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Date Dec. 4, 1963

on list

BILLY H. COMBEST, Detective, Vice Section, Special Services Bureau, Dallas Police Department, was advised at the outset of the interview that he did not have to make a statement, that any statement he did make could be used against him in a court of law and that he had the right to consult an attorney prior to making any statement. He furnished the following information:

He advised he resides at 2803 Linhaven Drive, Mesquite, Texas, home telephone BR 9-5304.

On November 24, 1963, he was assigned to his regular day shift and reported to the Central Police Headquarters at 7:00 a.m. He advised he was wearing civilian clothes during his entire tour of duty that date. After handling some of his routine work, he left the Special Services Bureau with Detective B. L. BEATY and Officer J. D. HUTCHINSON who are also members of the Vice Section. He and Detective HUTCHINSON had coffee at the coffee shop of the White Plaza Hotel across the street while Detective BEATY remained in the basement of the Police Department in the vicinity of the Jail Information Desk. After having coffee, he and HUTCHINSON returned to the Police Department, entering the basement through the Harwood Street entrance and there met with Detective BEATY. They waited there for some time to see what was going on, and at about 10:50 a.m. were approached by Captain O.A. JONES of the Forgery Detail. He asked them if they would remain in the basement as they would be needed to help with the transfer of the prisoner, LEE HARVEY OSWALD. He had been aware, through conversation in the Police Department, that OSWALD would be transferred to the County Jail on the morning of November 24, 1963; however, he had received no assignment in this matter from the head of the Special Services Bureau.

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B/L of content from Harvey  
Bill Correllist*

Several of the officers joined the group near the Jail Information Desk, and Captain JONES then directed them to the passageway leading from the Jail Office into the parking basement. They were given orders to form a line on either

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on 12/2/63 at Dallas, Texas File # DL 44-1639  
by Special Agent S. R. NEIL QUIGLEY/csh Date dictated 12/3/63

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Ex.No.5101 COMBEST,Wm.H. Deposition-  
Dallas 3-26-64

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side of the passageway so that OSWALD could be escorted through that area to whatever vehicle had been arranged for his transportation to the County Jail. They were ordered to keep the members of the press back and specifically instructed not to allow them to fall in behind OSWALD and the escorting officers when they passed.

He recalled that there were some reporters in the public area of the Jail Office Booking Room, and someone made the decision to clear them out and to clear the passage of nonpolice personnel. They were moved to the far side of the driveway to the garage area. He also overheard Captain JONES and Sergeant J. A. PUTNAM ask the members of the press not to ask OSWALD any questions when he was to be brought out. He also recalled orders being passed to search all vehicles at the basement garage and he personally observed Officer DAVID PATE locate a police shotgun in one of the police cars and saw him unload it and carry it back to the Jail Office.

It was approximately 15 minutes from the time he was ordered to stand guard at the passageway until the prisoner, OSWALD, was brought down from the jail. His post was at the inside corner of the corridor leading from the jail to the ramp leading to Commerce Street. A few moments before OSWALD was brought out of the elevator he heard someone say "OSWALD's coming" and everybody there got ready. The first one to appear was Lieutenant SWAIN who walked down the passageway to the ramp. He overheard Captain FRITZ ask if everything was "okay", and Lieutenant SWAIN answered in the affirmative. Captain FRITZ then led the way with Officer LEAVELLE on OSWALD's right and Officer GRAVES on OSWALD's left. This group had just started the turn toward the Commerce Street ramp after leaving the passageway from the Jail Information Desk area, the group, therefore, being directly in front of him, when he suddenly observed JACK RUBY moving forward directly toward OSWALD from the garage side of the passageway with a pistol in what he believed was his left hand. He also noted that the newsmen surged forward at this time, some with microphones thrust forward, from the area of the Main Street ramp. The only person who obstructed his view at that time in any way was Officer LEAVELLE. He was completely taken by surprise by RUBY'S

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presence and action and because it happened so fast, he was unable to make any movement to prevent RUBY from rushing directly up to OSWALD. RUBY apparently fired the pistol as soon as he thrust the weapon into OSWALD's stomach. Upon recognizing RUBY and seeing what he was about to do, he said to him "JACK RUBY, you son-of-a-bitch, don't." As best as he could recall, RUBY had what could be described as a determined look or grimace on his face, and he could recall RUBY making no statement in conjunction with his action. The next thing he knew, Officer LEAVELE who was handcuffed to OSWALD, was bending over OSWALD who was lying on the floor. He asked LEAVELE what he could do, and LEAVELE said "We should gethim out of here the best we can." They then took him to the Jail Office Booking Room, and he removed the handcuffs connecting OSWALD and LEAVELE and also the handcuffs which joined OSWALD's hands. OSWALD groaned and was apparently conscious, and he asked him if he had anything to say. OSWALD looked at him in such a fashion that he apparently understood his question but merely shook his head slightly as if to say "no." He then lifted up OSWALD's shirt and noted a bullet hole on his side and his first impression was that the bullet had passed directly through his stomach and that he was not badly hurt. He then, however, felt the bullet just beneath the surface of the skin on the other side of OSWALD's stomach and realized that he was probably in serious condition. He did not see any blood and assumed that the wound at the point of entry had possibly been seared. A few moments later, the ambulance arrived to take OSWALD to the hospital, and he then went back to his regular duties.

As concerns the security precautions in the basement of the Police Headquarters, he recalled that Sergeant PUTNAM had stopped one of the female civilian employees who works behind the Police Information Desk from leaving that area when she had attempted to go out and summon police officers who had received telephone calls. He also recalled that PUTNAM told a male civilian employee who works behind the Jail Booking Desk to stay behind the counter and not to go into the hall or passageway area. He also recalls that everybody that was not recognized as being associated with the police department had to show appropriate identification to the officers in the basement. In particular, he recalled a reporter, JIM STANDARD, from the Daily Oklahoman in Oklahoma City who did not have a press card. He asked STANDARD for identification, and STANDARD

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showed him a Blue Cross Hospitalization Group Policy card and a gasoline credit card, both reflecting he was associated with the Daily Oklahoman. He also frisked STANDARD to make sure he was not armed and after asking Captain TALBERT if the identification was sufficient, STANDARD was allowed to remain on the scene. To his knowledge, no unauthorized individuals were allowed in the basement and even the civilian employee who parks the cars in the basement was not allowed to remain in the building. He personally recalled asking several individuals who were members of the press for identification, which they exhibited to his satisfaction, but he could not recall who they were. He estimated that there were about 70 press personnel in the vicinity during the time the above related incidents took place. The only nonpolice personnel who were allowed in the area of the Jail Information Desk were a couple of photographers who took photographs of the elevator coming down from the jail, and they were not allowed to follow the prisoner out through the passageway to the ramp. Only police officers were positioned on the inner wall leading from the area of the Jail Information Desk to the Commerce Street ramp.

He first met JACK RUBY when he was assigned to the Special Services Bureau over four years ago. As part of his duties as a Vice Officer, he checked the Vegas Club and the Carousel Club for possible violations of City ordinances. He described these as being routine vice checks. RUBY naturally made himself aware of the presence of any police officers, especially vice squad officers, who entered his places of business because he apparently took every precaution not to violate any laws which would result in the revocation of his licenses. He did not develop any friendship with RUBY as a result of his work, but merely knew him on the same basis as any vice officer would as a result of checking such establishments. He also visited one of RUBY's clubs on a social basis with his wife on a few occasions but only recalled one occasion when RUBY was present and recognized him as being a police officer.

He never knew of any of the officers working for RUBY, either before or after they left the police department. He did recall, however, that an individual by the name of NEWMAN (first name unknown), who was formerly the District Supervisor for the Texas Liquor Control Board,

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had worked for RUBY at the Theater Lounge. NEWLIAN terminated his employment with the State about a year and a half ago and it would have possibly been about that time he started working with RUBY.

Prior to November 24, 1963, he had not seen RUBY for six to eight weeks. The last time he saw him was during a routine check of his clubs in Dallas. He did not see RUBY at any time during the weekend of the 24th of November other than the exact moment when RUBY lunged forward and shot OSWALD. He personally made it a point to stay away from the Third Floor of the Police Headquarters during the time OSWALD was in custody there. He did recall that Lieutenant J. R. GILMORE had told him some time shortly after OSWALD was shot that GILMORE had recalled possibly seeing RUBY outside of the Police Showup Room in the basement of Police Headquarters on Saturday, November 23, 1963.

He does not know anything about RUBY's personal habits, political convictions or associates. He does know that RUBY was conscientious in the operation of his business and made it a point to make friends wherever he could. It was his understanding that RUBY was very careful not to be caught in the violation of any law that would result in the closing of his clubs because it was obvious he was "always after the money." He never recalled seeing RUBY at the City Hall or Police Department at any time other than on November 24, 1963. He knows of no relationship between RUBY and LEE HARVEY OSWALD and never recalled seeing OSWALD or hearing anything concerning him prior to the President's assassination.

As concerns the identity of police officers that he observed in the basement area of the Central Police Headquarters on November 24, 1963, he could recall no one in addition to the list of officers that he furnished to Chief of Police JESSE E. CURRY in his written statement made to Chief CURRY dated November 26, 1963.

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