

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?

Mr. HANKAL. I am a director of KRLD Television.

Mr. HUBERT. How long have you been so employed?

Mr. HANKAL. I have been at KRLD for around 2 years. I have been a director since January.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you on duty in connection with your occupation at the city hall on November 23, 1963?

Mr. HANKAL. I was.

Mr. HUBERT. And I think you were there also on the 24th of November?

Mr. HANKAL. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, I have handed you a report of an interview of you by special agents of the FBI Quigley and Dallman, dated December 3, 1963, which I have marked in the right hand margin—endorsed as follows: "Dallas, Tex., April 17, 1964, Exhibit 5337, Deposition of R. L. Hankal." I have signed my name below that and on the second and third pages I have placed my initials in the lower right-hand corner.

Mr. Hankal have you had an opportunity to read this Exhibit 5337?

Mr. HANKAL. I have.

Mr. HUBERT. That would be just a moment ago; is that correct?

Mr. HANKAL. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you think that this Exhibit 5337 is a fair and correct record of the interview had between you and the FBI agents?

Mr. HANKAL. It is with one exception, if I can make a note of that?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes.

Mr. HANKAL. I did see Jack Ruby shoot him—I didn't know what was happening.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, what sentence are you talking about?

Mr. HANKAL. This one—"The first reaction was that Oswald had grabbed a police officer's gun. He also recalls seeing a man's back directly in front of him obstructing his view of Oswald, and seemed to recall that immediately preceding that he had observed a blur of movement out of the corner of his eye,"—we didn't go into it at the time—they were interested in my activity more than anything else, when this interview was held.

Mr. HUBERT. Let me go into this and get it identified here in the record—you are speaking of this sentence—this is the sentence in the second paragraph on page 2 and the sentence reads as follows: "The first reaction was that Oswald had grabbed the police officer's gun. He also recalled seeing a man's back directly in front of him obstructing his view of Oswald, and seemed to recall that immediately preceding that he had observed a blur of movement out of the corner of his eye."

Mr. HANKAL. This is all correct, but it should be added also—I did see—I know that man I later found out was Jack Ruby shoot Oswald.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, you saw more than a blur—that's what you have in mind?

Mr. HANKAL. Yes; I saw—

Mr. HUBERT. You saw a blur first?

Mr. HANKAL. And then the action.

Mr. HUBERT. And then your attention was directed to the action by the blur?

Mr. HANKAL. Right.

Mr. HUBERT. So, actually, you saw a man coming?

Mr. HANKAL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Where was he coming from?

Mr. HANKAL. To my right.

Mr. HUBERT. How far away was he?

Mr. HANKAL. I believe since I made that statement it has been paced off and set at about 9 feet.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, in order that we may have a graphic record of the matter, I am showing you a chart of the basement area, and you are now sitting before the FBI mockup of substantially the same area except that it doesn't cover all the parking area.

I have marked that chart as follows: "Dallas, Tex., April 17, 1964, Exhibit 5338, Deposition of R. L. Hankal," and I have signed my name on it.

Now, before we go into positions to be marked on that map, may I ask you how long you had been in the basement area prior to the shooting?

Mr. HANKAL. Somewhere around 2 or 3 hours and the night before.

Mr. HUBERT. Had you ever seen Ruby around at any time?

Mr. HANKAL. Not that I recall.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you know him?

Mr. HANKAL. No; I didn't.

Mr. HUBERT. And when you testified a moment ago that you saw the man Ruby shoot Oswald, is it correct to state that you did not at that time know that the man doing the shooting was Jack Ruby?

Mr. HANKAL. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, now, you did assume a position in the basement for some time prior to the actual shooting and it was a rather static position, wasn't it?

Mr. HANKAL. The evening before we were positioned directly across from the jail office door. The next day when we came to work, we moved our camera across the ramp down into the parking area.

Mr. HUBERT. Back of the rail?

Mr. HANKAL. Back of the rail—we were shooting between the rails.

Mr. HUBERT. Where were you, in fact, standing at the moment of the shooting? I ask you to place the spot first on the mockup and I give you the chart to mark a point at which you were standing after you fixed the point on the mock-up.

Mr. HANKAL. My camera was here just to the left of this center pole and shooting between the rails—we have a long verital zoom lens and it stuck out between the rails—I was standing outside of the rail of the ramp to the left of the lens.

Mr. HUBERT. Would you mark on this chart where you were standing?

Mr. HANKAL. I was standing here [indicating and marking on the chart referred to].

Mr. HUBERT. Now, you have marked a place "X". Now, put it in a circle, and I am drawing a line and writing the following "position of Hankal at time of shooting" is that correct?

Mr. HANKAL. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. The camera was to your rear and left, is that right?

Mr. HANKAL. To my right.

Mr. HUBERT. To your right or to your left?

Mr. HANKAL. To my right.

Mr. HUBERT. So that the camera would have been approximately like this?

Mr. HANKAL. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. I am drawing a square in which I am marking an "A" and I am drawing a line out and writing "position of live camera"—it was a live camera?

Mr. HANKAL. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. What is the station?

Mr. HANKAL. KRLD.

Mr. HUBERT. "KRLD".

It was there at all pertinent times—right?

Mr. HANKAL. We moved and shot up here after the shots were fired.

Mr. HUBERT. But before the shots were fired, that's where you were?

Mr. HANKAL. That's right—before the shots were fired that's where we were.

Mr. HUBERT. Then, at all pertinent times prior to the shooting you were there?

Mr. HANKAL. Right.

Mr. HUBERT. The camera itself was back of the rail into the parking area—you were in front of the rail on the ramp?

Mr. HANKAL. On the ramp in front of the rail—right.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know Jim Turner?

Mr. HANKAL. No; I don't.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know George Phenix?

Mr. HANKAL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Was he there too?

Mr. HANKAL. Oh, yes.

Mr. HUBERT. What was the relative position between you and George?

Mr. HANKAL. George was to my right, I believe, he was still here.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, I am marking a position which you have designated on the mockup as being approximately where I am putting the letter "P" for Phenix, is that about right?

Mr. HANKAL. That's as I last saw him before the shooting.

Mr. HUBERT. And I am drawing a line and writing "Phenix position according to Hankal," is that right?

Mr. HANKAL. Correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know a man by the name of Huffaker?

Mr. HANKAL. I do.

Mr. HUBERT. Who is he?

Mr. HANKAL. He is a newsman at KRLD.

Mr. HUBERT. Where was he standing?

Mr. HANKAL. Well, the last time I saw Bob before the shooting, he was just outside and to the left of the jail office door.

Mr. HUBERT. How long before the shooting was that?

Mr. HANKAL. Perhaps 5 or 6 minutes before it.

Mr. HUBERT. You didn't see him at the time of the shooting?

Mr. HANKAL. No; I didn't. After the shooting he came to our camera for instructions.

Mr. HUBERT. When they brought Oswald down, was any announcement made of it at the moment?

Mr. HANKAL. Not outside of just a cry from a newsman that said, "He's coming." That's the only announcement I ever heard.

Mr. HUBERT. And then immediately thereafter the parties escorting him began to come through?

Mr. HANKAL. Appeared at the door and came through.

Mr. HUBERT. Can you tell us what was the reaction at the time Oswald actually appeared into view of the news people and the police and so forth?

Mr. HANKAL. Well, the physical things that happened was there was a stir—some of the movie cameras lights—they need more lights than the television cameras do, some of their lights came on, strobe lights came on and cameras began to click. It was—at the moment not very noisy as it had been—a little, oh, a hush fell over us.

Mr. HUBERT. Isn't it a fact that prior to the shooting, immediately prior to the shooting there was a general surge forward?

Mr. HANKAL. Just prior to the shooting?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes.

Mr. HANKAL. Yes—I would say.

Mr. HUBERT. I mean that there was a general movement—a step or two forward by each person—that made a surge?

Mr. HANKAL. A moving forward, leaning forward, of all bodies.

Mr. HUBERT. And it was almost immediately thereafter or contemporaneously with it that Jack Ruby brushed through the crowd, is that correct?

Mr. HANKAL. Within the same action.

Mr. HUBERT. You had not seen him standing there before?

Mr. HANKAL. No; I hadn't.

Mr. HUBERT. You don't know how he got in?

Mr. HANKAL. I don't.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you present at the showup of Oswald which took place on the night of November 22 in the assembly room of the police department when the press and other news media representatives were allowed to see Oswald?

Mr. HANKAL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see Jack Ruby in that crowd?

Mr. HANKAL. No; I didn't.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you hear anyone say anything from the rear to Oswald?

Mr. HANKAL. Well, what do you mean?

Mr. HUBERT. Well, specifically—

Mr. HANKAL. There were a lot of questions, a lot of people were asking him questions; yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Were there any answers?

Mr. HANKAL. Yes; he answered some of them—yes—one of them was "I

haven't killed anyone," was one of his answers, and I didn't hear that question. I believe the question was, "Did you shoot the President?" But if you are asking me if I heard Jack Ruby say anything to Oswald, I did not.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see anyone standing on a table toward the rear of the room?

Mr. HANKAL. I did not—well, there were people standing on tables in the back of the room; yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you observe them?

Mr. HANKAL. I did see that there were people on tables, but excuse me—I am anticipating your question.

Mr. HUBERT. Can you tell me whether you can say definitely one way or the other that among those people standing on tables was Jack Ruby?

Mr. HANKAL. No; I can't tell you that I saw him to recognize him. I'm sure I saw him if he was up there, but wherever he was I must have seen him.

Mr. HUBERT. But your point, as I understand it, is that you did see some people standing?

Mr. HANKAL. Right.

Mr. HUBERT. On tables?

Mr. HANKAL. Yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Whether any of those people was Jack Ruby you cannot say one way or the other?

Mr. HANKAL. That's right, I didn't know the man.

Mr. HUBERT. And after you got to know him, your recollection doesn't place him at all?

Mr. HANKAL. It does not.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, have you been interviewed by any other member of the President's Commission prior to this?

Mr. HANKAL. No; I have not.

Mr. HUBERT. I believe that's all. Thank you very much.

Mr. HANKAL. Thank you.

TESTIMONY OF ROBERT S. HUFFAKER, JR.

The testimony of Robert S. Huffaker, Jr., was taken at 4:25 p.m., on April 16, 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. Mr. Huffaker, my name is Leon Hubert. I'm a member of the advisory staff of the general counsel of the President's Commission. 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 that Executive order and joint resolution, I have been authorized to take a sworn statement from you.

I state to you now 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. Huffaker, 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, and about the activities of one Jack Ruby.

Mr. Huffaker, I think you have appeared here today as a result of a written request addressed to you by Mr. J. Lee Rankin, general counsel of the President's Commission; is that a fact?

Mr. HUFFAKER. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you receive that written notice more than 3 days from today?

Mr. HUFFAKER. Yes; I did.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, will you rise and be sworn?