Mr. Griffin. You don't want to send anything to us?

Mrs. Grant. Not through the mail.

This is the stuff, take it with you.

Mr. Burleson. That is the post office package that Jack picked up.

Mr. Griffin. This is the material you had printed?

Mrs. Grant. Yes.

Mr. Griffin. Okay.

TESTIMONY OF VICTOR F. ROBERTSON, JR.

The testimony of Victor F. Robertson, Jr. was taken at 2:05 p.m., on July 24, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Burt W. Griffin, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. Griffin, I will introduce myself again. I am Burt Griffin, and I am a member of the general counsel's staff of the Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy.

We have a general procedure of giving a little spiel in advance about what we are here for, so I will tell you that the Commission has been set up pursuant to an Executive order of President Johnson and a joint resolution of Congress and we have been directed to investigate and evaluate and report back to the President all the facts that have to do with the assassination of President Kennedy and the death of Lee Harvey Oswald.

We have asked you to come here today because in particular you provided some very helpful information to the FBI.

We want to find out what you can tell us about the events of November 22, 23, and 24. Did you receive a letter from us?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Yes; I did.

Mr. Griffin. Did you receive that 3 days ago or longer?

Mr. Robertson. I received one about 10 days ago just before I left for San Francisco and the convention. This one is dated the 18th.

Mr. Griffin. You are entitled to receive a written notice 3 days before you get here. Do you have any questions that you would like to ask about the deposition that is about to be taken?

Mr. Robertson. None at all.

Mr. Griffin. Would you raise your right hand? Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. Robertson. I do.

Mr. Griffin. Will you state your full name for the court reporter.

Mr. ROBERTSON. Victor F. Robertson, Jr.

Mr. Griffin. Where do you live?

Mr. Robertson, Dallas, Tex.

Mr. Griffin. Could you give us your address?

Mr. Robertson. 414 South Willomet Avenue.

Mr. Griffin. When were you born?

Mr. Robertson. December 17, 1933.

Mr. Griffin. Where are you presently employed?

Mr. Robertson. With WFAA radio and television.

Mr. Griffin. What do you do for them?

Mr. Robertson. I am a reporter.

Mr. Griffin. Are you a news reporter?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Oddly enough, the only way I can clarify it as a reporter, I work covering the city hall beat primarily, and political assignments. I do some work on the air, actually, I am assigned outside the station just as a reporter.

Mr. Griffin. Did you know Jack Ruby before November 22?

Mr. Robertson. Yes.

Mr. Griffin. When had you first met him?

Mr. Robertson. I am not sure I can give even an approximate date. Considerably prior to February of 1963, but how much before, I don't know.

Mr. Griffin. How many times had you seen him before February of 1963?

Mr. Robertson. Perhaps a dozen or two.

Mr. Griffin. How had it been that you had seen him on those various occasions?

Mr. Robertson. One of the men who had been working for our station had an interest in one of the girls who was working in Jack's club.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Which girl was that?

Mr. Robertson. I don't remember her name.

Mr. Griffin. Which employee was that?

Mr. Robertson. She was one of the girls who, I guess, "danced" for Jack. All I can remember about her is that she had at one time worked for Lone Star Cadillac and she quit there and went to work for Jack.

Mr. Griffin. What was the name of the employee who was interested?

Mr. Robertson. Murphy Martin.

Mr. Griffin. Was he employed at the radio station in November?

Mr. Robertson. Yes. He was working for us as our primary newscaster until February of 1963 when he went with the American Broadcasting Co. in New York.

Mr. Griffin. Did he leave Dallas in 1963?

Mr. Robertson. He left; yes.

Mr. Griffin. Had you visited the Carousel with him?

Mr. ROBERTSON. That's right. There were several of us that used to go up there in a group.

Mr. Griffin. After February of 1963, did you have occasion to see Jack Ruby?

Mr. Robertson. Yes. Not frequently. I would see him on the street or up at the city hall or something like that.

Mr. Griffin. Is there anybody that you have confused with Jack Ruby?

Mr. Robertson. No.

Mr. Griffin. Let me ask you, where were you when you first heard that President Kennedy had been shot?

Mr. Robertson. In the phone booth in the Adolphus Hotel.

Mr. Griffin. About what time of the day was that?

Mr. Robertson. It must have been immediately afterward. I had called the station. One of the men in the news room, John Allen, answered the phone, and I told him where I was, and he said, "My God, he's been hit." So far as I know, the phone is still hanging there.

Mr. Griffin. What did you do after that?

Mr. Robertson. I took off on a dead run down Main Street to the Depository.

Mr. Griffin. How long did you remain at the Depository?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Until the call came over the police radio about the officer having been shot.

Mr. Griffin. Then where did you go?

Mr. Robertson. I went out there.

Mr. Griffin. Who did you go out with?

Mr. ROBERTSON. I drove out with Ron Reiland and Hugh Aynesworth of the Dallas Morning News.

Mr. Griffin. Were you driving the automobile?

Mr. Robertson. No; Ron drove.

Mr. Griffin. Did you go out to the scene where Tippit had been shot?

Mr. Robertson. That's right.

Mr. Griffin. When you arrived out there, what did you find?

Mr. Robertson. Perhaps I should correct that. Actually, we went first to a location on West—no; East Jefferson Avenue, not quite opposite the Dudley Hughes Funeral Home where the man who shot Tippit was believed to be in the building. This was approximately a block and a half from the site where Tippit was shot. Then we went to the site where he had been found, and from there to the Texas Theatre.

Mr. Griffin. Did you arrive at the Texas Theatre before Oswald was brought

Mr. Robertson. Yes.

Mr. Griffin. Did you see Oswald being brought out of the theatre?

Mr. Robertson. Yes.

Mr. GRIFFIN. What did you observe?

Mr. ROBERTSON. As he was being brought out. He was in the back of the theatre in the center section, perhaps a quarter to a third of the way over from the right-hand aisle as you look down toward the screen.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you go into the theatre?

Mr. Robertson. That's right. I was looking through the drapes at the back over the little railing as they arrested him.

Mr. Griffin. Did you arrive before he was actually taken into custody?

Mr. Robertson, Yes.

Mr. Griffin. What did you see the police officers doing as you got there?

Mr. ROBERTSON. It was kind of confused. He rose in his seat and lifted his arm with his pistol just about simultaneously with the time they landed all over him.

Mr. Griffin. Did you hear him say anything?

Mr. Robertson. No.

Mr. Griffin. How far were you from him?

Mr. Robertson. About three or four rows.

Mr. Griffin. How many feet would that be?

Mr. Robertson. Possibly 10.

Mr. Griffin. Did you hear any of the police officers say anything?

Mr. Robertson. The officer in charge said as they were taking him out of the theatre, "Don't let anyone see his face," or words to that effect. "Don't let anyone touch him."

Mr. Griffin. How long were you inside the Texas Theatre before you saw Oswald rise out of his seat?

Mr. Robertson. A matter of a length of time it takes to walk from the door to those curtains and pull them apart. It was a matter of seconds.

Mr. Griffin. In other words, just as you pulled apart the curtains, you were able to see him?

Mr. ROBERTSON. Well, there is a slight delay there. When I arrived inside the theatre, the main portion of the theatre itself with the audience, it was still dark. I think the camera equipment must have been turned off, because I have no recollection of sound, and it was still dark when I opened the curtains. But the lights came on almost immediately, and the screen, of course, was blank at that time, and then again, just seconds, he rose, and they took him in custody.

Mr. Griffin. How close was your photographer to you?

Mr. ROBERTSON. I don't have any idea. He was there someplace shooting his pictures.

Mr. Griffin. Do you know if he got a picture of that episode?

Mr. Robertson. I thought he did until just the other day when they told me he didn't. Apparently the filter in the camera was in the wrong place.

Mr. Griffin. Do you know if Oswald had said something, if you would have heard it from where you were standing?

Mr. Robertson. I don't know.

Mr. Griffin. Were you able to hear the police officers as they were standing next to Oswald some 10 feet away from you?

Mr. Robertson. All I can say about that is, if I heard them, what I heard was not significant, and I don't recall having heard anything. I mean, there obviously was noise connected with it, but I don't know.

Mr. Griffin. If Oswald had said something and you had heard it, do you think you would have remembered it?

Mr. Robertson. If it had any significance to me, yes; but I really don't know.

Mr. Griffin. At the time you opened up the curtains and looked out, did you have any idea that this might be the man who would be accused of shooting the President?

Mr. Robertson. If I hadn't, I wouldn't have been there.

Mr. Griffin. What did you do after Oswald was apprehended and taken out of the theatre?

Mr. Robertson. Well, we followed the officers and Oswald out of the theatre and then they put him in the squad car and drove downtown. We got our own

car and returned to the station to leave the photographer, and then I went on down to the police station.

Mr. Griffin. How much later was it that you arrived at the police station after Oswald was apprehended?

Mr. Robertson. Judging by normal driving time, half an hour or 45 minutes.

Mr. Griffin. What did you do at the police station?

Mr. Robertson. Stood in the hall and asked questions of those people I knew, and listened to what was going on.

Mr. Griffin. Did you have dinner that night?

Mr. Robertson. Yes; one of the fellows in the auto theft bureau bought some hamburgers and brought them up there.

Mr. Griffin. You never left the building?

Mr. Robertson. No; depending on what you mean here. I was not in that hall all the time. There were times that I was in the new section of the municipal building adjacent, in the city manager's office, because the police department was reporting to him.

Mr. Griffin. You are referring to Elgin Crull?

Mr. Robertson, Yes.

Mr. Griffin. Were you present at the time when they were reporting to him?

Mr. Robertson. Yes.

Mr. Griffin. Can you tell us about what kind of action they were reporting and what sort of control he was exercising over them?

Mr. Robertson. I had the impression that their reports were advisory. They were keeping him posted as to how the investigation was progressing. There was one officer and I am not certain which one, who talked rather loud, and Mr. Crull had to hold the phone some distance from his ear in order to be comfortable. And it was as a result of that that I learned that they were definitely going to file both charges against Oswald.

Mr. Griffin. Do you remember when it was that you learned that, approximately?

Mr. Robertson. Approximately 3:15 in the afternoon.

Mr. Griffin. But the charges were not charged against Oswald until much later that night, isn't that right?

Mr. ROBERTSON. That's right.

Mr. Griffin. How did you place it at approximately 3:15 in the afternoon that the decision to file had been made?

Mr. Robertson. I don't know how I placed it. This I can't correlate in regard to anything else. If I could—now I assume I must have looked at a clock about that minute, because there has never been any question as to what the time was.

Mr. Griffin. Were you making notes as you were at the city hall in following out your assignment?

Mr. Robertson. No.

Mr. Griffin. Were you reporting back to anybody who was making any record of what you were observing?

Mr. ROBERTSON. I was reporting back to Mr. Walter Evans of our station, who at that time was the radio news director, keeping him advised of the information that I gathered, some of which we published and some of which we did not.

Mr. Griffin. You indicated when you talked to the FBI that you saw Jack Ruby sometime on November 22.

Mr. Robertson. That's correct.

Mr. Griffin. How do you place the time at which you saw him?

Mr. Robertson. Well, it was after 3:15. I can't place the time accurately. I have tried to do so in my own mind. I am reasonably certain before I had this opportunity to eat, which my best estimate is after 7 o'clock, and before 8 o'clock. As I say, it was definitely after 3:15 after I had learned about the other. Between this time, I am at a loss.

Mr. Griffin. Can you place it in terms of the press conference that Henry Wade held on Friday night?

Mr. ROBERTSON. It was before that.

Mr. Griffin. How much before that?

Mr. Robertson. Well, I got the impression it was a considerable time before that, although time seemed very long in that afternoon and evening.

Mr. Griffin. Do you recall when Henry Wade and Chief Curry walked out of Captain Fritz' office and the reporters crowded around and the decision was made to go down to the assembly room? Were you present at that time?

Mr. ROBERTSON. No; I was not. I was on the telephone in another room and I didn't see Mr. Wade come out of Captain Fritz' office.

Mr. Griffin, Well, after you got off that telephone, what did you do?

Mr. Robertson. I learned that they were holding the press conference down in the basement, but I did something else first rather than go down there, because we had a man down there on television. I don't recall just what else it was, but I had something I wanted to check on, so subsequently I went downstairs and I talked with Henry after the thing was over, briefly.

Mr. Griffin. Would there be any possibility that you saw Jack Ruby between the time you got off the telephone call and went down to the basement?

Mr. Robertson. No.

Mr. Griffin. Let's try to work backwards. Before you made this telephone call, do you recall what you had been doing? What did you make the telephone call about?

Mr. Robertson. I have no recollection of that at all. It was one of a series of telephone calls that I can't even give you any idea of how many, which was just a continual feeding of information into Walter Evans, and then trying to determine between ourselves which of this was valuable enough to publish and something that I would report on and what we ought to sit with until we got more confirmation, and that sort of thing.

Mr. Griffin. Are you able to pinpoint time at all between the time you had your sandwich or hamburger and the time you made that telephone call?

Mr. Robertson. Not in my own mind. Perhaps there is. If it is any help to you, if you have information on time which can go with this, it may narrow it down. It was before the police department changed for the first time their shift on guard at Captain Fritz' door. It was, I am reasonably certain, during the first shift of the two officers.

Mr. Griffin. Do you know the officers who were on guard?

Mr. Robertson. No; I do not. I believe—let me stress that word because I may be wrong about this, that it was after the first session of interrogation in Captain Fritz' office. Whether it was while Oswald was upstairs, or after he had been brought back, I am not certain, but I believe it was after the first session of interrogation.

Mr. Griffin. Well, is there any question in your mind about that man that you did see was Jack Ruby up there on the floor?

Mr. Robertson. No; I have no doubts.

Mr. Griffin. Suppose I told you that we interviewed the police officers who were on guard, and one of them says he recalls a man, who says he recognized Ruby, that he recalls a man who looks like Ruby, but it wasn't Ruby, come up and do what you have previously described to the FBI, and go on. Would that shake your judgment in any way?

Mr. Robertson. No. I don't, of course, claim that I cannot make a mistake. In my judgment, the man I saw was Jack Ruby. I know no one else who looks like that. Obviously, I could have been mistaken, but I don't believe so.

Mr. Griffin. Tell us what you think Jack Ruby, the man you think was Jack Ruby, what you recall him doing.

Mr. Robertson. He walked up to the door of Captain Fritz' office and put his hand on the knob and started to open it. He had the door open a few inches and began to step into the room, and the two officers stopped him. I was reasonably certain one of them, or some voice at that time had said, "You can't go in there, Jack." And the man in question, if it was not Jack Ruby, turned around and passed some joking remarks with a couple of people who were there, I don't know who, and went back down the hall toward the elevator.

Mr. Griffin. Do you recall how Jack Ruby was dressed on that occasion?
Mr. Robertson. No. All I saw was his head; as you know, he is a comparatively short man. I saw him through a break over some people's shoulder, and all I saw was about, well, from the shoulders. Not all of the shoulders, but a portion of the shoulders, the neck and the head.

Mr. Griffin. Did you see him; did you get a full front face view of him?

Mr. ROBERTSON. No. He was in profile.

Mr. Griffin. Where were you standing in relationship to the homicide door and the main elevator, public elevator?

Mr. ROBERTSON. I was standing almost immediately opposite Captain Fritz' door. Perhaps a matter of 2 feet beyond it toward the preseroom, which is opposite, the opposite direction of the elevators. As this happened, I stepped closer, and ultimately was on the elevator side of Captain Fritz' door about the middle of the hall.

Mr. Griffin. Did you follow Ruby on down the hall to see where he went?

Mr. Robertson. No; I didn't.

Mr. Griffin. Do you know how many feet he would have walked before he got out of sight?

Mr. Robertson. No. He was out of my sight almost instantly in that melee.

Mr. Griffin. So when you say he walked on down the hall, could it have been that he just walked a few feet and stopped?

Mr. Robertson. It could have been; that's right.

Mr. Griffin. Did you ever see him come back down the hall in the other direction?

Mr. ROBERTSON. No.

Mr. Griffin. How long did you remain at your position after you saw Ruby?

Mr. Robertson. I have no idea. Considerable length of time.

Mr. GRIFFIN. What were you standing there for?

Mr. Robertson. Trying to get a chance to talk to Bill Alexander.

Mr. Griffin. Was Alexander inside Fritz' office at that time?

Mr. Robertson. I wasn't certain whether he was at that time or not.

Mr. Griffin. Did you subsequently find out he was in there?

Mr. Robertson. I subsequently saw him.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Where did you see him?

Mr. ROBERTSON. I saw him coming out of Captain Fritz' office later. But now I have no idea how much later. I don't know whether he had gone in in the meantime, or not.

Mr. Griffin. I take it that you may have walked away and come back?

Mr. ROBERTSON. That's right.

Mr. Griffin. What made you think Alexander was inside Fritz' office?

Mr. Robertson. Somebody had said so; I assume.

Mr. Griffin. So that if we knew when Alexander was at the police station, we might have a more accurate estimate?

Mr. ROBERTSON. He was in and out several times throughout the evening. As a matter of fact, I saw him three or four times up until late in the evening.

Mr. Griffin. At the time you saw Ruby, do you recall any of the other news representatives who were around there?

Mr. ROBERTSON. No. There was a whole hall full, and I recall some of the people who were in the hall, but not necessarily in connection with that particular instant.

Mr. Griffin. Now, I believe that the first time you were interviewed by the FBI was on January 17, 1964. Do you recall being interviewed by an FBI agent by the name of Scott?

Mr. Robertson. Yes.

Mr. Griffin. How did you happen to be interviewed?

Mr. Robertson. I believe they called me and asked when I could be.

Mr. GRIFFIN. At that point, had they had any information that you had seen Ruby up there?

Mr. Robertson. I don't know.

Mr. Griffin. I believe that there did come a time after these events occurred that you made a radio tape recounting your experiences of the 3 days?

Mr. ROBERTSON. That's right.

Mr. Griffin. When was that tape made? I don't ask for the exact date, but approximately.

Mr. ROBERTSON. I don't know. At the time this question arose and the Commission asked the FBI if they would look into it further, Agent Drain contacted us and we tried to recall at that time precisely when the tape had been

made, and couldn't do so. To the best of our recollection, it was sometime around the first of the year.

Mr. Griffin. Would your best estimate be that at least a month passed before you made this tape?

Mr. Robertson. I believe so.

Mr. Griffin. Now on Sunday, November 24, after Ruby shot Oswald, did you report to anybody in your station that you had seen Ruby?

Mr. Robertson. Yes.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Who did you tell that to?

Mr. ROBERTSON. To Walter Evans.

Mr. Griffin. Was this used in any way as part of a newscast?

Mr. Robertson. I doubt that it would have been used for a newscast. I had been under the impression that I had mentioned it in connection with a wrap-up broadcast that we had done shortly after the events, within a week or so. When all of this came up, I mentioned that, and Walter said that he recollects it was not included in that, and I believe he checked the material. But I had thought we had. I thought I talked about it at that time.

Mr. Griffin. As you think back over how your own recollection of this event has evolved, have there been any changes in your mind about, in other words, as you first reported this to Evans? Has there been any difference in your conception of what had happened when you reported on it to Evans, as opposed to what it is now in your mind?

Mr. Robertson. You mean have the events or descriptions changed any?

Mr. Griffin. What I mean to say is, very often the first time we think about this, we will describe it in one way, and then as we think about it and talk about it again, why in our own mind it changes and our description changes. Has that happened in connection with this event at all?

Mr. Robertson. If it has, I am not aware of it. The only way in which I would say some sort of mutation of this sort has taken place is that, looking back from this perspective, I don't feel so greatly that thundering herd in the hall as I did at that time. I am further removed and it seems more of an abstraction. It was at the time, frankly indescribable, in my judgment. But other than that, I can't recall.

Mr. Griffin. You mentioned when you talked with one of the FBI agents that in the time you had seen Ruby, you had seen him bawling out his fellow employees. Can you give us some specific instances of that?

Mr. ROBERTSON. I remember one particular—I am sorry I can't say when—I can't even say which girl it was—and I recall I only heard a portion of the conversation. Apparently the girl had been running around with someone of whom Jack didn't approve, and the gist of the conversation, as I understood it at the time, and this was fragmentary, was you either leave this guy alone or find some place else to work.

Mr. Griffin. Let me ask you if you know any of these people. Do you know Ruby's stripper, Little Lynn?

Mr. Robertson. No.

Mr. Griffin. Did you know her before November 22?

Mr. Robertson. Not as far as I know. I don't know her now.

Mr. Griffin. Did you know his stripper, Kathy Kay?

Mr. Robertson. No.

Mr. Griffin. How about Tammi True?

Mr. Robertson. No.

Mr. Griffin. Do you know his roommate, George Senator?

Mr. Robertson. No; I never met Senator.

Mr. Griffin. Were you downtown at all on Saturday, November 23?

Mr. ROBERTSON. No.

Mr. Griffin. Have you heard any information which might indicate how Ruby got into the police department on Sunday morning?

Mr. Robertson. I heard one story, and I have no idea whether there is any validity to it or not. The story I heard was that he had gained entrance to the basement by helping a camera crew push a camera down the ramp, that he had attached himself to the crew pushing the camera, and got in that way.

Mr. Griffin. Have you heard anything that would indicate that any police officer gave him any assistance or any advice?

Mr. ROBERTSON. No.

Mr. Griffin. I am going to mark for the purpose of identification a copy of the interview report that the FBI made after talking with you. The first one is a report made by Special Agent Paul Scott of an interview he had with you on January 17, 1964, and it consists of three pages, and are numbered at the bottom of the page, 10, 11, and 12, and I am going to mark this at the top "Victor Robertson, Deposition, July 24, 1964, Exhibit No. 1." I would like you to look at it, Mr. Robertson, and read it over and tell me if there are any changes or corrections that you would make in it. I really have particular reference to whether or not that is an accurate report of what you said at the time.

Mr. Robertson (after reading report). The only comment I would make about the report is that where it says, "While at Houston Street with Hugh Aynesworth, a WFAA photographer, he heard on a police radio that Officer Tippit had been shot in Oak Cliff, and he and Aynesworth proceeded to Oak Cliff." Aynesworth was not the photographer. There were two separate people. The other thing I would comment on is, in the second paragraph, Mr. Scott reports accurately that I had seen Ruby, and said sometime possibly between 5 and 7 p.m., which is what I told him and was my best judgment as to the time, although it may have been slightly somewhere between 3:15 and 7 or 8 p.m. That is what I told him and I answered to my best judgment on it.

Mr. Griffin. In light of the conversation that we have had today, is that still your best judgment or would you narrow it in some other way?

Mr. ROBERTSON. I can't narrow it. The only thing that I can do is really broaden it to be sure that it is comprehensive.

Mr. Griffin. What is the latest you would place it at?

Mr. Robertson. I believe the latest possibly would have been 7 or 7:30 p.m. Mr. Griffin. Let me hand you what I have marked as Victor Robertson's Deposition, July 24, 1964, Exhibit No. 2. This is a document that consists of two pages, and it is an interview report by FBI Agent Vincent E. Drain, of an interview he had with you on June 9, 1964. I ask you to read it and comment on that in the same way that you did on the first one.

Mr. Robertson (after reading report). The only comment I would make on this is at the end of the second paragraph. Mr. Drain has stated that the first time Ruby was mentioned by him was on a portion of the time that he reported in late December, 1963, etc., etc. This apparently is Vincent's report of the consensus that was true at the time. As I said, I mentioned to him I thought I had had it in the earlier broadcast, but Walter Evans said it had not been. The other observation I would make is that I don't recall having said between 5 and 6 o'clock. I thought I had said between 5 and 7.

Mr. Griffin. All right, let me ask you then if you will sign each of these exhibits up near the top where I have marked them.

Mr. Robertson. Is this all right?

Mr. Griffin. Any place that is conspicuous.

Mr. Robertson (initials).

Mr. Griffin. Thank you very much. I appreciate your taking out this time.

Mr. Robertson. My pleasure. If there is anything else I can do, let me know.

TESTIMONY OF FREDERIC RHEINSTEIN

The testimony of Frederic Rheinstein was taken at 10:30 a.m., on July 22, 1964, at 120 Linden Avenue, Long Beach, Calif., by Mr. Joseph A. Ball, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Frederic Rheinstein, called as a witness herein, having been first duly sworn was examined and testified as follows: