

Mr. HUBERT. And she would have had it stamped in this box called "Ambulance ordered," and "time received," isn't that right?

Mr. HULSE. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. Then after she made up the card and had it stamped, how did it get to you?

Mr. HULSE. It is put on a conveyer belt that runs from one room to the radio room, this conveyer belt, and falls into a box, and I pick it up.

Mr. HUBERT. And your—you have your own timeclock there?

Mr. HULSE. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. So, as soon as you have done what you said you did, you slip it into a stamp machine and it automatically stamps the time?

Mr. HULSE. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, I notice that there is an initial in the column right next to the figure "118," "MJ," which Mrs. Cason advises was put there by her. Do you know who that refers to?

Mr. HULSE. Yes, sir; the other officer that was working on the radio with me. In this—"MJ" M. J. Jackson, his initials, M. J.

Mr. HUBERT. But, as a matter of fact you handled it?

Mr. HULSE. Yes; I actually handled the dispatching of the call and the ambulance.

Mr. HUBERT. Why didn't he do it?

Mr. HULSE. Well, at that time Mr. Jackson was fairly new to the radio dispatcher's office and everything was in such a turmoil there I decided that I would handle all transmissions made on the radio, seeing that he was new to the office and didn't know quite how to handle the calls under the conditions.

Mr. HUBERT. And in any case, you distinctly remember handling the call which is reflected by this Exhibit 5135?

Mr. HULSE. Yes; I do.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, Officer Hulse, we had an interview now, you and I, did we not, immediately before the beginning of this deposition?

Mr. HULSE. Yes; we did.

Mr. HUBERT. Can you recall anything that was covered in that interview which has not been covered in this deposition?

Mr. HULSE. No; I couldn't. I believe all has been covered.

Mr. HUBERT. Can you think of any inconsistencies between what was developed in the course of the interview and what was developed in the course of the deposition?

Mr. HULSE. No.

Mr. HUBERT. Have you any other comments that you would like to make concerning this matter of any nature whatsoever?

Mr. HULSE. No, sir; I have told everything I know about it.

Mr. HUBERT. Thank you, sir.

TESTIMONY OF IRA JEFFERSON "JACK" BEERS, JR.

The testimony of Ira Jefferson "Jack" Beers, Jr., was taken at 9:15 a.m., on April 14, 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. First of all, let me introduce myself. My name is Burt Griffin, and I am with the advisory staff of the General Counsel staff of the President's Commission investigating the Assassination of President Kennedy. I want to tell you a little bit about the Commission, what we are authorized to do and so forth before we actually get into the deposition. The Commission was set up pursuant to Executive order of President Johnson on November 30, 1963, and also pursuant to a joint resolution of Congress which was enacted about the same time. Under these two documents, the Executive order and the joint resolution, the Commission has been authorized to promulgate certain rules

and regulations, and under those rules and regulations I have been specifically designated to take your sworn deposition.

I want to tell you a little bit about the general nature of our inquiry. The Commission has been set up to inquire into and evaluate and report back to President Johnson upon the facts relating to the assassination of President Kennedy and the subsequent murder of Lee Harvey Oswald, and particularly as to you, Mr. Beers, we are interested in what you know about Jack Ruby and about the events of November 24.

You have been interviewed by the FBI, and we have these interview reports before us, so we have a place to start anyhow in talking about this matter.

You have been asked to appear here by virtue of an oral request which was made by Special Agent Sorrels of the Secret Service. I don't know whether he made it to you personally or to your employer or how it actually happened. Under the rules of the Commission you are entitled to have a 3-day written notice before you are obligated to appear here.

Mr. BEERS. I did.

Mr. GRIFFIN. All right, you got it.

Mr. BEERS. He changed the date and asked me to come this day.

Mr. GRIFFIN. All right; fine. But I did want to make clear to you that if there have been any irregularities or anything that you prefer to have a different time, we could discuss that. But I presume that you are satisfied since you are here?

Mr. BEERS. That is all right.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Fine. Also under the rules of the Commission you are entitled to appear here with an attorney, and we actually encourage people to have attorneys, if they so desire, although many of the people, in fact most of them, don't appear with an attorney. I see you are not here with an attorney, and I take it that is because you don't desire one. But if you do for any reason feel you would like an attorney, please let us know and we can defer your deposition or interrupt it, whatever the case might be. I ask if you have any questions about what is involved here before I ask you to be sworn?

Mr. BEERS. I have no questions whatsoever.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Okay, would you raise your right hand, then.

Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Would you state for the record your full name.

Mr. BEERS. Ira Jefferson Beers, known as Jack.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Can you tell us when you were born, Mr. Beers?

Mr. BEERS. July 14, 1923.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Where do you live presently?

Mr. BEERS. I live at 10913 Joaquín Drive.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Is that here in Dallas?

Mr. BEERS. Dallas.

Mr. GRIFFIN. What is your occupation?

Mr. BEERS. Photographer with the Dallas Morning News.

Mr. GRIFFIN. How long have you been employed with the Dallas Morning News?

Mr. BEERS. A little over 14 years.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I take it you have been a photographer?

Mr. BEERS. Since 1942; yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now I want to hand you a document which I have marked Dallas, Tex., April 14, 1963, Ira J. Beers' Exhibit 5350. This purports to be a copy of an FBI interview report. The interview took place, according to this report, on November 30, 1963, between you and two Special Agents of the FBI, Mr. Pinkston and W. Harlan Brown. I want to hand you this and ask you if you have had a chance to read it?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you have any additions or corrections that you would want to make in that. What I am referring to here right now in particular is whether you feel that that report accurately reflects everything that you told the bureau on the date of that interview?

Mr. BEERS. With one minor exception. Shall I just read?

Mr. GRIFFIN. Would you read the sentence that you feel is wrong?

Mr. BEERS. "He is acquainted with Ruby both by name and by sight since about 18 months ago. He was assigned as a cameraman with Dale Bayse, a reporter for the Dallas News, on a story Bayse was doing on a stripper school being run by Jack Ruby.

"This story was for a magazine . . ." —I would like to make clear this was not an assignment by the Dallas News.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I see.

Mr. BEERS. That is the only thing I think of in this particular report.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Fine. Now I am going to hand you what has been marked Dallas, Tex., April 14, 1963, Ira J. Beers' Exhibit 5351. This is also an FBI interview report. This interview took place on December 3, 1963, here in Dallas, and purports to be a report of an interview between you and two other Special Agents of the FBI, Mr. James C. Kennedy and Will Hayden Griffin. I am going to hand you this Exhibit 5351, and ask you the same question as I asked with respect to 5350?

Mr. BEERS. Yes; I have seen this report.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Are there any additions?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir; there is a couple in here. Let me locate them. One, which is probably a minor one, speaking of myself: "He also stated that there were two armored vehicles, one in the basement and one near the driveway from the Commerce side." I think possibly the agent misunderstood what I said there. There was only one armored vehicle. That was in the basement driveway near the Commerce Street side. There was another vehicle, police car, parked in the basement right near the entrance.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now that is a runover sentence from the first page of the report to the second page of the report, is that right?

Mr. BEERS. Yes; that's correct.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you want to correct the sentence?

Mr. BEERS. "Beers did not know Ruby prior to the shooting, nor did he know Oswald . . ." et cetera. This is contradictory to the first report that you just handed me a moment ago. Apparently the agent must have misunderstood me or misread his notes or something. I did know who Ruby was prior to this shooting.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I wonder if you would want to make a change in ink in that sentence which would reflect accurately what you said, then initial the change that you make and date it?

Mr. BEERS. Let me ask you a question here. Shall I say this sentence is contradictory to that report, or just change it to that I did know Ruby prior?

Mr. GRIFFIN. Yes.

Mr. BEERS. [Making change.] I have written here "I did know Ruby prior to the shooting, as stated to the FBI in report dated November 30, 1963, Exhibit 5350." Would you like me to initial this?

Mr. GRIFFIN. If you would, please, and then date it?

Mr. BEERS. [Initialing.] This is April 14?

Mr. GRIFFIN. Yes; are there any other additions or corrections?

Mr. BEERS. So far as I can see, there are no further corrections.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Okay. Well if we go along and something occurs to you, we can change it even further. Let me ask you, Mr. Beers, where were you at the time President Kennedy was shot?

Mr. BEERS. I was on Dallas News property between the parking lot probably and my photographic studio.

Mr. GRIFFIN. When you heard that President Kennedy had been shot, what did you do?

Mr. BEERS. I was in my photo lab in the process of finishing films of the arrival at Love Field, and a lab man who works with us told me that the President had been shot, and I immediately thought he was making some sort of joke and I continued to turn out my picture of his arrival at Love Field. And I told the fellow, "Well, go ahead with your joke." And he said, "No; that is right, the President has been shot." And he just turned around and walked out. And I still didn't believe him. In a few minutes our intercom between the city

desk came on, and I was told to report to the Texas School Book Depository Building, that they thought they had the man that shot the President in the corner there.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you go to the Texas School Book Depository?

Mr. BEERS. A few minutes later, I did. It sort of stunned me. I guess I didn't quite realize. I said, "Okay," and I kept standing there working on my prints. And just a couple or 3 minutes, our city editor came back and he said, "Get the hell out and go over to the Depository." And I arrived at the School Book Depository about 5 minutes later.

Mr. GRIFFIN. What time would you say it was when you got there?

Mr. BEERS. I don't know. It would be shortly after noon sometime. I have lost complete track of time for a good length of time.

Mr. GRIFFIN. About how long would you say it was after you first heard the President had been shot?

Mr. BEERS. Probably 20 minutes.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now, when you got there, did you go into the building?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir; I did not. As I arrived, there was quite a crowd of people gathered around the building, and so some officers brought a disheveled looking man from the building, and I thought this probably was the person, so I ran over and made a picture, and then went over to the building. This time the building was sealed off and no one was allowed to enter.

Mr. GRIFFIN. How long did you remain there at the School Book Depository?

Mr. BEERS. I remained at the School Book Depository for 2 or 3 minutes, and I heard the report that an officer had been shot in Oak Cliff. I ran back to my car, which was parked on Main Street directly across the street from the county jail building, and notified our office by 2-way radio that there was a report of a shooting, that a police officer had been involved, and asked them if they had any information, or if this would probably be linked to the President's assassination, and they had no information.

I checked the police dispatcher, and the dispatcher didn't have enough information to tell us, so I was told to remain at the Texas School Book Depository, which I did until sometime quite late in the afternoon, at the time the police had finished their investigation there in the building, and then admitted the press to the building, and we were taken to the sixth floor and allowed to photograph the area where the rifle was found, and shown and allowed to photograph the area in and around the window and make pictures from the window where the assassination was supposedly—where the assassin was supposed to have fired shots from.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Can you give us an estimate of what time that would have been when you were up there taking the pictures on the sixth floor?

Mr. BEERS. This would be strictly a guess, an estimate. It would be sometime around the vicinity of 4 o'clock. It was quite late in the afternoon. Probably later.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now in your pictures that you took, were any of the objects that were allegedly found up there on the sixth floor photographed, such as the position of the rifle and the placement of the boxes and other materials in the window from which the assassin is believed to have shot?

Mr. BEERS. Yes. Prior to admitting us to the building, I made pictures of a sack, very long narrow sack type of affair that was brought down from there, and a pop bottle and some pieces of chicken, and I also made a picture of the rifle which I believe it was Lieutenant Carl Day from the Dallas police crime lab brought that. And upon going in the building, I photographed the area where the rifle was found. I photographed the area around the window from which the assassin was supposedly seated, and I moved into that area and made a picture from the window, supposedly the window from which the bullets were fired, that showed a little corner of the boxes which possibly the rifle rested on. It shows the street down below where the automobile was traveling when the President was killed.

Mr. GRIFFIN. The photographs that you took up there in the window and on the sixth floor would not at that time have shown the rifle on the sack or the pop bottle or the chicken?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir. That was shown outside the building.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I see. Do you still have copies of the photographs?

Mr. BEERS. I do not have copies of the photographs. The negatives are in custody of the managing editor, Mr. Jack Krueger, managing editor of the Dallas News.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you know what the newspaper policy is going to be with respect to retention of those negatives?

Mr. BEERS. We planned to keep them in our permanent file. Not with the ordinary run of the mill day-to-day negatives, but they are filed in and will be filed for how long, I do not know, in the managing editor's office.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I take it from what you have said then, there is perhaps a general file of negatives or photos that were taken on the day of this assassination and the 2 days thereafter, which are going to be kept in a separate spot in your building?

Mr. BEERS. To the best of my knowledge; yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you know, for our information, and I don't know whether we are interested in this or not, do you know if the newspaper has any policy with respect to making those available, if it should turn out the Commission would like to see them?

Mr. BEERS. We have made available everything that we have been requested to so far; yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Fine. Is my understanding correct, that what you have in that file is negatives and not developed photographs, or do you have both?

Mr. BEERS. Primarily negatives. It is possible there are some photographs that are filed either in our biographical file in the managing editor's department, which we consider to be second prints.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Are these negatives such as they could be easily examined to determine whether they might be of use to us without having to develop them or print them?

Mr. BEERS. That would depend upon whoever examined them; their ability to read negatives.

I am sure, I, or whoever made the pictures, would be glad to sit down and go over and explain to you what is in the negatives and what they show.

Mr. GRIFFIN. After you left the School Book Depository on the 22d, where did you go next?

Mr. BEERS. I returned to the office and turned out my afternoon work.

Mr. GRIFFIN. How long did you remain there?

Mr. BEERS. Until approximately 7. Maybe 8 o'clock that night.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you have occasion to perform any more work for the newspaper that day?

Mr. BEER. No, sir; we had pretty well closed up for the day by then. I believe this was the day—I am not sure—that—no; I am sorry. This was November the 24th that I was thinking about—referring to.

Mr. GRIFFIN. On the 22d, were there any photographers from your newspaper at the police department?

Mr. BEERS. On November the 22d?

Mr. GRIFFIN. Yes; the day that the President was shot?

Mr. BEERS. I believe that night when Mr. Oswald was apprehended, we had a photographer dispatched to the police station to make photographs up there.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you know who?

Mr. BEERS. Mr. Bill Wentfre.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Are you and Mr. Wentfre the only news photographers?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir; we have approximately 10 news photographers at the Dallas News.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I take it that all of the photographs that were taken by all 10 of you photographers that day which had anything to do with the assassination would either be in the file that is in your managing editor's office, or else the negatives to the photographs would be there?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir; to the best of my knowledge, we attempted to collect all of those negatives and control them.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you have any photographer who was assigned to the Dallas Police Department on a regular basis during those 3 days, the 22d, 23d, and 24th of November?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir; we have a photographer assigned there most of the time, but it was not any one single photographer.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you work on Saturday?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. The 23d?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you recall where you were working that day?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir; I worked hours 10 to 7 on Saturday, and I received an assignment to go to the city hall, third floor of the city hall near Captain Fritz' office, homicide bureau, and to stand by there to photograph whatever might take place or whoever might be brought in or maybe any pictures of Mr. Oswald as he was going up and down the hall.

I arrived there roughly at 10:30 and remained there until roughly 1 o'clock, 1 p.m.

Mr. GRIFFIN. In the afternoon?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now, during the period that you were there, did you see Jack Ruby?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir; I didn't.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you have occasion to return to the police station that day, Saturday?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir; I did not.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Where did you spend the remainder of Saturday?

Mr. BEERS. I think, I can't remember exactly where I spent the remainder of Saturday, but I think just on general assignments out of the paper there. On Saturday afternoon it is usually rather quiet, and I possibly, I may have had one or more assignments, but I don't think so.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now, before you left work on Saturday, did you have any instructions as to what you were to do the next day, Sunday?

Mr. BEERS. No; I did not. It was approximately midnight anyway when I left work Saturday night. I had no instructions. And at midnight, I was called to the telephone and told to report to the basement of the city hall Sunday morning at 10 a.m., to photograph the transfer of Lee Harvey Oswald from the city jail to the Dallas County Jail.

Mr. GRIFFIN. What time did you actually arrive there?

Mr. BEERS. I arrived at the city hall just about 9 o'clock.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Where did you go when you came in?

Mr. BEERS. I went to the basement of the city hall, and then on through the basement out into the police parking area in the basement of the city hall.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you station yourself some place in the parking area?

Mr. BEERS. Yes; I did. I went into the parking area and was in general conversation with various and sundry members of the press who were there for a short while, and I discovered that there was an area along a railing which is on the east side of the driveway that goes through the basement of the city hall, next to some television cameras that would permit one cameraman to be in this area without obstructing the view of the television cameras, so I went to this railing and I stayed there, sitting on this railing until the transfer had started.

When I stood up on the railing and made photographs as Mr. Oswald was being transferred, which included the pictures of Mr. Ruby shooting Mr. Oswald.

Then I remained standing on the railing and shot three or four or so further negatives of the scuffle that was going on.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I am going to hand you—I will turn this around—I am going to hand you what is a diagram of the basement area in the municipal building. I have marked this diagram "Dallas, Texas, April 14, 1964, Ira J. Beers' Exhibit 5352."

Let me try to explain it a little bit to you. Here is Commerce Street along the right-hand side, and Main Street along the left-hand side, and near the bottom of the page, is a ramp which says, "down ramp leading from Main Street into the basement area," and following on up towards Commerce Street you see something marked, "up ramp."

In this area here is the parking area of the garage. Here is the Police Department Building. Here is the jail office. This is the hallway that comes out from the public elevators near Harwood Street so that if you enter from Harwood you come down to this area, and you go up in the elevators here and walk through this hallway through some double doors, and you would be in the ramp area at the bottom of the basement floor.

Now can you, taking your pen, at the time you took your position on the railing, would you show us where the TV cameras were placed? Can you mark that in rectangles of some sort?

Mr. BEERS. [Marking on map.] These were live TV cameras that I have marked on the east side of the railing, and there was a sound on-film camera-man leaning against the railing right there [pointing].

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now this sound on-film camera, is this something that requires a tripod of some sort?

Mr. BEERS. It may or may not.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you recall if that one did?

Mr. BEERS. He had a monopod or a unapod, which is a single leg support for the camera.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you know who that man was?

Mr. BEERS. Mr. George Phenix with KRLD-TV.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Can you put a figure 1, at the spot on the railing where you stationed yourself first?

Mr. BEERS. Right here. Actually on the railing [marking.]

Mr. GRIFFIN. You have crossed out one mark and you made a big circle which you blacked in, on the railing.

Mr. BEERS. May I draw an arrow to point where I was standing?

Mr. GRIFFIN. Okay.

Mr. BEERS. So it will be much clearer.

Mr. GRIFFIN. What time would you estimate it was when you stationed yourself at point 1?

Mr. BEERS. Probably 9:15 or 9:20.

Mr. GRIFFIN. How long did you remain at that position?

Mr. BEERS. According to the time which we received, and which Mr. Ruby shot Mr. Oswald, which would be somewhere around 11:21, or thereabouts, I probably remained there until about 11:25.

Mr. GRIFFIN. So you remained there right at that spot right up until the shooting?

Mr. BEERS. And through the shooting and for a few moments thereafter.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I see.

Mr. BEERS. A few minutes thereafter.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you recall an automobile moving out of the ramp? I mean out of the garage area and going up the Main Street ramp shortly before Mr. Oswald was shot?

Mr. BEERS. Yes; there was an armored car parked in the driveway near the top of the Commerce Street entrance, and there was a black squad car, I believe I am correct, that backed up the ramp to Main Street in the direction of Main Street. I didn't look right up there and see what he did. He never came back down the ramp.

Mr. GRIFFIN. This is a car that you recall driving onto Main Street?

Mr. BEERS. It backed up onto Main Street, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I see.

Mr. BEERS. It backed from the basement and backed up Main Street toward what would be the entrance way to the ramp.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Before that car was moved, was backed up onto the Main Street ramp, do you recall any car driving in a forward direction up the Main Street ramp?

Mr. BEERS. No; I don't.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you recall how much traffic there was in and out of the basement while you were stationed there?

Mr. BEERS. There was several police cars that came into the basement and out, and if I remember correctly, after this armored car was stationed there. I don't recall that there were any other squad cars that came into the basement.

The reason I recall them was because they were stopping there just about right where I was standing and looking into the back seats and so forth.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you recall a TV camera being wheeled into the basement shortly before Jack Ruby shot Oswald?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir; I don't. A big live camera?

Mr. GRIFFIN. Yes.

Mr. BEERS. I don't recall seeing that. I may have, but I don't recall seeing it.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now at the time that Oswald was brought out, do you recall how people were, newspeople and policemen, were stationed in the basement? Do you recall roughly how they were spread out?

Mr. BEERS. Roughly, they were asked to get into somewhat of an L-shaped position here, which would be that the news people would be across the driveway like so, and this area here in front of the cameras was more or less open.

There was some people moving back over here in this area just a little bit, and then from approximately right in front of myself to up this ramp, towards the Commerce Street exit was roughly the position that the, this was the position people were asked to get into, that they assumed that, roughly.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now, do you have any recollection if the people were more densely stationed along the Main Street ramp than along the area in front of the entrance to the garage, or vice versa, or were they more densely stationed in front of the garage than elsewhere?

Mr. BEERS. They were probably a little more concentrated right across the ramp.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Main Street ramp?

Mr. BEERS. Not here. They were fairly well strung out this way [pointing]. I couldn't see too far up this ramp here without leaning out and around and looking up this post, but from my observation, they were fairly well strung out up toward the Commerce Street exit there for a number of feet or yards.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you recall how many persons deep the people were that were strung across the Main Street ramp?

Mr. BEERS. I am sure that would vary from two to maybe five.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Well, could there have been as few as 15 people strung across the Main Street ramp?

Mr. BEERS. There was probably more—actually, they came around this corner just a little bit and almost up to this door.

Mr. GRIFFIN. You are pointing towards the entrance of the jail office?

Mr. BEERS. The entrance to the jail office; yes. There were actually a few at the corner there, and strung out across there, and I didn't particularly look over in that area because I was concentrating most of my attention towards the jail office door, because we didn't know exactly what time they would be coming out, and we didn't know what, if any, advance warning we would have, so I didn't dare look around too much. I had already seen everybody I wanted to see, I think.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you ever have occasion to look up the Main Street ramp?

Mr. BEERS. I did look up there earlier.

Mr. GRIFFIN. From where you were in the basement, was it possible to see anybody up at the top of the Main Street ramp?

Mr. BEERS. There was a policeman standing up at the top of the ramp up there. Looked like he was out on the sidewalk.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Was the visibility such that his features were distinguishable?

Mr. BEERS. No; it was a silhouette.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Can you tell us what kind of advance warning you had that Oswald was coming down?

Mr. BEERS. I believe there were some of the news media in this hallway which I pointed out, that goes from the elevator to the Harwood Street side of the city hall, and the hallway goes past the jail office and goes into the police parking area.

I believe there were some members of the news media in the hall in front of the window of the jail office, and someone, I think, shouted, "Oh, here he comes."

Then there was just a lot of noise and the door opened and he came in.

Mr. GRIFFIN. You indicated in your interview with the Federal Bureau of Investigation that you felt sure that if you had seen Ruby in the basement you would have recognized him?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir; I know his face that well; yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I take it from that, that the lighting conditions were such and the people were spread out thinly enough so that you were in a position from where you were to have seen the man?

Mr. BEERS. Television camera had a bank or two banks, I don't remember which, of light, and the lighting was adequate in there.

However, there was a considerable number of people and quite an amount of confusion.

It is possible he could have been in there and I had not seen him, but had I seen him, there was enough light for me to have recognized him.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Were you taking any pictures before it became apparent Oswald was being brought down?

Mr. BEERS. I think I made up earlier, looked up towards the Commerce Street entrance that showed either one or two policemen in silhouette at the top of that ramp there.

I believe I made one negative, and I believe that it was one or two policemen up there. There was at least an officer there.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Now you indicated earlier that you had first met Jack Ruby 18 months before in connection with some freelance work that you were doing. Can you tell us what that was?

Mr. BEERS. Mr. Bayse, Dale Bayse was doing a story, speculating as to being able to sell this story, and needed some photographers to illustrate it.

His information to me was that Mr. Ruby had a stripper school, and that he would like to have some pictures of these, of this school, and these people involved in the school, the supposed instructors and the supposed students, to illustrate this article with.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did Mr. Bayse ever sell the story?

Mr. BEERS. I believe that story he showed me a copy of Adam Magazine. I believe that was probably December 1962.

Mr. GRIFFIN. How much time did you spend at Jack Ruby's place of business taking photographs?

Mr. BEERS. That particular day, which was the only time I was there in his place, I spent from approximately 11 o'clock until must have been around 7. It was dark when I went outside.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Did you visit only the Carousel Club? Or also the Vegas Club?

Mr. BEERS. Just the Carousel Club; yes, sir.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Do you still have any of the photographs?

Mr. BEERS. Yes, sir; I do. I supplied the FBI with one or two sets of those photographs, and I do have some still available.

I would like to inject here that I was introduced to Mr. Ruby on this particular day, which was my first meeting with him, and—but throughout the day I had little or no conversation with him.

He was negotiating with Mr. Bayse.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Was he actually running the school for strippers or was this a promotion idea?

Mr. BEERS. Mr. Griffin, this is an opinion. I don't think Mr. Ruby actually ran a stripper school.

As I worked throughout the day, it seemed fairly apparent to me that there was no school in operation there, I don't think. That is strictly an opinion.

Mr. Ruby did run an amateur night, and from what information I think I absorbed there, it appeared that these girls must have, part of them practiced in some of his amateur and semiregularly at his place, and it didn't appear to be a school.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Was he running an amateur night at the time you were taking these photographs?

Mr. BEERS. I was not familiar with the club prior to that.

Mr. GRIFFIN. But at the time you took these photographs, did you have the understanding that he had run an amateur night?

Mr. BEERS. I got that impression; yes, sir, that he had some amateur nights there.

Mr. GRIFFIN. During the period of November 22, 23, and 24, were you aware of newspaper people who were operating in the Dallas area on the freelance basis?

Mr. BEERS. You say was I aware that there were some operating on a freelance basis?

Mr. GRIFFIN. Yes; were you aware of any such people?

Mr. BEERS. Not particularly.

I ran into one photographer who was a local man, who I understand was freelancing and had received an assignment from Paris Match, a French magazine, and to the best of my knowledge, I don't recall—I am sure there were some here, but I don't recall meeting any that I absolutely knew were on a freelance basis.

Mr. GRIFFIN. What I am interested in finding out is if there is any practice that a freelance person follows in hooking up with a network, or somebody who can pay him, whether he makes a commitment in advance to work, or whether he is just down there for shooting pictures or trying to gather information and selling it as he gets it?

Are you familiar enough with what the practice generally is for freelance people in a situation, developing news situations such as we had in this period, to be able to state how a freelance photographer or newspapermen would operate?

Mr. BEERS. In instances such as occurred there, as the assassination of the President, there are some photographers in Dallas who operate on a freelance basis, and also some of them, the same people possibly operate on a stringer basis. This is someone who is known in the area by a news agency or a particular magazine or newspaper, and if something occurred in that area, the people by whom he is known, could possibly contact him and tell him to cover this story, either by himself, or until some of their people could arrive on the scene.

I am sure there were some such people operating there. I don't know just exactly who it might be.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I will ask you one final question. Has anything come to your attention having to do with either Jack Ruby or with the assassination of President Kennedy, or anything else that you might think would be of importance to the Commission that you think you should make available to us?

I do want to encourage you in this respect because I don't know that I have covered everything that you might have.

Mr. BEERS. I have tried to insert what I thought, what little information or comments I might have to make. I can't recall that I have learned anything additional since this happened that is not common knowledge to everyone.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I see.

Now, let me also ask you, for the record, whether prior to commencing this deposition you have talked with anybody from the Commission?

I am not talking about the FBI agents, but any staff member of the Commission other than myself?

Mr. BEERS. No; I have had no contact with anyone from the Warren Commission except over the telephone when I was notified and they verified my address so they could mail me a notice to appear here.

I might go back and add, as far as my acquaintance with Jack Ruby is concerned, I met him that particular day, and I have seen him in the halls of the Dallas News in that 18-month period four times probably.

And I think Jack recalled that my first name was Jack, but not until I testified in his change of venue hearing.

I think that he aware that I was Jack Beers.

Mr. GRIFFIN. Were you a prosecution witness or defense witness?

Mr. BEERS. Defense.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I take it that you were called to testify as to the climate in Dallas, whether Jack could get a fair trial in Dallas or not?

Mr. BEERS. More or less; yes, sir.

It was concerned with the change of venue hearing in Judge Brown's court there.

Mr. GRIFFIN. I might add also that I did not interview you prior to taking this deposition?

Mr. BEERS. No, sir.

I have never met you before in my life.

Mr. GRIFFIN. If there is anything else that you think we haven't covered here that comes to your mind after this deposition is concluded, we would appreciate it if you would let us know. And if it is something of importance, we might want to talk to you again.

But I certainly want to thank you for coming here and taking your time. I realize you people are all busy, and it is an imposition to take you away from your work, and we certainly are very grateful that you are willing to take out this time and appear before us and give us this information.

Mr. BEERS. Thank you, Mr. Griffin, you are very welcome.

Mr. GRIFFIN. It is a pleasure to have met you.

Mr. BEERS. I wish I could help you a lot more.

Mr. GRIFFIN. This is rather a methodical process we have to go through talking to people, but you are all finished.

Mr. BEERS. Thank you very much.

TESTIMONY OF ROBERT LEONARD HANKAL

The testimony of Robert Leonard Hankal was taken at 10:25 a.m., on April 17, 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 Robert Leonard Hankal.

Mr. HANKAL, my name is Leon Hubert. I'm a member of the advisory staff of the general counsel of the President's Commission created under the provisions of Executive Order 11130, dated November 29, 1963, and the Joint Resolution of Congress No. 137, and rules of procedure adopted by the Commission in conformance with the Executive order and the joint resolution and I have been authorized to take a sworn deposition from you.

I state to you now Mr. Hankal that the general nature of the Commission's inquiry is to ascertain, evaluate and report upon facts relating to the assassination of President Kennedy and the subsequent violent death of Lee Harvey Oswald.

In particular as to you, Mr. Hankal, the nature of the inquiry today is to determine what facts you know about the death of Oswald and any other pertinent facts you may know about the general inquiry.

Mr. HANKAL. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Mr. Hankal, you are appearing here today as a result of a letter received by you, signed by Mr. J. Lee Rankin, the general counsel for the President's Commission; is that correct?

Mr. HANKAL. That is correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Is it correct that you received that letter more than 3 days from this date?

Mr. HANKAL. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. Will you stand and raise your right hand and be sworn?

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. HANKAL. I do.

Mr. HUBERT. Will you state your name?

Mr. HANKAL. Robert Leonard Hankal.

Mr. HUBERT. Your age?

Mr. HANKAL. Thirty-two.

Mr. HUBERT. Your residence?

Mr. HANKAL. 3305 McKinney (No. 1).

Mr. HUBERT. And your occupation?