

Mr. HUBERT. And Vaughn turned immediately back and went back to his position?

Sergeant PUTNAM. Was walking back in that direction. In other words, we could have been close enough to touch him.

Mr. HUBERT. As you passed, he was walking back.

Sergeant PUTNAM. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. And therefore, he was facing towards the entrance?

Sergeant PUTNAM. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you hear him call to anybody up there?

Sergeant PUTNAM. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, is there anything else you would like to say?

Sergeant PUTNAM. Well—

Mr. HUBERT. Any other facts that aren't covered in the documents which we have identified here as 5071, 5072 and 5073?

Sergeant PUTNAM. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. I do not believe you have been interviewed by any member of the Commission's staff at all prior to this deposition?

Sergeant PUTNAM. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, I think that is all. If any fact that has not been developed in these reports and in your testimony should come to your attention, I hope you will free to let us know about it if you think it is a material fact. All we are seeking is to get the facts. That's all. And if, by chance, you have forgotten something and you should remember it at a later date, please contact us through the United States attorney's office and tell them that you have a fact that you would like to report that you have overlooked and we will make arrangements to see you again.

But at this time, we will give you the 3 days' notice.

I thank you, sir.

TESTIMONY OF WILLIE B. SLACK

The testimony of Willie B. Slack was taken at 11 a.m., on March 31, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Leon D. Hubert, Jr., assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. HUBERT. This is the deposition of Patrolman Willie—is that Willie? Not William?

Mr. SLACK. Willie.

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

I state to you now that the general nature of the Commission's inquiry is to ascertain, evaluate and report upon the facts relating to the assassination of President Kennedy, and the subsequent violent death of Lee Harvey Oswald. In particular to you, Mr. Slack, the nature of the inquiry today is to determine the facts that you know about the death of Oswald, and any other pertinent facts you may know about the general inquiry. Now, Mr. Slack, you have appeared here today by virtue of the general request made to Chief Curry by J. Lee Rankin, who is general counsel of the President's Commission. Under the rules adopted by this Commission, you are entitled to a 3-day written notice that your deposition is going to be taken, but the rules also provide that you may waive the 3-day written notice if you see fit to do so. And are you now willing to waive that 3-day notice?

Mr. SLACK. I do.

Mr. HUBERT. That being the case, will you stand and be sworn?
Do you solemnly swear then to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. SLACK. I do.

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

Mr. SLACK. W. B. Slack.

Mr. HUBERT. Your age?

Mr. SLACK. Thirty-nine.

Mr. HUBERT. Your residence?

Mr. SLACK. 5605 Sumatra, Dallas.

Mr. HUBERT. And your occupation?

Mr. SLACK. Patrolman.

Mr. HUBERT. How long have you been a patrolman on the Dallas Police Force?

Mr. SLACK. Ten years.

Mr. HUBERT. What is your particular assignment?

Mr. SLACK. Working in the jail office.

Mr. HUBERT. What duties do you have there, in general?

Mr. SLACK. We answer the telephone, and when the officers bring the worksheets down, we book them on a booking form.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, book the prisoners in and out?

Mr. SLACK. Check them out when somebody comes in and pays them out.

Mr. HUBERT. When you say, "Pays them out," you mean, makes bond?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir; or writs.

Mr. HUBERT. Or writs? Oh, you mean if they are released on a writ?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, your office then is the control center, as it were, for people coming in and people coming out?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. You work in shifts, of course, like all the rest of the police?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you on duty on November 24, 1963, the day that Oswald was shot?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. What time did you come on duty?

Mr. SLACK. 6:30 a.m., in the morning.

Mr. HUBERT. You had what is called the first platoon, I think. Eleven o'clock, oh, no—I beg your pardon. That would be the second platoon.

Mr. SLACK. Second platoon.

Mr. HUBERT. Comes on at 6:30 and goes off at 2:30?

Mr. SLACK. 2:30.

Mr. HUBERT. Therefore, you were there between 11 and the time Oswald was shot?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know Jack Ruby?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Had you ever seen him before that day?

Mr. SLACK. Not to my knowledge; no.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you recall the occasion when Oswald was brought down to be transferred to the county jail?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, tell us what you know about it in your own words.

Mr. SLACK. Well, he got off the elevator and—

Mr. HUBERT. Had you ever seen him before that time?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; and he was flanked on either side by detectives and Captain Fritz was with the detectives, and they went out the swinging doors, which is into the basement of the city hall.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know what time that was?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. What time was it?

Mr. SLACK. 11:20.

Mr. HUBERT. How do you fix that?

Mr. SLACK. When a prisoner is released from jail we have to put the time on a booking card, we have to put them down.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you do so?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Does that booking card exist?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Have you examined it briefly?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. How long ago?

Mr. SLACK. I examined it before I came to work, before I came over here.

Mr. HUBERT. When? This morning, or yesterday, or——

Mr. SLACK. That was yesterday.

Mr. HUBERT. What does it show?

Mr. SLACK. It shows——

Mr. HUBERT. About the time?

Mr. SLACK. Transferred to the county at 11:20 a.m., on the 24th of November.

Mr. HUBERT. Whose handwriting is that entry in?

Mr. SLACK. It is in mine.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, how did you fix the time? How do you normally fix the time?

Mr. SLACK. Well, we put the date and the time.

Mr. HUBERT. What I mean is, do you have an electric clock?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; do it with a pencil, or fountain pen.

Mr. HUBERT. You mean you rely upon your watch?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; we have a clock on the wall.

Mr. HUBERT. Is that an electric clock?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Is it accurate?

Mr. SLACK. That, I can't answer, because——

Mr. HUBERT. Well, I mean, you all go by it?

Mr. SLACK. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Time is of importance in going in and going out of prisoners, isn't it?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir; it sure is important.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know if the clock is checked at any time to see if it is?

Mr. SLACK. Not to my knowledge; no, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Have you ever observed it to be wrong?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; I sure haven't.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, it certainly needs checking procedure to see if it loses time, or gains, or stops because of the electricity being cut off, or something of that sort.

Mr. SLACK. Yes. Well, if the time was different from one of our watches I imagine they would call "Time," sir. Of course, we call "Time," all the time usually checking the news, you know, so it is checked that way.

Mr. HUBERT. In your opinion, that clock is accurate; right?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. If it were in error, what would you say would be the greatest error it could be in?

Mr. SLACK. Well, it couldn't be over a minute or two either way, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, what happened after that?

Mr. SLACK. Well, he went out the door, and then my job there was to, when the lieutenant told me that they had got in the car or transportation which was to be used, they then would notify me, and I was supposed to notify the dispatcher that they were——

Mr. HUBERT. What were you supposed to notify the dispatcher?

Mr. SLACK. That they were on their way.

Mr. HUBERT. Had you received any orders about that?

Mr. SLACK. Well——

Mr. HUBERT. I mean, who told you that, to notify the dispatcher?

Mr. SLACK. Lieutenant Wiggins.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, notifying the dispatcher, would mean that it would go over the radio?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; they have a direct line to the county.

Mr. HUBERT. So, the purpose of notifying the dispatcher, so far as you know, was for them to telephone the county that the prisoner was on his way?

Mr. SLACK. Apparently; yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Had you been told that by Wiggins or had you been told that—merely to notify the dispatcher?

Mr. SLACK. The—

Mr. HUBERT. We have to take it on the record. Just—

Mr. SLACK. Well, my letter there I wrote that—do you have a copy of it?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes.

Mr. SLACK. That I—well, I can say that I was told to tell the dispatcher that he was en route to the county.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know who the dispatcher was?

Mr. SLACK. Jim Farr is the dispatcher.

Mr. HUBERT. No; I mean on that particular day?

Mr. SLACK. Well, he is, like I say, the dispatcher up there, but when I called on this particular occasion, I got Miss Cason first, and then I—

Mr. HUBERT. Of course, that was to report to Miss Cason that the man had been shot?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir; but—

Mr. HUBERT. What did you say to Miss Cason?

Mr. SLACK. Told her that Oswald had been shot, and that we needed a doctor.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you call for an ambulance, tell her you needed an ambulance?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Your remark to Miss Cason was simply that Oswald had been shot and to get a doctor?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir; best of my knowledge.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, when did you write out the entry which you say was in your own hand showing that the prisoner was being transferred at 11:20? Was that done at 11:20 or later?

Mr. SLACK. I would—I believe I wrote it out then. In other words, what I am in the habit of doing is this. That is something that comes naturally.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, the normal procedure is that the time of release and the time of action taken—

Mr. SLACK. I was standing there—

Mr. HUBERT. Let me finish my question; is done simultaneously with the act itself?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. So, that normally, when a prisoner leaves you make these notations, and you look to see what time it is. You enter the time, and that is how the notation is made?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. As far as you know, was there any deviation from that normal procedure in the case of the transfer of Oswald?

Mr. SLACK. The deviation, it was in this point, that we usually have it filled out before the prisoner is brought down. In this particular case, we didn't know when he was going to be transferred, so therefore, we had to write down when he did come down.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, you hadn't pulled his card?

Mr. SLACK. I had his card pulled. I knew he was going to be transferred, presumably.

Mr. HUBERT. But you didn't know the time; so, therefore, you hadn't entered anything?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; I had it on the clipboard on the counter where we always keep them.

Mr. HUBERT. What is your best recollection about what you entered there with reference to the shooting, that is to say, was the entry made before or after the shooting?

Mr. SLACK. It was made before the shooting.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, it was made in the interval when he came out of the elevator and they walked out?

Mr. SLACK. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Yes.

Mr. SLACK. [Witness nods head.]

Mr. HUBERT. She can't—you have to say something, because the reporter can't record silence.

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir; I forget.

Mr. HUBERT. You didn't see the shooting, as I understand it?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; I saw the shuffle out there.

Mr. HUBERT. And then they brought Ruby and Oswald in?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Did either Ruby or Oswald say anything that you, yourself heard?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you notice the time that they brought them in? Who came in first?

Mr. SLACK. I don't know, sir. Like I say, the lieutenant told me to call the doctor, and, of course, my back end was turned a few seconds.

Mr. HUBERT. When you say, "lieutenant," I believe you are referring to Lieutenant Wiggins?

Mr. SLACK. Wiggins; yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. So, you called the dispatcher and told him what you said you told him, and what happened next, to your recollection?

Mr. SLACK. Well, it was just about over with then except the ambulance did come in, and, of course, that was a little confusion around there.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know anything about the times of, say the movement of Ruby up in the elevator to the jail, or the time when the ambulance arrived and the time when it left with Oswald?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; not the exact time; no, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. No record was made on any of that?

Mr. SLACK. Not that I know of. Not in our office.

Mr. HUBERT. What is the form called that you filled in with your own hand about the time of movement? Does that have a number?

Mr. SLACK. We call it a booking card.

Mr. HUBERT. Booking card?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. And I think you testified that yesterday you looked at it to refresh your memory and it is in your handwriting, and it states 11:20?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Apparently sometime ago, let's say on December 12, you were interviewed by the FBI, and at that time you stated it was between 11:25 and 11:30 that Oswald was brought down. Can you assist us in explaining this discrepancy between the two times? Do you remember that interview?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir; I remember the interview; yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Edmond Hardin and Paul Scott, and yourself?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you recall telling them it was 11:25?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; I don't.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you have any recollection now about it, or are you relying upon what you saw on the records yesterday when you looked at it?

Mr. SLACK. That would be the way I would have to go on it, sir, would be the records there.

Mr. HUBERT. You are satisfied that the record which is normally made contemporaneously with the act is really more accurate than your present memory right now?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Or would have been more accurate actually than your statement to the FBI agent if, in fact, you did say that?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. I would like you to just read these two documents. The one, the FBI report, and the other, the letter. Have you had occasion to read the two documents I have handed you, sir?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Let me mark them then for identification.

Mr. SLACK. There is a little discrepancy—

Mr. HUBERT. Yes; I'm going to give you an opportunity to explain them.

For the purpose of identification I am marking what purports to be a copy of a letter addressed to Mr. J. E. Curry, chief of police, apparently signed by Willie B. Slack, dated November 27, 1963. I am marking it "Dallas, Texas, March 31, 1963, Exhibit No. 5116, deposition of W. B. Slack." Putting my name below it. It has only one page. For the purpose of identification, I am marking what purports to be an FBI interview of Willie B. Slack by Agents Hardin and Scott, which took place on December 2, 1963. I am marking the first page of that document with the following, "Dallas, Texas, March 31, 1964. Exhibit No. 5117. Deposition of W. B. Slack," and signing my name, and on the second page thereof, on the lower right-hand corner I am placing my initial. Now, Patrolman Slack, I show you the document marked Exhibit 5116, and ask you if you have read it, and if it is a correct statement?

Mr. SLACK. All right.

Mr. HUBERT. Is that a correct statement?

Mr. SLACK. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. So that the record may show that we are both talking about the same thing, same document, I wonder if you will just put your name below mine. Now, we will refer to a document—in two pages—that I have marked a moment ago for identification as "5117," and ask you if you have read that, and if that is correct, or if you have any corrections or observation or comments to make with reference to that document? For the purpose of identification will you mark these two documents with your name where my name is, and with your initials where my initials are, and then you can make the comments if you want to correct it or modify it and so forth.

Mr. SLACK. You want me to mark it before I—

Mr. HUBERT. Just sign your name on that, and on the second page write your initials. That's right. Now, have you any comments to make, or any corrections to make concerning that document?

Mr. SLACK. Well, on your second page, in here, the document here stated that Patrolman Slack cleared his office. I didn't have anything to do with security in the office. Only part I was in charge would be the immediate area in which I was standing, and nobody was in there, of course, but our personnel. Of course, I believe I did make the statement to them after they had cleared it, it wasn't no one that had come in except authorized personnel.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, you are speaking of the second to last paragraph on the second page and you want to modify that paragraph so that it will conform with the statement you have just made, and which the stenographer has recorded?

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir; I am not a supervisor or anything like that.

Mr. HUBERT. I notice also, and I believe you have already testified about this, but I think for the purposes of clarity, we ought to note it, and that is that upon the first page there is a statement that about 11:25 to 11:30, Oswald was brought down.

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Your previous testimony actually has clarified that, but it was those times that you were speaking about in this deposition earlier, that is to say, that as to this statement in "5117" the last paragraph on the first page, wherein it says that you saw Oswald coming down somewhere between 11:25 and 11:30, your previous statement or testimony is more accurate, that is to say, that it was about 11:20.

Mr. SLACK. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. And I think that modification ought to be noted, too.

Mr. SLACK. Yes; I do too.

Mr. HUBERT. And it is noted, because the reporter has taken it down. Now, have you any other statement that you would like to make that has not been covered?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; that is about all.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you interviewed by me or any other member of the Commission's staff prior to the taking of this deposition?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir; except the—

Mr. HUBERT. The FBI? Yes. I mean the President's Commission?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. The staff of the President's Commission?

Mr. SLACK. No, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, sir; I think that is all. Thank you very much.

TESTIMONY OF DON FRANCIS STEELE

The testimony of Don Francis Steele was taken at 10:05 p.m., on March 25, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Leon D. Hubert, Jr., assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. HUBERT. My name is Leon D. Hubert. I am a member of the advisory staff of the General Counsel on the President's Commission. Under the provisions of the Executive Order 11130, dated November 29, 1963, and joint resolution of Congress No. 137 and the rules of procedure adopted by the Commission in conformance with that Executive order in the joint resolution I have been authorized to take the sworn deposition from you, Mr. Steele. I now state that the general nature of the Commission's inquiry is to ascertain, evaluate, and report upon the facts relating to the assassination of President Kennedy and the subsequent violent death of Lee Harvey Oswald. In particular to you, Mr. Steele, the nature of our inquiry tonight is to determine the facts you know about the death of Oswald and any other pertinent facts you may know about the general inquiry. Mr. Steele, you have appeared here by virtue of a request made by the general counsel on the staff of the President's Commission, Mr. J. Lee Rankin, directed to Chief J. E. Curry. Under the rules adopted by the Commission, you are entitled to a 3-day written notice prior to the taking of this deposition, but the rules adopted by this Commission also provide that you may waive that 3-day notice if you are willing to do so. Now, the question is: Are you willing to waive the notice?

Sergeant STEELE. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Will you stand and raise your right hand and be sworn. Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Sergeant STEELE. I do.

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

Sergeant STEELE. Don Francis Steele.

Mr. HUBERT. Your age?

Sergeant STEELE. Thirty-two.

Mr. HUBERT. Your residence?

Sergeant STEELE. 1707 Kent Drive, Arlington, Tex.

Mr. HUBERT. Your occupation?

Sergeant STEELE. Sergeant of police, Dallas, Tex.

Mr. HUBERT. How long have you been a sergeant of police?

Sergeant STEELE. Five years and four months—five months, excuse me.

Mr. HUBERT. What division or department of the Dallas Police Department?

Sergeant STEELE. I am presently in the patrol division.

Mr. HUBERT. Where were you on November 22, 23, and 24, 1963?

Sergeant STEELE. November 22 I was on a day off.

Mr. HUBERT. 23d?

Sergeant STEELE. 23d I worked in the Oak Cliff area.

Mr. HUBERT. And the—

Sergeant STEELE. And the 24th, of course, the regular assignment is in the Oak Cliff area, and I reported to that assignment.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you moved from that assignment?

Sergeant STEELE. I came to the city hall, came to the police station downtown