approximately 4 miles.<sup>35</sup>

After the selection of the Trade Mart as the luncheon site, Lawson and Sorrels met with Dallas Chief of Police Jesse E. Curry, Assistant

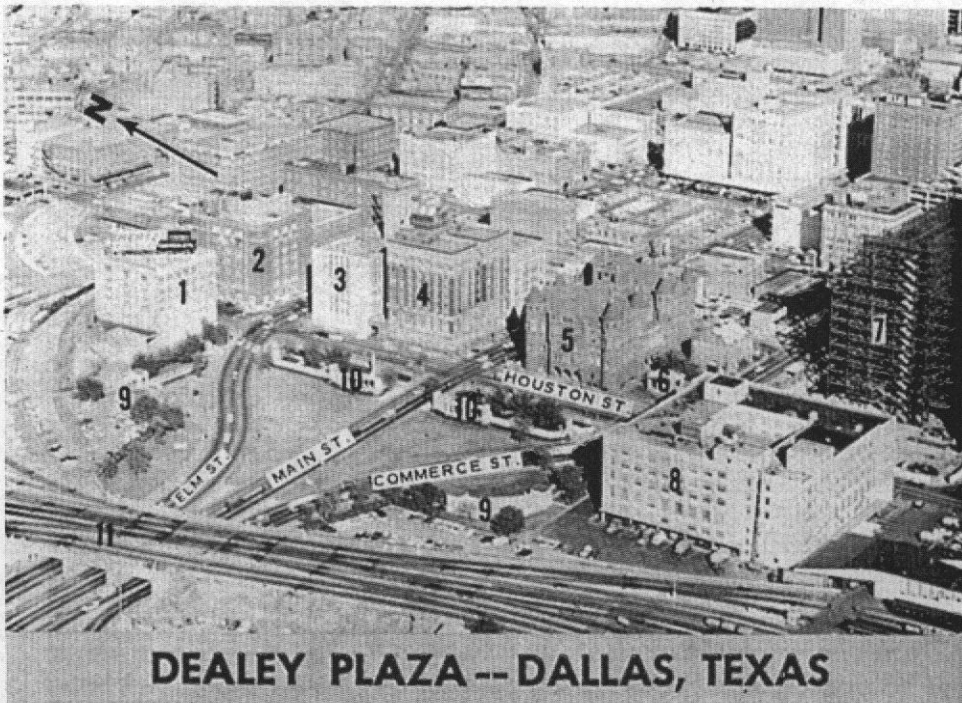
Chief Charles Batchelor, Deputy Chief N. T. Fisher, and several other command officers to discuss details of the motorcade and possible routes.<sup>36</sup> The route was further reviewed by Lawson and Sorrels with Assistant Chief Batchelor and members of the local host committee on November 15. The police officials agreed that the route recommended by Sorrels was the proper one and did not express a belief that any other route might be better.<sup>37</sup> On November 18, Sorrels and Lawson drove over the selected route with Batchelor and other police officers, verifying that it could be traversed within 45 minutes. Representatives of the local host committee and the White House staff were advised by the Secret Service of the actual route on the afternoon of November 18.<sup>38</sup>

The route impressed the agents as a natural and desirable one. Sorrels, who had participated in Presidential protection assignments in Dallas since a visit by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936,<sup>39</sup> testified that the traditional parade route in Dallas was along Main Street, since the tall buildings along the street gave more people an opportunity to participate.<sup>40</sup> The route chosen from the airport to Main Street was the normal one, except where Harwood Street was selected as the means of access to Main Street in preference to a short stretch of the Central Expressway, which presented a minor safety hazard and could not accommodate spectators as conveniently as Harwood Street.<sup>41</sup> According to Lawson, the chosen route seemed to be the best.

It afforded us wide streets most of the way, because of the buses that were in the motorcade. It afforded us a chance to have alternative routes if something happened on the motorcade route. It was the type of suburban area a good part of the way where the crowds would be able to be controlled for a great distance, and we figured that the largest crowds would be downtown, which they were, and that the wide streets that we would use downtown would be of sufficient width to keep the public out of our way.<sup>42</sup>

Elm Street, parallel to Main Street and one block north, was not used for the main portion of the downtown part of the motorcade because Main Street offered better vantage points for spectators.

To reach the Trade Mart from Main Street the agents decided to use the Stemmons Freeway (Route No. 77), the most direct route. The only practical way for westbound traffic on Main Street to reach the northbound lanes of the Stemmons Freeway is via Elm Street, which Route No. 77 traffic is instructed to follow in this part of the city. (See Commission Exhibit No. 2113, p. 34.) Elm Street was to be reached from Main by turning right at Houston, going one block north and then turning left onto Elm. On this last portion of the journey, only 5 minutes from the Trade Mart, the President's motorcade would pass the Texas School Book Depository Building on the northwest corner of Houston and Elm Streets. The building overlooks Dealey Plaza,



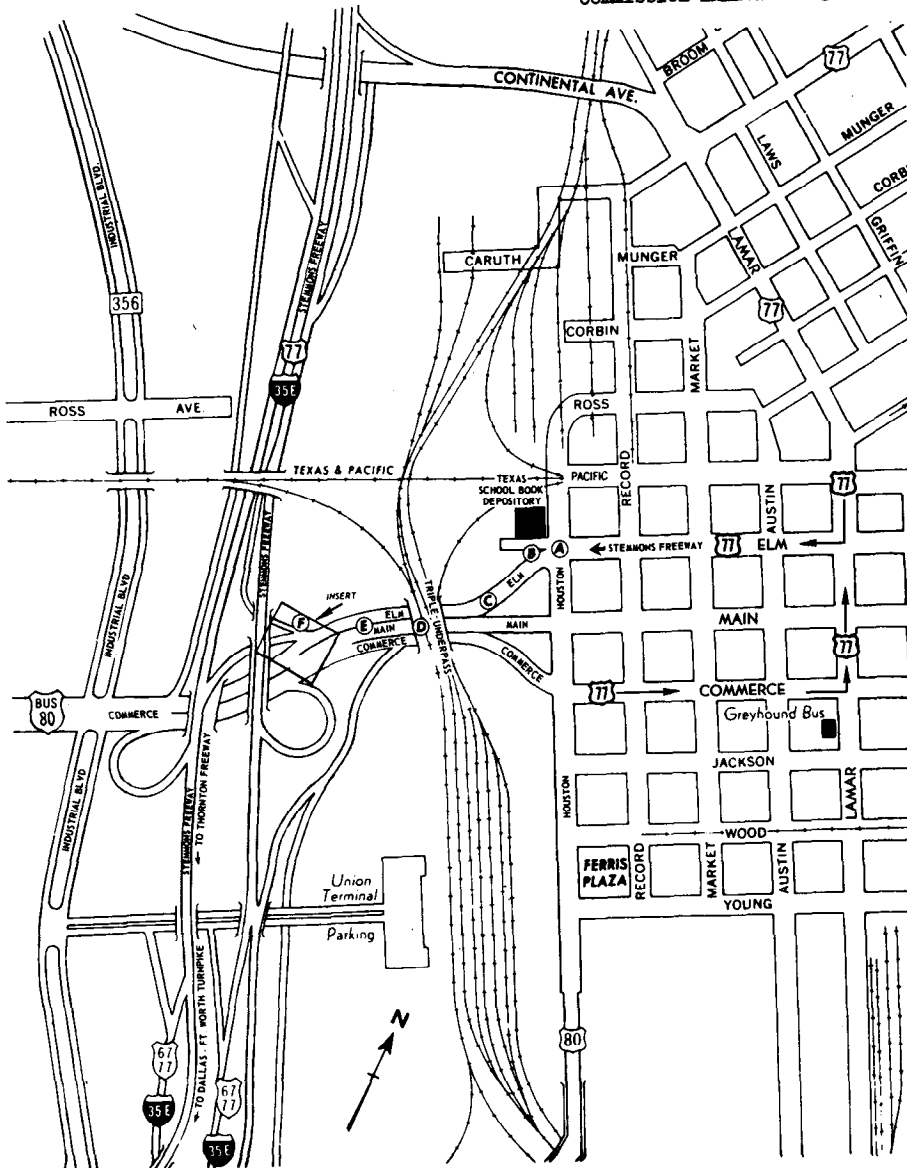
## DEALEY PLAZA -- DALLAS, TEXAS

1. TEXAS SCHOOL BOOK DEPOSITORY
2. DAL-TEX BUILDING
3. DALLAS COUNTY RECORDS BUILDING
4. DALLAS COUNTY CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING
5. OLD COURT HOUSE
6. NEELEY BRYAN HOUSE
7. DALLAS COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER (UNDER CONSTRUCTION)
8. UNITED STATES POST OFFICE BUILDING
9. PERGOLAS
10. PERISTYLES AND REFLECTING POOLS
11. RAILROAD OVERPASS (TRIPLE UNDERPASS)

COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 876

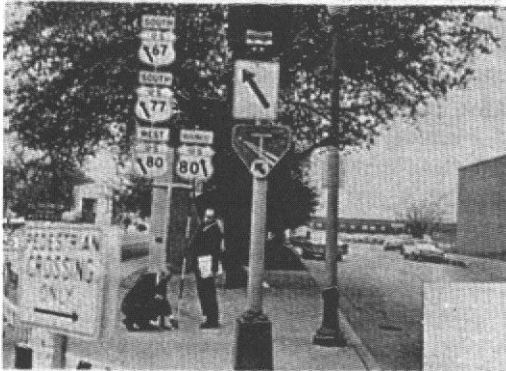
# **FREEWAY CONVERGENCE AT TRIPLE UNDERPASS DALLAS, TEXAS**

Commission Exhibit 2113



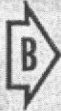
COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 2113





LOOKING TOWARD ENTRANCE TO  
DEALEY PLAZA FROM INTERSEC-  
TION OF HOUSTON AND ELM STS.

LOOKING WEST THROUGH DEALEY  
PLAZA ALONG ELM ST.



LOOKING WEST THROUGH TRIPLE  
UNDERPASS

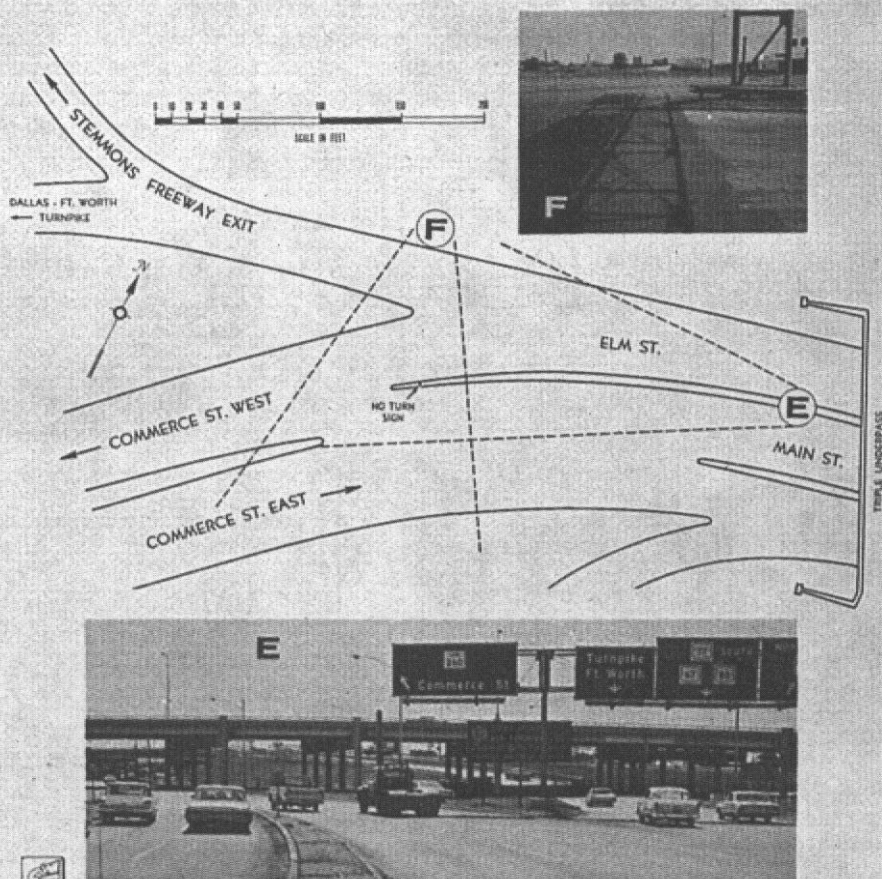


LOOKING WEST TOWARD COMMERCE  
ST. FROM TRIPLE UNDERPASS



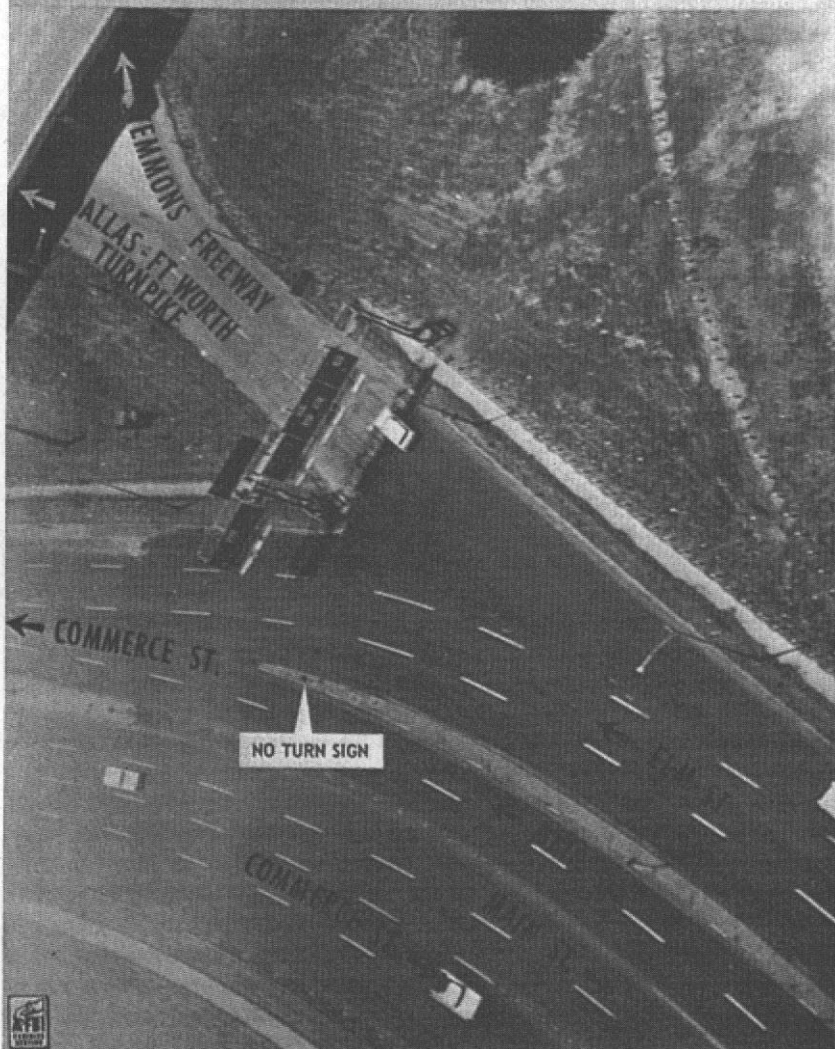


PLAN VIEW OF FREEWAY CONVERGENCE  
WEST OF TRIPLE UNDERPASS  
DALLAS, TEXAS

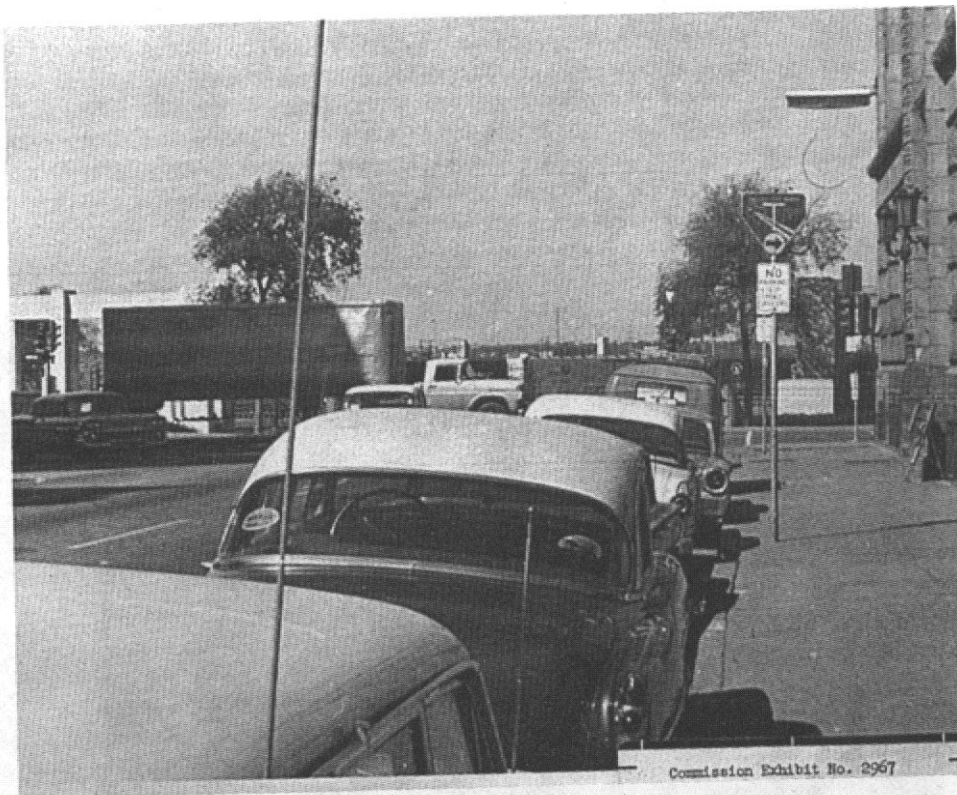


COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 2115

**AERIAL VIEW (500 FT. ALTITUDE)  
OF FREEWAY CONVERGENCE WEST OF  
TRIPLE UNDERPASS, DALLAS, TEXAS**



COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 2116



**COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 2967**

Traffic sign on Main Street which directs westbound traffic to turn right at Houston Street to gain access to the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike.

an attractively landscaped triangle of 3 acres. (See Commission Exhibit No. 876, p. 33.) From Houston Street, which forms the base of the triangle, three streets—Commerce, Main, and Elm—trisection the plaza, converging at the apex of the triangle to form a triple underpass beneath a multiple railroad bridge almost 500 feet from Houston Street.<sup>43</sup> Elm Street, the northernmost of the three, after intersecting Houston curves in a southwesterly arc through the underpass and leads into an access road, which branches off to the right and is used by traffic going to the Stemmons Freeway and the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike. (See Commission Exhibits Nos. 2113-2116, pp. 34-37.)

The Elm Street approach to the Stemmons Freeway is necessary in order to avoid the traffic hazards which would otherwise exist if right turns were permitted from both Main and Elm into the freeway. To create this traffic pattern, a concrete barrier between Main and Elm Streets presents an obstacle to a right turn from Main across Elm to the access road to Stemmons Freeway and the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike. This concrete barrier extends far enough beyond the access road to make it impracticable for vehicles to turn right from Main directly to the access road. A sign located on this barrier instructs Main Street traffic not to make any turns.<sup>45</sup> (See Commission Exhibits Nos. 2114-2116, pp. 35-37.) In conformity with these arrangements, traffic proceeding west on Main is directed to turn right at Houston in order to reach the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike, which has the same access road from Elm Street as does the Stemmons Freeway.<sup>46</sup> (See Commission Exhibit No. 2967, p. 38.)

The planning for the motorcade also included advance preparations for security arrangements along the route. Sorrels and Lawson reviewed the route in cooperation with Assistant Chief Batchelor and other Dallas police officials who took notes on the requirements for controlling the crowds and traffic, watching the overpasses, and providing motorcycle escort.<sup>47</sup> To control traffic, arrangements were made for the deployment of foot patrolmen and motorcycle police at various positions along the route.<sup>48</sup> Police were assigned to each overpass on the route and instructed to keep them clear of unauthorized persons.<sup>49</sup> No arrangements were made for police or building custodians to inspect buildings along the motorcade route since the Secret Service did not normally request or make such a check.<sup>50</sup> Under standard procedures, the responsibility for watching the windows of buildings was shared by local police stationed along the route and Secret Service agents riding in the motorcade.<sup>51</sup>

As the date for the President's visit approached, the two Dallas newspapers carried several reports of his motorcade route. The selection of the Trade Mart as the possible site for the luncheon first appeared in the Dallas Times-Herald on November 15, 1963.<sup>52</sup> The following day, the newspaper reported that the Presidential party "apparently will loop through the downtown area, probably on Main Street, en route from Dallas Love Field" on its way to the Trade

Mart.<sup>53</sup> On November 19, the Times-Herald afternoon paper detailed the precise route :

From the airport, the President's party will proceed to Mockingbird Lane to Lemmon and then to Turtle Creek, turning south to Cedar Springs.

The motorcade will then pass through downtown on Harwood and then west on Main, turning back to Elm at Houston and then out Stemmons Freeway to the Trade Mart.<sup>54</sup>

Also on November 19, the Morning News reported that the President's motorcade would travel from Love Field along specified streets, then "Harwood to Main, Main to Houston, Houston to Elm, Elm under the Triple Underpass to Stemmons Freeway, and on to the Trade Mart."<sup>55</sup> On November 20 a front page story reported that the streets on which the Presidential motorcade would travel included "Main and Stemmons Freeway."<sup>56</sup> On the morning of the President's arrival, the Morning News noted that the motorcade would travel through downtown Dallas onto the Stemmons Freeway, and reported that "the motorcade will move slowly so that crowds can 'get a good view' of President Kennedy and his wife."<sup>57</sup>

## DALLAS BEFORE THE VISIT

The President's intention to pay a visit to Texas in the fall of 1963 aroused interest throughout the State. The two Dallas newspapers provided their readers with a steady stream of information and speculation about the trip, beginning on September 13, when the Times-Herald announced in a front page article that President Kennedy was planning a brief 1-day tour of four Texas cities—Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston.<sup>58</sup> Both Dallas papers cited White House sources on September 26 as confirming the President's intention to visit Texas on November 21 and 22, with Dallas scheduled as one of the stops.<sup>59</sup>

Articles, editorials, and letters to the editor in the Dallas Morning News and the Dallas Times-Herald after September 13 reflected the feeling in the community toward the forthcoming Presidential visit. Although there were critical editorials and letters to the editors, the news stories reflected the desire of Dallas officials to welcome the President with dignity and courtesy. An editorial in the Times-Herald of September 17 called on the people of Dallas to be "congenial hosts" even though "Dallas didn't vote for Mr. Kennedy in 1960, may not endorse him in '64."<sup>60</sup> On October 3 the Dallas Morning News quoted U.S. Representative Joe Pool's hope that President Kennedy would receive a "good welcome" and would not face demonstrations like those encountered by Vice President Johnson during the 1960 campaign.<sup>61</sup>

Increased concern about the President's visit was aroused by the incident involving the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai E. Stevenson. On the evening of October 24, 1963, after addressing a meeting in Dallas, Stevenson was jeered, jostled, and spat upon by hostile demonstrators outside the Dallas Memorial Auditorium Theater.<sup>62</sup> The local, national, and international reaction to this incident evoked from Dallas officials and newspapers strong condemnations of the demonstrators. Mayor Earle Cabell called on the city to redeem itself during President Kennedy's visit.<sup>63</sup> He asserted that Dallas had shed its reputation of the twenties as the "Southwest hate capital of Dixie."<sup>64</sup> On October 26 the press reported Chief of Police Curry's plans to call in 100 extra off-duty officers to help protect President Kennedy.<sup>65</sup> Any thought that the President might cancel his visit to Dallas was ended when Governor Connally confirmed on November 8 that the President would come to Texas on November 21-22, and that he would visit San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas, and Austin.<sup>66</sup>

During November the Dallas papers reported frequently on the plans for protecting the President, stressing the thoroughness of the preparations. They conveyed the pleas of Dallas leaders that citizens not demonstrate or create disturbances during the President's visit. On November 18 the Dallas City Council adopted a new city ordinance prohibiting interference with attendance at lawful assemblies.<sup>67</sup> Two days before the President's arrival Chief Curry warned that the Dallas police would not permit improper conduct during the President's visit.<sup>68</sup>

Meanwhile, on November 17 the president of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce referred to the city's reputation for being the friendliest town in America and asserted that citizens would "greet the President of the United States with the warmth and pride that keep the Dallas spirit famous the world over."<sup>69</sup> Two days later, a local Republican leader called for a "civilized nonpartisan" welcome for President Kennedy, stating that "in many respects Dallas County has isolated itself from the main stream of life in the world in this decade."<sup>70</sup>

Another reaction to the impending visit—hostile to the President—came to a head shortly before his arrival. On November 21 there appeared on the streets of Dallas the anonymous handbill mentioned above. It was fashioned after the "wanted" circulars issued by law enforcement agencies. Beneath two photographs of President Kennedy, one fullface and one profile, appeared the caption, "Wanted for Treason," followed by a scurrilous bill of particulars that constituted a vilification of the President.<sup>71</sup> And on the morning of the President's arrival, there appeared in the Morning News a full page, black-bordered advertisement headed "Welcome Mr. Kennedy to Dallas," sponsored by the American Factfinding Committee, which the sponsor later testified was an ad hoc committee "formed strictly for the purpose of having a name to put in the paper."<sup>72</sup> The "welcome" consisted of a series of statements and questions critical of the



President and his administration.<sup>73</sup> (See Commission Exhibit No. 1031, p. 294.)

## VISITS TO OTHER TEXAS CITIES

The trip to Texas began with the departure of President and Mrs. Kennedy from the White House by helicopter at 10:45 a.m., e.s.t., on November 21, 1963, for Andrews AFB. They took off in the Presidential plane, *Air Force One*, at 11 a.m., arriving at San Antonio at 1:30 p.m., c.s.t. They were greeted by Vice President Johnson and Governor Connally, who joined the Presidential party in a motorcade through San Antonio.<sup>74</sup> During the afternoon, President Kennedy dedicated the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine at Brooks AFB.<sup>75</sup> Late in the afternoon he flew to Houston where he rode through the city in a motorcade, spoke at the Rice University Stadium, and attended a dinner in honor of U.S. Representative Albert Thomas.<sup>76</sup>

At Rice Stadium a very large, enthusiastic crowd greeted the President.<sup>77</sup> In Houston, as elsewhere during the trip, the crowds showed much interest in Mrs. Kennedy. David F. Powers of the President's staff later stated that when the President asked for his assessment of the day's activities, Powers replied "that the crowd was about the same as the one which came to see him before but there were 100,000 extra people on hand who came to see Mrs. Kennedy."<sup>78</sup> Late in the evening, the Presidential party flew to Fort Worth where they spent the night at the Texas Hotel.<sup>79</sup>

On the morning of November 22, President Kennedy attended a breakfast at the hotel and afterward addressed a crowd at an open parking lot.<sup>80</sup> The President liked outdoor appearances because more people could see and hear him.<sup>81</sup> Before leaving the hotel, the President, Mrs. Kennedy, and Kenneth O'Donnell talked about the risks inherent in Presidential public appearances.<sup>82</sup> According to O'Donnell, the President commented that "if anybody really wanted to shoot the President of the United States, it was not a very difficult job—all one had to do was get a high building someday with a telescopic rifle, and there was nothing anybody could do to defend against such an attempt."<sup>83</sup> Upon concluding the conversation, the President prepared to depart for Dallas.

## ARRIVAL AT LOVE FIELD

In Dallas the rain had stopped, and by midmorning a gloomy overcast sky had given way to the bright sunshine that greeted the Presidential party when *Air Force One* touched down at Love Field at 11:40 a.m., c.s.t.<sup>84</sup> Governor and Mrs. Connally and Senator Ralph W. Yarborough had come with the President from Fort Worth.<sup>85</sup> Vice President Johnson's airplane, *Air Force Two*, had arrived at Love



Field at approximately 11:35 a.m., and the Vice President and Mrs. Johnson were in the receiving line to greet President and Mrs. Kennedy.<sup>86</sup>

After a welcome from the Dallas reception committee, President and Mrs. Kennedy walked along a chain-link fence at the reception area greeting a large crowd of spectators that had gathered behind it.<sup>87</sup> Secret Service agents formed a cordon to keep the press and photographers from impeding their passage and scanned the crowd for threatening movements.<sup>88</sup> Dallas police stood at intervals along the fence and Dallas plainclothesmen mixed in the crowd.<sup>89</sup> Vice President and Mrs. Johnson followed along the fence, guarded by four members of the Vice-Presidential detail.<sup>90</sup> Approximately 10 minutes after the arrival at Love Field, the President and Mrs. Kennedy went to the Presidential automobile to begin the motorcade.<sup>91</sup>

### ORGANIZATION OF THE MOTORCADE

Secret Service arrangements for Presidential trips, which were followed in the Dallas motorcade, are designed to provide protection while permitting large numbers of people to see the President.<sup>92</sup> Every effort is made to prevent unscheduled stops, although the President may, and in Dallas did, order stops in order to greet the public.<sup>93</sup> When the motorcade slows or stops, agents take positions between the President and the crowd.<sup>94</sup>

The order of vehicles in the Dallas motorcade was as follows:

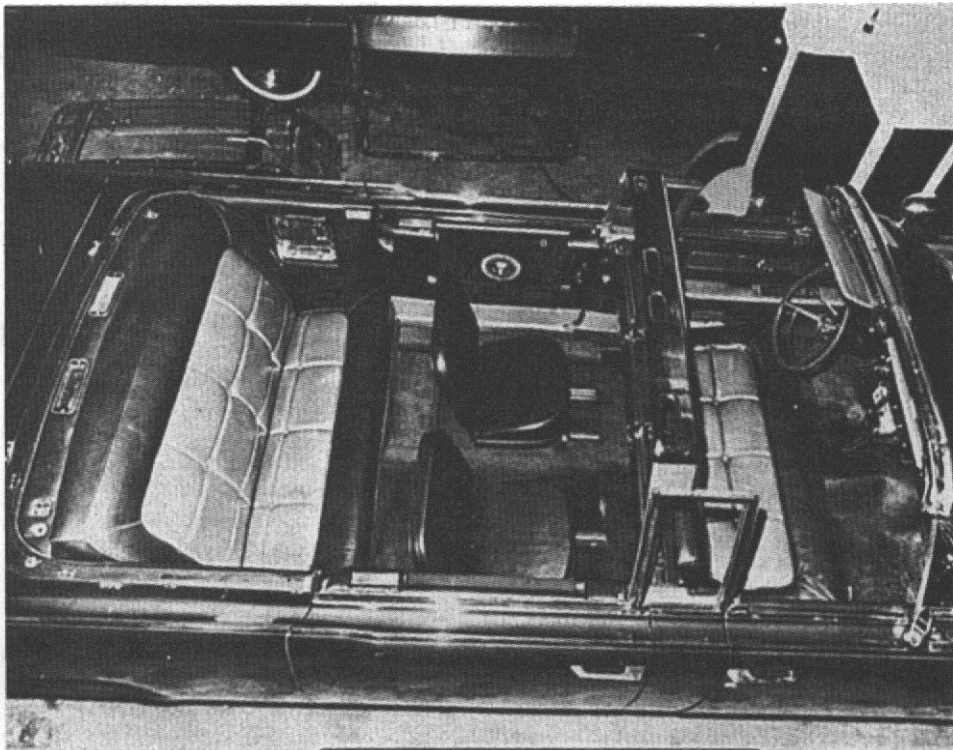
*Motorcycles.*—Dallas police motorcycles preceded the pilot car.<sup>95</sup>

*The pilot car.*—Manned by officers of the Dallas Police Department, this automobile preceded the main party by approximately a quarter of a mile. Its function was to alert police along the route that the motorcade was approaching and to check for signs of trouble.<sup>96</sup>

*Motorcycles.*—Next came four to six motorcycle policemen whose main purpose was to keep the crowd back.<sup>97</sup>

*The lead car.*—Described as a "rolling command car," this was an unmarked Dallas police car, driven by Chief of Police Curry and occupied by Secret Service Agents Sorrels and Lawson and by Dallas County Sheriff J. E. Decker. The occupants scanned the crowd and the buildings along the route. Their main function was to spot trouble in advance and to direct any necessary steps to meet the trouble. Following normal practice, the lead automobile stayed approximately four to five car lengths ahead of the President's limousine.<sup>98</sup>

*The Presidential limousine.*—The President's automobile was a specially designed 1961 Lincoln convertible with two collapsible jump seats between the front and rear seats.<sup>99</sup> (See Commission Exhibit No. 346, p. 44.) It was outfitted with a clear plastic bubble-top which was neither bulletproof nor bullet resistant.<sup>100</sup> Because the skies had cleared in Dallas, Lawson directed that the top not be used for the day's activities. He acted on instructions he had re-



COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 346

Interior of Presidential limousine used on November 22, 1963.

ceived earlier from Assistant Special Agent in Charge Roy H. Kellerman, who was in Fort Worth with the President.<sup>101</sup> Kellerman had discussed the matter with O'Donnell, whose instructions were, "If the weather is clear and it is not raining, have that bubbletop off."<sup>102</sup> Elevated approximately 15 inches above the back of the front seat was a metallic frame with four handholds that riders in the car could grip while standing in the rear seat during parades.<sup>103</sup> At the rear on each side of the automobile were small running boards, each designed to hold a Secret Service agent, with a metallic handle for the rider to grasp.<sup>104</sup> The President had frequently stated that he did not want agents to ride on these steps during a motorcade except when necessary. He had repeated this wish only a few days before, during his visit to Tampa, Fla.<sup>105</sup>

President Kennedy rode on the right-hand side of the rear seat with Mrs. Kennedy on his left.<sup>106</sup> Governor Connally occupied the right jump seat, Mrs. Connally the left.<sup>107</sup> Driving the Presidential limousine was Special Agent William R. Greer of the Secret Service; on his right sat Kellerman.<sup>108</sup> Kellerman's responsibilities included maintaining radio communications with the lead and followup cars, scanning the route, and getting out and standing near the President when the cars stopped.

*Motorcycles.*—Four motorcycles, two on each side, flanked the rear of the Presidential car. They provided some cover for the President, but their main purpose was to keep back the crowd.<sup>109</sup> On previous occasions, the President had requested that, to the extent possible, these flanking motorcycles keep back from the sides of his car.<sup>110</sup>

*Presidential followup car.*—This vehicle, a 1955 Cadillac eight-passenger convertible especially outfitted for the Secret Service, followed closely behind the President's automobile.<sup>111</sup> It carried eight Secret Service agents—two in the front seat, two in the rear, and two on each of the right and left running boards.<sup>112</sup> Each agent carried a .38-caliber pistol, and a shotgun and automatic rifle were also available.<sup>113</sup> Presidential Assistants David F. Powers and Kenneth O'Donnell sat in the right and left jump seats, respectively.<sup>114</sup>

The agents in this car, under established procedure, had instructions to watch the route for signs of trouble, scanning not only the crowds but the windows and roofs of buildings, overpasses, and crossings.<sup>115</sup> They were instructed to watch particularly for thrown objects, sudden actions in the crowd, and any movements toward the Presidential car.<sup>116</sup> The agents on the front of the running boards had directions to move immediately to positions just to the rear of the President and Mrs. Kennedy when the President's car slowed to a walking pace or stopped, or when the press of the crowd made it impossible for the escort motorcycles to stay in position on the car's rear flanks.<sup>117</sup> The two agents on the rear of the running boards were to advance toward the front of the President's car whenever it stopped or slowed down sufficiently for them to do so.<sup>118</sup>

*Vice-Presidential car.*—The Vice-Presidential automobile, a four-door Lincoln convertible obtained locally for use in the motor-

cade, proceeded approximately two to three car lengths behind the President's followup car.<sup>119</sup> This distance was maintained so that spectators would normally turn their gaze from the President's automobile by the time the Vice President came into view.<sup>120</sup> Vice President Johnson sat on the right-hand side of the rear seat, Mrs. Johnson in the center, and Senator Yarborough on the left.<sup>121</sup> Rufus W. Youngblood, special agent in charge of the Vice President's detail, occupied the right-hand side of the front seat, and Hurchel Jacks of the Texas State Highway patrol was the driver.<sup>122</sup>

*Vice-Presidential followup car.*—Driven by an officer of the Dallas Police Department, this vehicle was occupied by three Secret Service agents and Clifton C. Carter, assistant to the Vice President.<sup>123</sup> These agents performed for the Vice President the same functions that the agents in the Presidential followup car performed for the President.

*Remainder of motorcade.*—The remainder of the motorcade consisted of five cars for other dignitaries, including the mayor of Dallas and Texas Congressmen, telephone and Western Union vehicles, a White House communications car, three cars for press photographers, an official party bus for White House staff members and others, and two press buses. Admiral George G. Burkley, physician to the President, was in a car following those "containing the local and national representatives."<sup>124</sup>

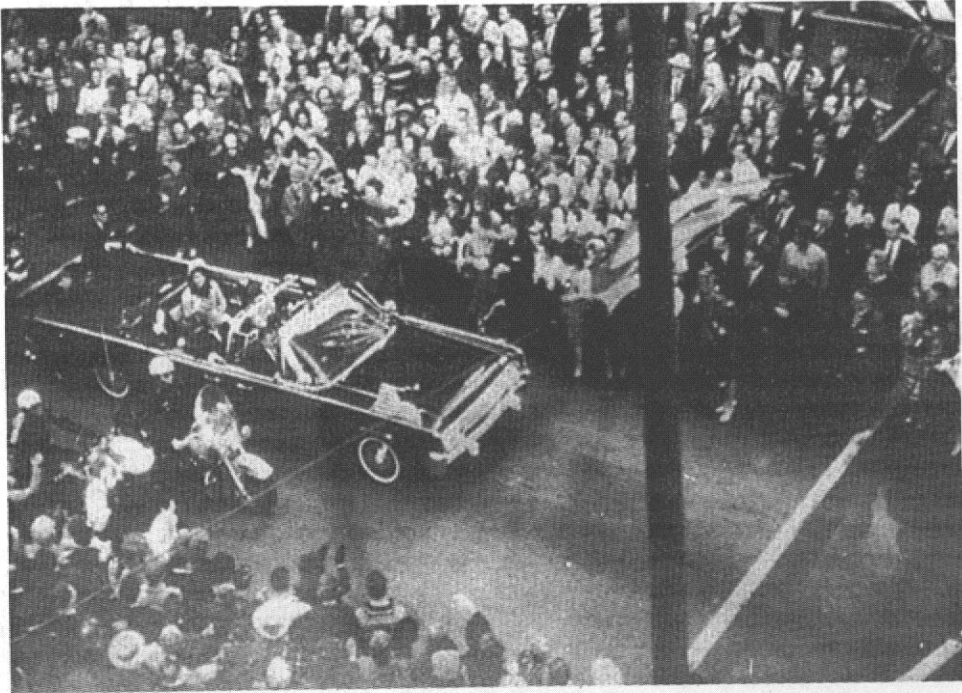
*Police car and motorcycles.*<sup>125</sup>—A Dallas police car and several motorcycles at the rear kept the motorcade together and prevented unauthorized vehicles from joining the motorcade.

*Communications in the motorcade.*<sup>126</sup>—A base station at a fixed location in Dallas operated a radio network which linked together the lead car, Presidential car, Presidential followup car, White House communications car, Trade Mart, Love Field, and the Presidential and Vice-Presidential airplanes. The Vice-Presidential car and Vice-Presidential followup car used portable sets with a separate frequency for their own car-to-car communication.

## THE DRIVE THROUGH DALLAS

The motorcade left Love Field shortly after 11:50 a.m. and drove at speeds up to 25 to 30 miles an hour through thinly populated areas on the outskirts of Dallas.<sup>127</sup> At the President's direction, his automobile stopped twice, the first time to permit him to respond to a sign asking him to shake hands.<sup>128</sup> During this brief stop, agents in the front positions on the running boards of the Presidential followup car came forward and stood beside the President's car, looking out toward the crowd, and Special Agent Kellerman assumed his position next to the car.<sup>129</sup> On the other occasion, the President halted the motorcade to speak to a Catholic nun and a group of small children.<sup>130</sup>

In the downtown area, large crowds of spectators gave the President a tremendous reception.<sup>131</sup> The crowds were so dense



COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 698

Presidential limousine in Dallas motorcade.

that Special Agent Clinton J. Hill had to leave the left front running board of the President's followup car four times to ride on the rear of the President's limousine.<sup>132</sup> (See Commission Exhibit No. 698, p. 47.) Several times Special Agent John D. Ready came forward from the right front running board of the Presidential followup car to the right side of the President's car.<sup>133</sup> Special Agent Glen A. Bennett once left his place inside the followup car to help keep the crowd away from the President's car. When a teenage boy ran toward the rear of the President's car,<sup>134</sup> Ready left the running board to chase the boy back into the crowd. On several occasions when the Vice President's car was slowed down by the throng, Special Agent Youngblood stepped out to hold the crowd back.<sup>135</sup>

According to plan, the President's motorcade proceeded west through downtown Dallas on Main Street to the intersection of Houston Street, which marks the beginning of Dealey Plaza.<sup>136</sup> From Main Street the motorcade turned right and went north on Houston Street, passing tall buildings on the right, and headed toward the Texas School Book Depository Building.<sup>137</sup> The spectators were still thickly congregated in front of the buildings which lined the east side of Houston Street, but the crowd thinned abruptly along Elm Street, which curves in a southwesterly direction as it proceeds downgrade toward the Triple Underpass and the Stemmons Freeway.<sup>138</sup>

As the motorcade approached the intersection of Houston and Elm Streets, there was general gratification in the Presidential party about the enthusiastic reception. Evaluating the political overtones, Kenneth O'Donnell was especially pleased because it convinced him that the average Dallas resident was like other American citizens in respecting and admiring the President.<sup>139</sup> Mrs. Connally, elated by the reception, turned to President Kennedy and said, "Mr. President, you can't say Dallas doesn't love you." The President replied, "That is very obvious."<sup>140</sup>

## THE ASSASSINATION

At 12:30 p.m., c.s.t., as the President's open limousine proceeded at approximately 11 miles per hour along Elm Street toward the Triple Underpass, shots fired from a rifle mortally wounded President Kennedy and seriously injured Governor Connally. One bullet passed through the President's neck; a subsequent bullet, which was lethal, shattered the right side of his skull. Governor Connally sustained bullet wounds in his back, the right side of his chest, right wrist, and left thigh.

### The Time

The exact time of the assassination was fixed by the testimony of four witnesses. Special Agent Rufus W. Youngblood observed that the large electric sign clock atop the Texas School Book Depository Building showed the numerals "12:30" as the Vice-Presidential automobile proceeded north on Houston Street, a few seconds before the

shots were fired.<sup>141</sup> Just prior to the shooting, David F. Powers, riding in the Secret Service followup car, remarked to Kenneth O'Donnell that it was 12:30 p.m., the time they were due at the Trade Mart.<sup>142</sup> Seconds after the shooting, Roy Kellerman, riding in the front seat of the Presidential limousine, looked at his watch and said "12:30" to the driver, Special Agent Greer.<sup>143</sup> The Dallas police radio log reflects that Chief of Police Curry reported the shooting of the President and issued his initial orders at 12:30 p.m.<sup>144</sup>

### Speed of the Limousine

William Greer, operator of the Presidential limousine, estimated the car's speed at the time of the first shot as 12 to 15 miles per hour.<sup>145</sup> Other witnesses in the motorcade estimated the speed of the President's limousine from 7 to 22 miles per hour.<sup>146</sup> A more precise determination has been made from motion pictures taken on the scene by an amateur photographer, Abraham Zapruder. Based on these films, the speed of the President's automobile is computed at an average speed of 11.2 miles per hour. The car maintained this average speed over a distance of approximately 136 feet immediately preceding the shot which struck the President in the head. While the car traveled this distance, the Zapruder camera ran 152 frames. Since the camera operates at a speed of 18.3 frames per second, it was calculated that the car required 8.3 seconds to cover the 136 feet. This represents a speed of 11.2 miles per hour.<sup>147</sup>

### In the Presidential Limousine

Mrs. John F. Kennedy, on the left of the rear seat of the limousine, looked toward her left and waved to the crowds along the route. Soon after the motorcade turned onto Elm Street, she heard a sound similar to a motorcycle noise and a cry from Governor Connally, which caused her to look to her right. On turning she saw a quizzical look on her husband's face as he raised his left hand to his throat. Mrs. Kennedy then heard a second shot and saw the President's skull torn open under the impact of the bullet. As she cradled her mortally wounded husband, Mrs. Kennedy cried, "Oh, my God, they have shot my husband. I love you, Jack."<sup>148</sup>

Governor Connally testified that he recognized the first noise as a rifle shot and the thought immediately crossed his mind that it was an assassination attempt. From his position in the right jump seat immediately in front of the President, he instinctively turned to his right because the shot appeared to come from over his right shoulder. Unable to see the President as he turned to the right, the Governor started to look back over his left shoulder, but he never completed the turn because he felt something strike him in the back.<sup>149</sup> In his testimony before the Commission, Governor Connally was certain that he was hit by the second shot, which he stated he did not hear.<sup>150</sup>



Mrs. Connally, too, heard a frightening noise from her right. Looking over her right shoulder, she saw that the President had both hands at his neck but she observed no blood and heard nothing. She watched as he slumped down with an empty expression on his face.<sup>151</sup> Roy Kellerman, in the right front seat of the limousine, heard a report like a firecracker pop. Turning to his right in the direction of the noise, Kellerman heard the President say "My God, I am hit," and saw both of the President's hands move up toward his neck. As he told the driver, "Let's get out of here; we are hit," Kellerman grabbed his microphone and radioed ahead to the lead car, "We are hit. Get us to the hospital immediately."<sup>152</sup>

The driver, William Greer, heard a noise which he took to be a backfire from one of the motorcycles flanking the Presidential car. When he heard the same noise again, Greer glanced over his shoulder and saw Governor Connally fall. At the sound of the second shot he realized that something was wrong, and he pressed down on the accelerator as Kellerman said, "Get out of here fast."<sup>153</sup> As he issued his instructions to Greer and to the lead car, Kellerman heard a "flurry of shots" within 5 seconds of the first noise. According to Kellerman, Mrs. Kennedy then cried out: "What are they doing to you?" Looking back from the front seat, Kellerman saw Governor Connally in his wife's lap and Special Agent Clinton J. Hill lying across the trunk of the car.<sup>154</sup>

Mrs. Connally heard a second shot fired and pulled her husband down into her lap.<sup>155</sup> Observing his blood-covered chest as he was pulled into his wife's lap, Governor Connally believed himself mortally wounded. He cried out, "Oh, no, no, no. My God, they are going to kill us all."<sup>156</sup> At first Mrs. Connally thought that her husband had been killed, but then she noticed an almost imperceptible movement and knew that he was still alive. She said, "It's all right. Be still."<sup>157</sup> The Governor was lying with his head on his wife's lap when he heard a shot hit the President.<sup>158</sup> At that point, both Governor and Mrs. Connally observed brain tissue splattered over the interior of the car.<sup>159</sup> According to Governor and Mrs. Connally, it was after this shot that Kellerman issued his emergency instructions and the car accelerated.<sup>160</sup>

### Reaction by Secret Service Agents

From the left front running board of the President's followup car, Special Agent Hill was scanning the few people standing on the south side of Elm Street after the motorcade had turned off Houston Street. He estimated that the motorcade had slowed down to approximately 9 or 10 miles per hour on the turn at the intersection of Houston and Elm Streets and then proceeded at a rate of 12 to 15 miles per hour with the followup car trailing the President's automobile by approximately 5 feet.<sup>161</sup> Hill heard a noise, which seemed to be a firecracker, coming from his right rear. He immediately looked to his right, "and, in so doing, my eyes had to cross the Presidential limousine and I saw President Kennedy grab at himself and lurch forward and to the

left.”<sup>162</sup> Hill jumped from the followup car and ran to the President’s automobile. At about the time he reached the President’s automobile, Hill heard a second shot, approximately 5 seconds after the first, which removed a portion of the President’s head.<sup>163</sup>

At the instant that Hill stepped onto the left rear step of the President’s automobile and grasped the handhold, the car lurched forward, causing him to lose his footing. He ran three or four steps, regained his position and mounted the car. Between the time he originally seized the handhold and the time he mounted the car, Hill recalled that—

Mrs. Kennedy had jumped up from the seat and was, it appeared to me, reaching for something coming off the right rear bumper of the car, the right rear tail, when she noticed that I was trying to climb on the car. She turned toward me and I grabbed her and put her back in the back seat, crawled up on top of the back seat and lay there.<sup>164</sup>

David Powers, who witnessed the scene from the President’s followup car, stated that Mrs. Kennedy would probably have fallen off the rear end of the car and been killed if Hill had not pushed her back into the Presidential automobile.<sup>165</sup> Mrs. Kennedy had no recollection of climbing onto the back of the car.<sup>166</sup>

Special Agent Ready, on the right front running board of the Presidential followup car, heard noises that sounded like firecrackers and ran toward the President’s limousine. But he was immediately called back by Special Agent Emory P. Roberts, in charge of the followup car, who did not believe that he could reach the President’s car at the speed it was then traveling.<sup>167</sup> Special Agent George W. Hickey, Jr., in the rear seat of the Presidential followup car, picked up and cocked an automatic rifle as he heard the last shot. At this point the cars were speeding through the underpass and had left the scene of the shooting, but Hickey kept the automatic weapon ready as the car raced to the hospital.<sup>168</sup> Most of the other Secret Service agents in the motorcade had drawn their sidearms.<sup>169</sup> Roberts noticed that the Vice President’s car was approximately one-half block behind the Presidential followup car at the time of the shooting and signaled for it to move in closer.<sup>170</sup>

Directing the security detail for the Vice President from the right front seat of the Vice-Presidential car, Special Agent Youngblood recalled:

As we were beginning to go down this incline, all of a sudden there was an explosive noise. I quickly observed unnatural movement of crowds, like ducking or scattering, and quick movements in the Presidential followup car. So I turned around and hit the Vice President on the shoulder and hollered, get down, and then looked around again and saw more of this movement, and so I proceeded to go to the back seat and get on top of him.<sup>171</sup>

Youngblood was not positive that he was in the rear seat before the second shot, but thought it probable because of President Johnson's statement to that effect immediately after the assassination.<sup>172</sup> President Johnson emphasized Youngblood's instantaneous reaction after the first shot:

I was startled by the sharp report or explosion, but I had no time to speculate as to its origin because Agent Youngblood turned in a flash, immediately after the first explosion, hitting me on the shoulder, and shouted to all of us in the back seat to get down. I was pushed down by Agent Youngblood. Almost in the same moment in which he hit or pushed me, he vaulted over the back seat and sat on me. I was bent over under the weight of Agent Youngblood's body, toward Mrs. Johnson and Senator Yarborough.<sup>173</sup>

Clifton C. Carter, riding in the Vice President's followup car a short distance behind, reported that Youngblood was in the rear seat using his body to shield the Vice President before the second and third shots were fired.<sup>174</sup>

Other Secret Service agents assigned to the motorcade remained at their posts during the race to the hospital. None stayed at the scene of the shooting, and none entered the Texas School Book Depository Building at or immediately after the shooting. Secret Service procedure requires that each agent stay with the person being protected and not be diverted unless it is necessary to accomplish the protective assignment.<sup>175</sup> Forrest V. Sorrels, special agent in charge of the Dallas office, was the first Secret Service agent to return to the scene of the assassination, approximately 20 or 25 minutes after the shots were fired.<sup>176</sup>

## PARKLAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

### The Race to the Hospital

In the final instant of the assassination, the Presidential motorcade began a race to Parkland Memorial Hospital, approximately 4 miles from the Texas School Book Depository Building.<sup>177</sup> On receipt of the radio message from Kellerman to the lead car that the President had been hit, Chief of Police Curry and police motorcyclists at the head of the motorcade led the way to the hospital.<sup>178</sup> Meanwhile, Chief Curry ordered the police base station to notify Parkland Hospital that the wounded President was en route.<sup>179</sup> The radio log of the Dallas Police Department shows that at 12:30 p.m. on November 22 Chief Curry radioed, "Go to the hospital—Parkland Hospital. Have them stand by." A moment later Curry added, "Looks like the President has been hit. Have Parkland stand by." The base station replied, "They have been notified."<sup>180</sup> Traveling at speeds estimated at times to be up to 70 or 80 miles per hour down the Stemmons Freeway and Harry Hines

Boulevard, the Presidential limousine arrived at the emergency entrance of the Parkland Hospital at about 12:35 p.m.<sup>181</sup> Arriving almost simultaneously were the President's followup car, the Vice President's automobile, and the Vice President's followup car. Admiral Burkley, the President's physician, arrived at the hospital "between 3 and 5 minutes following the arrival of the President," since the riders in his car "were not exactly aware what had happened" and the car went on to the Trade Mart first.<sup>182</sup>

When Parkland Hospital received the notification, the staff in the emergency area was alerted and trauma rooms 1 and 2 were prepared.<sup>183</sup> These rooms were for the emergency treatment of acutely ill or injured patients.<sup>184</sup> Although the first message mentioned an injury only to President Kennedy, two rooms were prepared.<sup>185</sup> As the President's limousine sped toward the hospital, 12 doctors rushed to the emergency area: surgeons, Drs. Malcolm O. Perry, Charles R. Baxter, Robert N. McClelland, Ronald C. Jones; the chief neurologist, Dr. William Kemp Clark; 4 anesthesiologists, Drs. Marion T. Jenkins, Adolph H. Giesecke, Jr., Jackie H. Hunt, Gene C. Akin; a urological surgeon, Dr. Paul C. Peters; an oral surgeon, Dr. Don T. Curtis; and a heart specialist, Dr. Fouad A. Bashour.<sup>186</sup>

Upon arriving at Parkland Hospital, Lawson jumped from the lead car and rushed into the emergency entrance, where he was met by hospital staff members wheeling stretchers out to the automobile.<sup>187</sup> Special Agent Hill removed his suit jacket and covered the President's head and upper chest to prevent the taking of photographs.<sup>188</sup> Governor Connally, who had lost consciousness on the ride to the hospital, regained consciousness when the limousine stopped abruptly at the emergency entrance. Despite his serious wounds, Governor Connally tried to get out of the way so that medical help could reach the President. Although he was reclining in his wife's arms, he lurched forward in an effort to stand upright and get out of the car, but he collapsed again. Then he experienced his first sensation of pain, which became excruciating.<sup>189</sup> The Governor was lifted onto a stretcher and taken into trauma room 2.<sup>190</sup> For a moment, Mrs. Kennedy refused to release the President, whom she held in her lap, but then Kellerman, Greer, and Lawson lifted the President onto a stretcher and pushed it into trauma room 1.<sup>191</sup>

### Treatment of President Kennedy

The first physician to see the President at Parkland Hospital was Dr. Charles J. Carrico, a resident in general surgery.<sup>192</sup> Dr. Carrico was in the emergency area, examining another patient, when he was notified that President Kennedy was en route to the hospital.<sup>193</sup> Approximately 2 minutes later, Dr. Carrico saw the President on his back, being wheeled into the emergency area.<sup>194</sup> He noted that the President was blue-white or ashen in color; had slow, spasmodic, agonal respiration without any coordination; made no voluntary movements; had his eyes open with the pupils dilated without any reaction

to light; evidenced no palpable pulse; and had a few chest sounds which were thought to be heart beats.<sup>195</sup> On the basis of these findings, Dr. Carrico concluded that President Kennedy was still alive.<sup>196</sup>

Dr. Carrico noted two wounds: a small bullet wound in the front lower neck, and an extensive wound in the President's head where a sizable portion of the skull was missing.<sup>197</sup> He observed shredded brain tissue and "considerable slow oozing" from the latter wound, followed by "more profuse bleeding" after some circulation was established.<sup>198</sup> Dr. Carrico felt the President's back and determined that there was no large wound there which would be an immediate threat to life.<sup>199</sup> Observing the serious problems presented by the head wound and inadequate respiration, Dr. Carrico directed his attention to improving the President's breathing.<sup>200</sup> He noted contusions, hematoma to the right of the larynx, which was deviated slightly to the left, and also ragged tissue which indicated a tracheal injury.<sup>201</sup> Dr. Carrico inserted a cuffed endotracheal tube past the injury, inflated the cuff, and connected it to a Bennett machine to assist in respiration.<sup>202</sup>

At that point, direction of the President's treatment was undertaken by Dr. Malcolm O. Perry, who arrived at trauma room 1 a few moments after the President.<sup>203</sup> Dr. Perry noted the President's back brace as he felt for a femoral pulse, which he did not find.<sup>204</sup> Observing that an effective airway had to be established if treatment was to be effective, Dr. Perry performed a tracheotomy, which required 3 to 5 minutes.<sup>205</sup> While Dr. Perry was performing the tracheotomy, Drs. Carrico and Ronald Jones made cutdowns on the President's right leg and left arm, respectively, to infuse blood and fluids into the circulatory system.<sup>206</sup> Dr. Carrico treated the President's known adrenal insufficiency by administering hydrocortisone.<sup>207</sup> Dr. Robert N. McClelland entered at that point and assisted Dr. Perry with the tracheotomy.<sup>208</sup>

Dr. Fouad Bashour, chief of cardiology, Dr. M. T. Jenkins, chief of anesthesiology, and Dr. A. H. Giesecke, Jr., then joined in the effort to revive the President.<sup>209</sup> When Dr. Perry noted free air and blood in the President's chest cavity, he asked that chest tubes be inserted to allow for drainage of blood and air. Drs. Paul C. Peters and Charles R. Baxter initiated these procedures.<sup>210</sup> As a result of the infusion of liquids through the cutdowns, the cardiac massage, and the airway, the doctors were able to maintain peripheral circulation as monitored at the neck (carotid) artery and at the wrist (radial) pulse. A femoral pulse was also detected in the President's leg.<sup>211</sup> While these medical efforts were in progress, Dr. Clark noted some electrical activity on the cardiograph attached to monitor the President's heart responses.<sup>212</sup> Dr. Clark, who most closely observed the head wound, described a large, gaping wound in the right rear part of the head, with substantial damage and exposure of brain tissue, and a considerable loss of blood.<sup>213</sup> Dr. Clark did not see any other hole or wound on the President's head. According to Dr. Clark,

the small bullet hole on the right rear of the President's head discovered during the subsequent autopsy "could have easily been hidden in the blood and hair." <sup>214</sup>

In the absence of any neurological, muscular, or heart response, the doctors concluded that efforts to revive the President were hopeless. <sup>215</sup> This was verified by Admiral Burkley, the President's physician, who arrived at the hospital after emergency treatment was underway and concluded that "my direct services to him at that moment would have interfered with the action of the team which was in progress." <sup>216</sup> At approximately 1 p.m., after last rites were administered to the President by Father Oscar L. Huber, Dr. Clark pronounced the President dead. He made the official determination because the ultimate cause of death, the severe head injury, was within his sphere of specialization. <sup>217</sup> The time was fixed at 1 p.m., as an approximation, since it was impossible to determine the precise moment when life left the President. <sup>218</sup> President Kennedy could have survived the neck injury, but the head wound was fatal. <sup>219</sup> From a medical viewpoint, President Kennedy was alive when he arrived at Parkland Hospital; the doctors observed that he had a heart beat and was making some respiratory efforts. <sup>220</sup> But his condition was hopeless, and the extraordinary efforts of the doctors to save him could not help but to have been unavailing.

Since the Dallas doctors directed all their efforts to controlling the massive bleeding caused by the head wound, and to reconstructing an airway to his lungs, the President remained on his back throughout his medical treatment at Parkland. <sup>221</sup> When asked why he did not turn the President over, Dr. Carrico testified as follows:

A. This man was in obvious extreme distress and any more thorough inspection would have involved several minutes—well, several—considerable time which at this juncture was not available. A thorough inspection would have involved washing and cleansing the back, and this is not practical in treating an acutely injured patient. You have to determine which things, which are immediately life threatening and cope with them, before attempting to evaluate the full extent of the injuries.

Q. Did you ever have occasion to look at the President's back?

A. No, sir. Before—well, in trying to treat an acutely injured patient, you have to establish an airway, adequate ventilation and you have to establish adequate circulation. Before this was accomplished the President's cardiac activity had ceased and closed cardiac massage was instituted, which made it impossible to inspect his back.

Q. Was any effort made to inspect the President's back after he had expired?

A. No, sir.

Q. And why was no effort made at that time to inspect his back?

A. I suppose nobody really had the heart to do it. <sup>222</sup>

Moreover, the Parkland doctors took no further action after the President had expired because they concluded that it was beyond the scope of their permissible duties.<sup>223</sup>

### Treatment of Governor Connally

While one medical team tried to revive President Kennedy, a second performed a series of operations on the bullet wounds sustained by Governor Connally.<sup>224</sup> Governor Connally was originally seen by Dr. Carrico and Dr. Richard Dulany.<sup>225</sup> While Dr. Carrico went on to attend the President, Dr. Dulany stayed with the Governor and was soon joined by several other doctors.<sup>226</sup> At approximately 12:45 p.m., Dr. Robert Shaw, chief of thoracic surgery, arrived at trauma room 2, to take charge of the care of Governor Connally, whose major wound fell within Dr. Shaw's area of specialization.<sup>227</sup>

Governor Connally had a large sucking wound in the front of the right chest which caused extreme pain and difficulty in breathing. Rubber tubes were inserted between the second and third ribs to reexpand the right lung, which had collapsed because of the opening in the chest wall.<sup>228</sup> At 1:35 p.m., after Governor Connally had been moved to the operating room, Dr. Shaw started the first operation by cutting away the edges of the wound on the front of the Governor's chest and suturing the damaged lung and lacerated muscles.<sup>229</sup> The elliptical wound in the Governor's back, located slightly to the left of the Governor's right armpit approximately five-eighths inch (a centimeter and a half) in its greatest diameter, was treated by cutting away the damaged skin and suturing the back muscle and skin.<sup>230</sup> This operation was concluded at 3:20 p.m.<sup>231</sup>

Two additional operations were performed on Governor Connally for wounds which he had not realized he had sustained until he regained consciousness the following day.<sup>232</sup> From approximately 4 p.m. to 4:50 p.m. on November 22, Dr. Charles F. Gregory, chief of orthopedic surgery, operated on the wounds of Governor Connally's right wrist, assisted by Drs. William Osborne and John Parker.<sup>233</sup> The wound on the back of the wrist was left partially open for draining, and the wound on the palm side was enlarged, cleansed, and closed. The fracture was set, and a cast was applied with some traction utilized.<sup>234</sup> While the second operation was in progress, Dr. George T. Shires, assisted by Drs. Robert McClelland, Charles Baxter, and Ralph Don Patman, treated the gunshot wound in the left thigh.<sup>235</sup> This punctuate missile wound, about two-fifths inch in diameter (1 centimeter) and located approximately 5 inches above the left knee, was cleansed and closed with sutures; but a small metallic fragment remained in the Governor's leg.<sup>236</sup>

### Vice President Johnson at Parkland

As President Kennedy and Governor Connally were being removed from the limousine onto stretchers, a protective circle of Secret Service agents surrounded Vice President and Mrs. Johnson and escorted



them into Parkland Hospital through the emergency entrance.<sup>237</sup> The agents moved a nurse and patient out of a nearby room, lowered the shades, and took emergency security measures to protect the Vice President.<sup>238</sup> Two men from the President's followup car were detailed to help protect the Vice President. An agent was stationed at the entrance to stop anyone who was not a member of the Presidential party. U.S. Representatives Henry B. Gonzalez, Jack Brooks, Homer Thornberry, and Albert Thomas joined Clifton C. Carter and the group of special agents protecting the Vice President.<sup>239</sup> On one occasion Mrs. Johnson, accompanied by two Secret Service agents, left the room to see Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Connally.<sup>240</sup>

Concern that the Vice President might also be a target for assassination prompted the Secret Service agents to urge him to leave the hospital and return to Washington immediately.<sup>241</sup> The Vice President decided to wait until he received definitive word of the President's condition.<sup>242</sup> At approximately 1:20 p.m., Vice President Johnson was notified by O'Donnell that President Kennedy was dead.<sup>243</sup> Special Agent Youngblood learned from Mrs. Johnson the location of her two daughters and made arrangements through Secret Service headquarters in Washington to provide them with protection immediately.<sup>244</sup>

When consulted by the Vice President, O'Donnell advised him to go to the airfield immediately and return to Washington.<sup>245</sup> It was decided that the Vice President should return on the Presidential plane rather than on the Vice-Presidential plane because it had better communication equipment.<sup>246</sup> The Vice President conferred with White House Assistant Press Secretary Malcolm Kilduff and decided that there would be no release of the news of the President's death until the Vice President had left the hospital.<sup>247</sup> When told that Mrs. Kennedy refused to leave without the President's body, the Vice President said that he would not leave Dallas without her.<sup>248</sup> On the recommendation of the Secret Service agents, Vice President Johnson decided to board the Presidential airplane, *Air Force One*, and wait for Mrs. Kennedy and the President's body.<sup>249</sup>

### Secret Service Emergency Security Arrangements

Immediately after President Kennedy's stretcher was wheeled into trauma room 1, Secret Service agents took positions at the door of the small emergency room. A nurse was asked to identify hospital personnel and to tell everyone, except necessary medical staff members, to leave the emergency room. Other Secret Service agents posted themselves in the corridors and other areas near the emergency room. Special Agent Lawson made certain that the Dallas police kept the public and press away from the immediate area of the hospital.<sup>250</sup> Agents Kellerman and Hill telephoned the head of the White House detail, Gerald A. Behn, to advise him of the assassination. The telephone line to Washington was kept open throughout the remainder of the stay at the hospital.<sup>251</sup>

Secret Service agents stationed at later stops on the President's itinerary of November 22 were redeployed. Men at the Trade Mart were driven to Parkland Hospital in Dallas police cars.<sup>252</sup> The Secret Service group awaiting the President in Austin were instructed to return to Washington.<sup>253</sup> Meanwhile, the Secret Service agents in charge of security at Love Field started to make arrangements for departure. As soon as one of the agents learned of the shooting, he asked the officer in charge of the police detail at the airport to institute strict security measures for the Presidential aircraft, the airport terminal, and the surrounding area. The police were cautioned to prevent picture taking. Secret Service agents working with police cleared the areas adjacent to the aircraft, including warehouses, other terminal buildings and the neighboring parking lots, of all people.<sup>254</sup> The agents decided not to shift the Presidential aircraft to the far side of the airport because the original landing area was secure and a move would require new measures.<sup>255</sup>

When security arrangements at the airport were complete, the Secret Service made the necessary arrangements for the Vice President to leave the hospital. Unmarked police cars took the Vice President and Mrs. Johnson from Parkland Hospital to Love Field. Chief Curry drove one automobile occupied by Vice President Johnson, U.S. Representatives Thomas and Thornberry, and Special Agent Youngblood. In another car Mrs. Johnson was driven to the airport accompanied by Secret Service agents and Representative Brooks. Motorcycle policemen who escorted the automobiles were requested by the Vice President and Agent Youngblood not to use sirens. During the drive Vice President Johnson, at Youngblood's instruction, kept below window level.<sup>256</sup>

### Removal of the President's Body

While the team of doctors at Parkland Hospital tried desperately to save the life of President Kennedy, Mrs. Kennedy alternated between watching them and waiting outside.<sup>257</sup> After the President was pronounced dead, O'Donnell tried to persuade Mrs. Kennedy to leave the area, but she refused. She said that she intended to stay with her husband.<sup>258</sup> A casket was obtained and the President's body was prepared for removal.<sup>259</sup> Before the body could be taken from the hospital, two Dallas officials informed members of the President's staff that the body could not be removed from the city until an autopsy was performed. Despite the protests of these officials, the casket was wheeled out of the hospital, placed in an ambulance, and transported to the airport shortly after 2 p.m.<sup>260</sup> At approximately 2:15 p.m. the casket was loaded, with some difficulty because of the narrow airplane door, onto the rear of the Presidential plane where seats had been removed to make room.<sup>261</sup> Concerned that the local officials might try to prevent the plane's departure, O'Donnell asked that the pilot take off immediately. He was informed that takeoff would be delayed until Vice President Johnson was sworn in.<sup>262</sup>

## THE END OF THE TRIP

### Swearing in of the New President

From the Presidential airplane, the Vice President telephoned Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, who advised that Mr. Johnson take the Presidential oath of office before the plane left Dallas.<sup>263</sup> Federal Judge Sarah T. Hughes hastened to the plane to administer the oath.<sup>264</sup> Members of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential parties filled the central compartment of the plane to witness the swearing in. At 2:38 p.m., c.s.t., Lyndon Baines Johnson took the oath of office as the 36th President of the United States.<sup>265</sup> Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Johnson stood at the side of the new President as he took the oath of office.<sup>266</sup> Nine minutes later, the Presidential airplane departed for Washington, D.C.<sup>267</sup>

### Return to Washington, D.C.

On the return flight, Mrs. Kennedy sat with David Powers, Kenneth O'Donnell, and Lawrence O'Brien.<sup>268</sup> At 5:58 p.m., e.s.t., *Air Force One* landed at Andrews AFB, where President Kennedy had begun his last trip only 31 hours before.<sup>269</sup> Detailed security arrangements had been made by radio from the President's plane on the return flight.<sup>270</sup> The public had been excluded from the base, and only Government officials and the press were permitted near the landing area. Upon arrival, President Johnson made a brief statement over television and radio. President and Mrs. Johnson were flown by helicopter to the White House, from where Mrs. Johnson was driven to her residence under Secret Service escort. The President then walked to the Executive Office Building, where he worked until 9 p.m.<sup>271</sup>

### The Autopsy

Given a choice between the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, Md., and the Army's Walter Reed Hospital, Mrs. Kennedy chose the hospital in Bethesda for the autopsy because the President had served in the Navy.<sup>272</sup> Mrs. Kennedy and the Attorney General, with three Secret Service agents, accompanied President Kennedy's body on the 45-minute automobile trip from Andrews AFB to the Hospital.<sup>273</sup> On the 17th floor of the Hospital, Mrs. Kennedy and the Attorney General joined other members of the Kennedy family to await the conclusion of the autopsy.<sup>274</sup> Mrs. Kennedy was guarded by Secret Service agents in quarters assigned to her in the naval hospital.<sup>275</sup> The Secret Service established a communication system with the White House and screened all telephone calls and visitors.<sup>276</sup>

The hospital received the President's body for autopsy at approximately 7:35 p.m.<sup>277</sup> X-rays and photographs were taken preliminarily and the pathological examination began at about 8 p.m.<sup>278</sup> The autopsy report noted that President Kennedy was 46 years of

age, 72½ inches tall, weighed 170 pounds, had blue eyes and reddish-brown hair. The body was muscular and well developed with no gross skeletal abnormalities except for those caused by the gunshot wounds. Under "Pathological Diagnosis" the cause of death was set forth as "Gunshot wound, head."<sup>279</sup> (See app. IX.)

The autopsy examination revealed two wounds in the President's head. One wound, approximately one-fourth of an inch by five-eighths of an inch (6 by 15 millimeters), was located about an inch (2.5 centimeters) to the right and slightly above the large bony protrusion (external occipital protuberance) which juts out at the center of the lower part of the back of the skull. The second head wound measured approximately 5 inches (13 centimeters) in its greatest diameter, but it was difficult to measure accurately because multiple crisscross fractures radiated from the large defect.<sup>280</sup> During the autopsy examination, Federal agents brought the surgeons three pieces of bone recovered from Elm Street and the Presidential automobile. When put together, these fragments accounted for approximately three-quarters of the missing portion of the skull.<sup>281</sup> The surgeons observed, through X-ray analysis, 30 or 40 tiny dustlike fragments of metal running in a line from the wound in the rear of the President's head toward the front part of the skull, with a sizable metal fragment lying just above the right eye.<sup>282</sup> From this head wound two small irregularly shaped fragments of metal were recovered and turned over to the FBI.<sup>283</sup>

The autopsy also disclosed a wound near the base of the back of President Kennedy's neck slightly to the right of his spine. The doctors traced the course of the bullet through the body and, as information was received from Parkland Hospital, concluded that the bullet had emerged from the front portion of the President's neck that had been cut away by the tracheotomy at Parkland.<sup>284</sup> The nature and characteristics of this neck wound and the two head wounds are discussed fully in the next chapter.

After the autopsy was concluded at approximately 11 p.m., the President's body was prepared for burial. This was finished at approximately 4 a.m.<sup>285</sup> Shortly thereafter, the President's wife, family and aides left Bethesda Naval Hospital.<sup>286</sup> The President's body was taken to the East Room of the White House where it was placed under ceremonial military guard.