

Mr. HUBERT. It is reasonable to suppose that if any had been recorded, it would have been brought to your attention?

Mr. CABELL. I am sure it would.

Mr. HUBERT. Who has the possession of that tape?

Mr. CABELL. The police department.

Mr. HUBERT. They still have it?

Mr. CABELL. I am assuming that they still have it.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, thank you very much, sir. I certainly thank both of you.

TESTIMONY OF MRS. EARLE CABELL

The testimony of Mrs. Earle Cabell was taken at 10 a.m., on July 13, 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. Sam Kelley, assistant attorney general of Texas, was present.

Mr. HUBERT. This is the deposition of Mrs. Earle Cabell. Mrs. Cabell, my name is Leon D. Hubert. I am 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 the rules of procedure adopted by the President's Commission in conformance with that Executive order and the joint resolution, I have been authorized to take a sworn deposition from you, among others.

I state to you now that the general nature of the Commission's inquiry is to ascertain, evaluate, and report upon the facts relevant to the assassination of President Kennedy and the subsequent violent death of Lee Harvey Oswald. In particular as to you, Mrs. Cabell, 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.

Now Mrs. Cabell, you appear today by virtue of a letter addressed actually to you and your husband, Mayor Earle Cabell, by Mr. J. Lee Rankin, general counsel of the staff of the President's Commission, is that correct? That letter was dated either the 8th or 9th, or in any case was received on the 8th or 9th of July?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Now will you stand, please, and take the oath? Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give in this matter will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mrs. CABELL. I do.

Mr. HUBERT. Please state your name for the record, please, ma'am.

Mrs. CABELL. Mrs. Earle Cabell.

Mr. HUBERT. You are the wife of former Mayor Earle Cabell?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. You reside with him now at what address?

Mrs. CABELL. 5338 Drane.

Mr. HUBERT. Mrs. Cabell, I think you were with your husband in the presidential parade on November 22, 1963?

Mrs. CABELL. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. I wish you would tell us in your own words what you observed concerning the shooting of the President. I might say that your husband has testified that you were in the second or third car behind the President's car—the third or fourth car.

Mrs. CABELL. Third or fourth. We have never been able to be sure about that, because we were under the impression—of course, the chief of police's car preceded the presidential car, and we were under the impression that it was the presidential car, the vice presidential car, the station wagon apparently with Secret Service men, and then our car. There have been other statements made which we have never been quite sure of, that there was a Secret Service car

between the presidential car and the vice presidential car. If that is true, we were one car further back.

Mr. HUBERT. You were sitting on the rear seat of the convertible?

Mrs. CABELL. Behind the driver.

Mr. HUBERT. Behind the driver. That would have put—

Mrs. CABELL. Me on the left.

Mr. HUBERT. Who was on your right?

Mrs. CABELL. Congressman Ray Roberts?

Mr. HUBERT. Your husband was seated to the left of the driver on the front seat?

Mrs. CABELL. The right of the driver.

Mr. HUBERT. The right of the driver. Now will you tell us in your own words, ma'am, what you saw and heard concerning the President's death?

Mrs. CABELL. As my husband has told you, he had his back to the School Depository Building. He was looking back talking to us.

Congressman Roberts was sitting just as this lady is now, and turned the same way. I was turned facing him. We were looking directly at each other. The position of our car was such that when that first shot rang out, my position was such that I did not have to turn to look at the building. I was directly facing it.

Mr. HUBERT. In other words, your car was still really on Houston?

Mrs. CABELL. No; we were making the turn.

Mr. HUBERT. Just on the turn?

Mrs. CABELL. Just on the turn, which put us at the top of the hill, you see.

Mr. HUBERT. Since you were actually turned toward Representative Roberts on your right?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Actually, you were facing—

Mrs. CABELL. The building.

Mr. HUBERT. The Texas Depository Building?

Mrs. CABELL. I was actually facing it.

Mr. HUBERT. What was the first thing you noticed of an extraordinary nature, or heard?

Mrs. CABELL. I heard the shot, and without having to turn my head, I jerked my head up.

Mr. HUBERT. Why did you do that?

Mrs. CABELL. Because I heard the direction from which the shot came, and I just jerked my head up.

Mr. HUBERT. What did you see?

Mrs. CABELL. I saw a projection out of one of those windows. Those windows on the sixth floor are in groups of twos.

Mr. HUBERT. In which window did you see the projection?

Mrs. CABELL. I have always been a little confused about that, but I think it was the first window.

Mr. HUBERT. On what floor?

Mrs. CABELL. On the top floor. Now I cannot take oath and say which window. There was some confusion in my mind.

Mr. HUBERT. But you say there were double windows. Is the confusion about whether it was the first or second double window, or the first or second window of the double windows?

Mrs. CABELL. The first or second window of the first group of double windows.

Mr. HUBERT. What was this projection?

Mrs. CABELL. I cannot tell you. It was rather long looking, the projection.

Mr. HUBERT. What did it seem like? An arm of an individual, or something mechanical?

Mrs. CABELL. I did not know, because I did not see a hand or a head or a human form behind it. It was in just a fleeting second that I jerked my head up and I saw something in that window, and I turned around to say to Earle, "Earle, it is a shot", and before I got the words out, just as I got the words out, he said, "Oh, no; it must have been a—" the second two shots rang out. After that, there is a certain amount of confusion in my mind. I was acutely

aware of the odor of gunpowder. I was aware that the motorcade stopped dead still. There was no question about that.

Mr. HUBERT. Let me ask you, after the first shot and your observation of this object in that window as you have described it, you turned your attention from that window?

Mrs. CABELL. That is right.

Mr. HUBERT. So that you were not looking in the direction of that window when the second and third shots were fired?

Mrs. CABELL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you look in that direction thereafter?

Mrs. CABELL. If I did, I don't recall. I am completely aware of the people running up that hill. I saw the man throw the child on the ground and throw himself. I saw a woman in a bright green dress throw herself on the ground. I saw the policeman running up the grassy slope.

Mr. HUBERT. You also mentioned that you were acutely aware of the smell of gunpowder?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. When was that relative to the shots? I mean how soon after?

Mrs. CABELL. I cannot say for sure, because as I told you, the motorcade was stopped. And somewhere in there, Congressman Roberts said, "That is a .30-06." I didn't know what a .30-06 was.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he say that after all the shots were fired?

Mrs. CABELL. I believe so. There was much confusion.

Mr. HUBERT. And it was about that time that you observed the odor?

Mrs. CABELL. Of gunpowder.

Mr. HUBERT. That was when your car at least had come to a standstill?

Mrs. CABELL. Every car in the motorcade had come to a standstill.

Mr. HUBERT. Therefore, of course, it was before you followed on to the hospital?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you make the observation to anyone at that time that you had smelled gunpowder?

Mrs. CABELL. No; because there was too much confusion. But I mentioned it to Congressman Roberts when we were in Washington a couple of weeks ago.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he say that he had observed it?

Mrs. CABELL. As well as I remember, he said "Yes." We were in a group, a large group, and there was much conversation.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you hear any other spontaneous remarks by anyone else? By spontaneous remarks, I mean remarks made then, not later.

Mrs. CABELL. Congressman Roberts—and I believe this was after the third shot, because we were dead still for a matter of some seconds—then when the motorcade started up, Congressman Roberts said—these might not be his exact words, but this is what he meant: "If all is well ahead, we are headed for Love Field. We are getting out."

Mr. HUBERT. His previous remark about the caliber of the rifle, which you did not at that time understand, was made after the third shot was fired and before you began to move?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Was there any other remark made by anyone other than those that you have covered?

Mrs. CABELL. No; except that as the motorcade started up, he said, "If all is well—"

Mr. HUBERT. Who said?

Mrs. CABELL. Congressman Roberts said, "If all is well, we are headed for Love Field. We are getting out."

Mr. HUBERT. Did the driver say anything, to your knowledge?

Mrs. CABELL. I don't recall that he said a word.

Mr. HUBERT. During the time that you were standing absolutely still for a few seconds, did you have occasion, or did you in fact look up at that window again?

Mrs. CABELL. Not again, as I recall.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you go to the hospital too?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. You were with your husband?

Mrs. CABELL. When we reached the hospital, the Presidential car was pulled up toward the slot ordinarily reserved for ambulances, which pulled us up a little closer to the entrance of the hospital. And as my husband jumped out of the car, he turned around and looked at me and said, "Stay in the car." And I believe at that time that Congressman Roberts got out of the car. The Texas delegation was standing around the cars at that time. And I sat in the car with our driver for quite some time.

Mr. HUBERT. How long, about?

Mrs. CABELL. I cannot tell you. Time left me that day. I sat there for quite a long time. I stood up and I saw them taking the President out of the car. I saw my husband by the carriage when the Governor was taken out of the car. Then our driver, after they went into the hospital, turned the car radio on and we and the other members of the Texas delegation, Senator Yarborough, all of the others—the delegation moved back and forth from the car where I was sitting, up to the door of the hospital. It is my impression that none of them went in.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you go in?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes; twice. Do you want me to tell you both times?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. CABELL. Well, this is a little difficult for me to tell.

Mr. HUBERT. Let me put it this way. What I am interested in is whether or not you saw Jack Ruby there. Did you know him prior to that time?

Mrs. CABELL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. Of course you have seen his pictures?

Mrs. CABELL. Since; but I had never seen him before.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see him at any place that you went in the hospital, in front of the hospital, or about the hospital on that day?

Mrs. CABELL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. In order to know where you were, to exclude your seeing him there, would you tell us just what places you were?

Mrs. CABELL. In the hospital?

Mr. HUBERT. Were you out there for some time?

Mrs. CABELL. There came a time when it was necessary for me to find a ladies' room. I walked up to one of the many police officers at the door and I said, "Officer, I am Mrs. Earle Cabell." He said, "Yes, Mrs. Cabell, I know." I have no idea which officer it was. I said, "It is necessary for me to go into the ladies' room. Can you get me in?" He said, "I can try." He had quite a good deal of trouble getting me in and identifying me. They did not let me go in until a nurse's aid was brought to the door. They did not let me stay on the first floor where the emergency section was. They took me to the left. This nurse's aid took me to the left with the police officer following, and we crossed the cafeteria and went over toward the front of the building. The nurse's aid went into the ladies' room with me. The policeman stood at the door. We went back the same way.

Mr. HUBERT. Tell me who was guarding the front door so that there was some difficulty getting you in.

Mrs. CABELL. I do not know. An elderly man in shirt sleeves, that I remember. I assume he was a part of the hospital personnel. I don't really know that to be true.

Mr. HUBERT. Were there police or State police or city police?

Mrs. CABELL. They were everywhere.

Mr. HUBERT. But you mean they were checking people going into the hospital?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes. Then as I came in, the policeman escorted me back to our car. I sat there again, I do not know how much longer I sat, but somebody brought me a Coca-Cola. We, as you know, had nothing to eat or drink since coffee at Mr. and Mrs. Eric Jonsson's, where we gathered before going to Love Field. Then a man came up to me. I have to assume that he was a Secret Service man. He said, "Are you Mrs. Earle Cabell?" I said, "Yes." He said, "There are no ladies presently with Mrs. Kennedy. We feel that it might be nice if you go in." So I handed my partially drunk Coca-Cola to the

driver, and I went in with this man. Another thing that makes me think he had some authority was that this second time when we got to the door, this man said, "This is Mrs. Earle Cabell," and we walked right in.

Mr. HUBERT. He said that to whom?

Mrs. CABELL. The man at the door.

Mr. HUBERT. The same man that had been at the door before?

Mrs. CABELL. I assume it was. There was such a short time that elapsed. He took me down. You turn to the right as you went in the door down this very wide hall, and as we were going down the hall, we met my husband coming toward us going out. I looked at him and he said, "I will be back." So we walked on in to this smaller hallway which separated the emergency rooms, either side of them. Mrs. Kennedy was sitting just outside the door of Emergency Room No. 1 in a straight chair. I walked up to her—

Mr. HUBERT. She was alone?

Mrs. CABELL. She was alone. There were, I am sure, Secret Service men. There was a group of men standing behind her, but she was sitting alone. I walked up to her and I said, "Mrs. Kennedy, I am Elizabeth Cabell. I wish there was something that I could do to help." And in a very dazed manner she said, "Yes, I remember you gave me the roses." And somebody put a chair by her for me and we sat there for just a few moments. And she said, "I would like a cigarette." My purse was on the floor behind my chair. I turned around to pick up my purse to give her a cigarette, and when I turned back around, she was walking into Emergency Room No. 2. I judge that it was next to the President, the room the President's body was in, and her purse was on a carriage in that emergency room. She was fumbling in her purse, and I said to her, "I have a cigarette here for you." It was exactly as though she had not heard me. She didn't answer me at all, and she kept fumbling in her purse and finally she came up with a cigarette. Then she turned to me as though she had never seen me before, but said, "But I don't have a match." And I said, "I have a match here for you." I lighted her cigarette and she turned around and walked out of that emergency room. We went back to the two chairs outside of Emergency Room No. 1 and sat down.

Just at that time I looked up and saw a Catholic priest coming toward us. It was not Father Huber. It was a man I did not recognize. I later understood he was the Catholic chaplain of the hospital. I am not sure about that. I got up and walked a few steps to meet him, and I said, "Father, take my chair by Mrs. Kennedy." Which he did do. In the meantime, my husband had come back in, and I stepped back where my husband was standing, and we stood there until the casket was wheeled out.

Mr. HUBERT. Was any announcement made to Mrs. Kennedy of the death of her husband?

Mrs. CABELL. Not while I was in there. I am under the impression—you see, I was still sitting out in the car when they brought Vice President, I guess then, and Mrs. Johnson out and put them in the car and took them away.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you know of the President's death when you went to Mrs. Kennedy?

Mrs. CABELL. Congressman Roberts had come back to the car and said, "He is gone."

Mr. HUBERT. It is your impression that Mrs. Kennedy then knew of the death of her husband when you first came up to her?

Mrs. CABELL. That is my impression. We did not discuss it.

Mr. HUBERT. Now I understand that there was a telephone call received by you that was of a threatening nature?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Would you tell us about that, please, ma'am? The time and so forth?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes; it was New Year's Eve. Of necessity, the security had asked us not to be out, that so many people had come in for the New Year's Day game, that they were uneasy. There was the possibility that Chief Justice Warren might come. There was the rumor that he might come. There was the

rumor that the President himself might come. We knew that the President's daughters were here, so they asked us not to wander around that night. We have spent New Year's night for many years with a very close group of friends, so we invited them to our home that night, but we explained to them that early in the evening and under rather heavy security, we went downtown to the Sheraton Hotel into a private suite to greet the Under Secretary of Navy and his wife. We stayed in this group possibly 30 or 40 minutes and then we went back to our home. At that time security had been lessened in our home. There were only two men with us at all times then. It had been much heavier earlier. The men had been in our home so long that they were like members of the family almost. They knew most of our guests because they had accompanied us on the Christmas parties and festivities that we went to. We were never without them.

We did not drive our own cars for 2 months. So most of these guests were known to the security officers that were in our home that night. But I am again hazy on the time. It must have been about 11 o'clock. I walked back into our bedroom for something, and the phone rang back there. I picked it up. This man's voice—it was not a kid, it was not a drunk—said, "Mrs. Cabell?" I said, "Yes." He said, "We are coming to kill that God damn mayor now." And hung up the phone.

Mr. HUBERT. Tell me, do you have a listed number?

Mrs. CABELL. An unlisted number. That is what startled us.

Mr. HUBERT. It is an unlisted number?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes; it is an unlisted number, and that is what startled us. I walked out of the bedroom through the living room, through the dining room, and into the kitchen and caught the eye of one of the security officers and motioned to him. He followed me back into the bedroom, and I closed the door and told him what had happened. He walked straight to the phone and called his superior officer.

Mr. HUBERT. Let me ask you, did this seem to be a local call, or long distance?

Mrs. CABELL. I have no way of knowing. When I picked up the phone and said "Hello," this man's voice said, "Mrs. Cabell."

Mr. HUBERT. And he said what you have just said, and that is all?

Mrs. CABELL. He hung up before I did. So Officer Beaty picked up the phone and called his superior. I had said to him, "Please ask what to do about our guests." Because there had always been the thinking among the security officers, the possibility of a bomb being thrown at the house.

Mr. HUBERT. Let me ask you, was your unlisted phone number carefully guarded or kept?

Mrs. CABELL. No, no. It was given to our church. It was given to the press. They all had it. They had to talk to Earle. It was given to some organizations to which we belonged. The thinking on our part was that we wanted to be available to responsible people. It was merely the crank calls that we were trying to avoid after Earle went in office.

Mr. HUBERT. So it was rather widely disseminated, and I suppose recorded by those people?

Mrs. CABELL. Who it had been given to; that's right. So it was not an impossible number to obtain. It couldn't be in Earle's position.

Mr. STOREY. (after shortly entering the room). Mr. Hubert, I might say I had trouble in finding it the one time I wanted to call the mayor.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, Mrs. Cabell, I have nothing more to ask you. If you have anything you would like to say concerning the subjects we have covered, or anything else pertinent to the inquiry, we would be glad to hear from you.

Mrs. CABELL. I do not know of anything that would be of any help except that from Earle's experience at Tupinamba, that somebody knew when those police cars pulled in and out of that driveway. There was always one facing the street. They were not squad cars. They were cars that the Special Service men drove. They were Galaxies, different color, but they all carried the license that people who knew about things like that could recognize them as being a police car. One evening Chief Curry called and talked to my husband and said things had been so quiet that if you and Mrs. Cabell feel all right about it, I am going to bring the boys in. And my husband said, "Now Chief, that has

always been up to you. Whatever you think, is what we want you to do. Within 30 minutes, I would say, after the security officers and the cars had gone, a threatening call came through the police switchboard, so within another 30 minutes the security was back.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you remember what that was?

Mrs. CABELL. No; I cannot give you the date.

Mr. HUBERT. How did you come to know of it?

Mrs. CABELL. I didn't know it until the next morning. The boys didn't come in the house that night. Earle didn't know it. We have a very trusted colored man who has been with us 26 years, and when he used his own key to come in the house next morning, I said, "Well, Phillip, I guess you miss our friends." And he said, "Mrs. Cabell, they haven't gone. They are outside." And I looked out the kitchen window and there they were. I went out—

Mr. HUBERT. You don't know, do you, whether that threatening call made reference to the fact that the security had been removed?

Mrs. CABELL. No; I do not. But the thinking on the part of the police was that somebody was watching that driveway, because the call came in within 30 minutes after the car had gone.

Mr. HUBERT. Have you anything else that you wish to say?

Mrs. CABELL. Only that, and days again escape me—I think it was the day of the President's funeral, my husband was in Washington. This can be verified, because by that time all of our phone calls were recorded. The phone rang early one afternoon, and I picked it up, and this man's voice said, "Mrs. Cabell." I said, "Yes." He said, "This is so-and-so—and the name I did not catch, or recall—said "I am with one of the news media. I would like to come out for an interview." Or words to that effect. And I said, "Well, Mr. Cabell is not here. You will have to talk to him about that." Then he said to me, "How heavily are you being guarded out there? Do you still have security?" And I don't know what I said, but I put it off. I passed it off. And by that time I had motioned to the security man that was in the next room, and he picked up the receiver, but the man had hung up by that time.

Mr. HUBERT. You mentioned that your calls were being recorded as early as the date of the President's funeral?

Mrs. CABELL. No; earlier.

Mr. HUBERT. Earlier?

Mrs. CABELL. Because the telephone men were out there within an hour after the shooting of Oswald.

Mr. HUBERT. They set up a recordation system whereby all calls could be recorded?

Mrs. CABELL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Was that still on at the time of New Year's Eve?

Mrs. CABELL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. When was that removed?

Mrs. CABELL. I can't tell you. Sometime during that 2 months, but I cannot say when.

Mr. HUBERT. But you do not think it was on at the time of the New Year's Eve call?

Mrs. CABELL. I am sure it wasn't, because the little recording machine, or whatever it was, had been—

Mr. HUBERT. Soundsciber?

Mrs. CABELL. Had been removed, and I believe I am correct in saying that that was removed at the time, and I can't give you a date, that they cut down to only two officers at a time being with us. For a long time there were two with me and two with Earle and two at the house.

Mr. HUBERT. Mrs. Cabell, I don't think there was actually any conversation much before the recordation of your deposition began between us, but in any case, I think you will agree with me that nothing was covered during the unrecorded conversation we had that has not been recorded here?

Mrs. CABELL. As far as I know; that is true.

Mr. HUBERT. Thank you very much, ma'am.

Mrs. CABELL. Thank you.