

SECRET SERVICE STATEMENT:

THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY ON NOVEMBER 22, 1963, AT DALLAS, TEXAS

Statement of Special Agent Clinton J. Hill, United States Secret Service, concerning his activities and official duties on November 22, 1963. Statement dated November 30, 1963.

I, Clinton J. Hill, Special Agent, United States Secret Service, arrived at Love Field, Dallas, Texas, at 11:40 a.m. on November 22, 1963, from Fort Worth, Texas, aboard Air Force No. One (USAF #26000) with President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy. President and Mrs. Kennedy debarked the aircraft first from the rear ramp followed by Governor and Mrs. John Connally and by three or four Congressmen and Senators, and then myself and ASAIC Roy H. Kellerman.

Upon alighting, President and Mrs. Kennedy were greeted by a small reception committee and Mrs. Kennedy was presented a bouquet of red roses. I ran over to the Secret Service Follow-up car immediately upon my arrival and placed my topcoat and a small folder containing information on this Dallas stop of the Texas trip on the floor of the car. I then went back to where the President and Mrs. Kennedy were greeting an elderly lady in a wheel chair.

The general public was restricted from the ramp area of Love Field by a permanent chain-link fence. There were a number of photographers and correspondents on the ramp area covering the arrival.

The President noticed the large number of people being restrained by the fence and walked over to the crowd and began shaking hands. He moved from his right to his left down the fence. Mrs. Kennedy accompanied him. I remained very close to Mrs. Kennedy observing the outstretched hands of well-wishers to make sure no weapons were extended toward Mrs. Kennedy and that nothing was handed to her. I accompanied Mrs. Kennedy behind the President along the fence and then to the Presidential automobile which was waiting to take President and Mrs. Kennedy and Governor and Mrs. John Connally to the Trade Mart for a luncheon, after a 45 minute motorcade through downtown Dallas.

President and Mrs. Kennedy entered the automobile with the President getting into the right rear seat and Mrs. Kennedy into the left rear seat. Mrs. Connally got into the left jump seat and Governor Connally into the right jump seat. SA William Greer was driving the automobile with ASAIC Roy H. Kellerman in the right front seat. I went to the left rear side of the Presidential automobile and stood on the airport ramp along side where Mrs. Kennedy was sitting.

As the Presidential automobile began to move forward at 11:55 a.m. I walked along side of the left rear of the automobile for about 150 feet, and since there were no people at all on the airport ramp I went back to the automobile immediately behind the Presidential Automobile and mounted the forward portion of the left running board.

SA Sam Kinney was driving this Secret Service Follow-up car which was a 1955 Cadillac 9-passenger convertible specifically outfitted for use by the Secret Service. ATSAIC Emory Roberts was sitting in the right front seat and operating the two way radio. SA John Ready was on the forward portion of the right hand running board; SA William McIntyre on the rear portion of the left hand running board; SA Paul E. Landis on the rear portion of the right hand running board; Mr. Kenneth O'Donnell, Presidential Appointment Secretary, was seated on the left side of the second seat; Mr. Dave Powers, Presidential Receptionist, was seated on the right side of the second seat; SA George Hickey was seated on the left side of the third seat- and SA Glen Bennett was seated on the right side of the third seat.

The Presidential Follow-up car was followed by a 1964 Lincoln 4-door convertible occupied by Vice-President and Mrs. Lyndon Johnson, Senator Ralph Yarborough, with ASAIC Rufus Youngblood in the right front seat. This automobile was followed by a Secret Service follow-up car for the Vice President, and then came automobiles occupied by photographers, correspondents, Senators and Congressmen.

Preceding the Presidential automobile was a Dallas Police Department Lead car in which SA Winston Lawson of the Secret Service was riding. Police motorcycles preceded and flanked the motorcade. There were two police motorcycles on the left side of the President's Secret Service follow-up car running abreast of one another between the automobile and the crowd of people.

My instructions for Dallas were to work the left rear of the Presidential automobile and remain in close proximity to Mrs. John F. Kennedy at all times. The agent assigned to work the left rear of the Presidential automobile rides on the forward portion of the left hand running board of the Secret Service follow-up car and only moves forward to walk alongside the Presidential automobile when it slows to such a pace that people can readily approach the auto on foot. If the crowd is very heavy, but the automobile is running at a rather rapid speed, the agent rides on the left rear of the Presidential automobile on a step specifically designed for that purpose.

As the motorcade moved from Love Field through downtown Dallas toward the Trade Mart, there were four (4) occasions before we reached the end of Main Street where I moved from the forward portion of the left running board of the follow-up car to the rear step of the Presidential automobile. I did this because the motorcycles that were along the left hand side of the follow-up car were unable to move up alongside the President's car due to the crowd surging into the street. The motorcycles were forced to drop back and so I jumped from the Follow-up car and mounted the President's car. I remained in this position until the crowd thinned and was away from the President's automobile, allowing the motorcycles to once again move up alongside of the automobile. When we approached the end of Main Street the crowd was noticeably less dense than had been the case prior to that point.

The motorcade made a right hand turn onto Elm Street. I was on the forward portion of the left running board of the follow-up car. The motorcade made a left hand turn from Elm Street toward an underpass. We were traveling about 12 to 15 miles per hour. On the left hand side was a grass area with a few people scattered along it observing the motorcade passing, and I was visually scanning these people when I heard a noise similar to a firecracker. The sound came from my right rear and I immediately moved my head in that direction. In so doing, my eyes had to cross the Presidential automobile and I saw the President hunch forward and then slump to his left. I jumped from the Follow-up car and ran toward the Presidential automobile. I heard a second firecracker type noise but it had a different sound-- like the sound of shooting a revolver into something hard. I saw the President slump more toward his left.

I jumped onto the left rear step of the Presidential automobile. Mrs. Kennedy shouted, "They've shot his head off;" then turned and raised out of her seat as if she were reaching to her right rear toward the back of the car for something that had blown out. I forced her back into her seat and placed my body above President and Mrs. Kennedy. SA Greer had, as I jumped onto the Presidential automobile, accelerated the Presidential automobile forward. I heard ASAIC Kellerman call SA Lawson on the two-way radio and say, "To the nearest hospital, quick." I shouted as loud as I could at the Lead car, "To the hospital, to the hospital."

As I lay over the top of the back seat I noticed a portion of the President's head on the right rear side was missing and he was bleeding profusely. Part of his brain was gone. I saw a part of his skull with hair on it lying in the seat. The time of the shooting was approximately 12:30 p.m., Dallas time. I looked forward to the jump seats and noticed Governor Connally's chest was covered with blood and he was slumped to his left and partially covered up by his wife. I had not realized until this point that the Governor had been shot.

When we arrived at Parkland Memorial Hospital, Dallas, I jumped off the Presidential automobile, removed my suit coat and covered the President's head and upper chest with it. I assisted in lifting the President from the rear seat of the automobile onto a wheel type stretcher and accompanied the President and Mrs. Kennedy into the Emergency Room. Governor Connally had been placed in an Emergency Room across the hall.

I exited the Emergency Room almost immediately because of the large number of doctors and nurses in the room, which was quite small. I asked a nurse standing outside of the Emergency Room in which the President was lying to please have everyone except those Medical Staff members necessary leave the emergency ward. She immediately began screening medical staff members.

I asked for the nearest telephone. ASAIC Kellerman exited the Emergency Room and told me to contact the White House in Washington and to keep the line open continually. I asked SA Lawson for the telephone number of the Dallas White House switchboard and he gave it to me. I dialed the Dallas White House operator and told him to connect me with the White House in Washington and to keep this line open continuously. He did so.

ASAIC Kellerman came out of the Emergency Room again and took the telephone and asked for SAIC Gerald A. Behn, Secret Service, The White House, Washington. This was

approximately 12:39 p.m. Kellerman told Behn that there had been a double tragedy; that the President and Governor Connally had both been shot and that I would keep him advised. I took over the telephone and told Mr. Behn that the situation was extremely critical. The operator cut into the line and said The Attorney General wanted to talk to me. He asked me what the situation was and I advised him that the President had been injured very seriously and that I would keep him advised as to his condition.

Mr. Kellerman came back out of the Emergency Room and said, "Clint, tell Gerry that this is not for release and not official, but the man is dead." I told that to Mr. Behn and then requested that he immediately contact the Attorney General and other members of the President's family so that he could advise them of the situation rather than having them hear it over some news media.

I then received a request from Mr. O'Donnell to obtain a casket immediately so that we could transport the body back to Washington, D.C., as quickly as possible. I contacted the Hospital Administrator and asked for the name of the nearest mortuary. He said it would be O'Neil, Inc. I telephoned them and identified myself and requested that they bring the best casket immediately available at the mortuary to the Parkland Memorial Hospital Emergency Entrance and deliver it to me. The casket arrived in about twenty minutes at approximately 1:40 p.m. We wheeled it immediately into the Emergency Room where the President's body lay.

I advised the Air Force Aide that we wanted Air Force No. One moved to a different location at Love Field and to have it secured completely away from the view of the General Public. I requested that no press be admitted to the area in which Air Force One was to be placed. I requested SA David Grant to notify the Dallas Police that we did not want to use the same entrance to Love Field that previously had been planned. I then went with the Hospital Administrator and checked the shortest and most direct route from the Emergency Room to the emergency platform where the O'Neil hearse was waiting. I advised ATSAIC Stuart Stout of the route and requested that it be cleared of personnel.

The President's body, accompanied by Mrs. Kennedy, exited the Emergency Room at approximately 1:58 p.m. and proceeded to the emergency entrance platform. The casket was placed in the back of the O'Neil, Inc., hearse and Mrs. Kennedy, Admiral George Burkley (the President's Physician), and I entered the back of the hearse with the casket. SA Andrew Berger drove the hearse- ATSAIC Stuart Stout rode in the center front seat and ASAIC Kellerman rode in the right front seat. We departed Parkland Memorial Hospital at 2:04 p.m. SA Lawson rode in the Dallas Police Department Lead Car. A Secret Service follow-up car followed immediately behind the hearse. The motorcade arrived at Air Force One, Love Field, at 2:14 p.m.

At 2:18 p.m the casket was placed aboard Air Force One with Mrs. Kennedy accompanying it. The casket was situated in the left rear corner of the aircraft where four seats had been removed. Mrs. Kennedy sat in one of the two seats immediately across the aisle from the casket.

The aircraft could not immediately depart because Vice-President Johnson had to be sworn in as the 36th President of the United States and it was necessary to wait for a Judge to arrive to do this. All personnel on Air Force One including Mrs. Kennedy were requested to witness the swearing in ceremony which took place in the Presidential Compartment of Air Force One at 2:38 p.m. I also attended.

I departed Love Field, Dallas, aboard Air Force One at 2:47 p.m. en route to Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. I arrived at Andrews Air Force Base at 5:58 p.m. I assisted in moving the casket bearing the President's body from Air Force One to a U.S. Navy ambulance. Mrs. Kennedy got in the back of the ambulance with the casket as did Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who had joined Mrs. Kennedy aboard Air Force One upon arrival at Andrews Air Force Base. General Godfrey McHugh also rode in the back of the ambulance. The ambulance was driven by SA Greer with ASAIC Kellerman, SA Landis, and Admiral Burkley riding in the front seat. I followed in the car immediately behind the ambulance with Dr. John W. Walsh, Dave Powers, Kenneth O'Donnell and Larry O'Brien.

The motorcade departed Andrews Air Force Base for Bethesda Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland, at 6:10 p.m. We were escorted by motorcycle police officers. The motorcade arrived Bethesda Naval Hospital at 6:55 p.m. Mrs. Kennedy, the Attorney General, SA Landis and I went immediately inside and via elevator to the 17th Floor of the hospital, the location of the Presidential Suite. Members of the immediate family and close friends were waiting in the suite.

The President's body was taken to the morgue at the hospital, accompanied by ASAIC Kellerman, SA Greer, and Admiral Burkley, for an autopsy. SA Landis and I secured the

17th Floor of the hospital and remained there with Mrs. Kennedy. We established a communications system with the White House and handled all telephone calls both incoming and outgoing, screening each and every call. Any person attempting to reach the 17th Floor was also screened.

At approximately 2:45 a.m., November 23, I was requested by ASAIC Kellerman to come to the morgue to once again view the body. When I arrived the autopsy had been completed and ASAIC Kellerman, SA Greer, General McHugh and I viewed the wounds. I observed a wound about six inches down from the neckline on the back just to the right of the spinal column. I observed another wound on the right rear portion of the skull. Attendants of the Joseph Gawler Mortuary were at this time preparing the body for placement in the casket. A new casket had been obtained from Gawler Mortuary in which the body was to be placed.

I went back to the 17th Floor of the hospital at approximately 3:10 a.m. The President's body was taken from the U.S. Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland, at 3:56 a.m., accompanied by Mrs. Kennedy and Attorney General Kennedy, in the rear of a U.S. Navy ambulance driven by SA Greer. ASAIC Kellerman rode in the right front seat. I rode in the right front seat of a White House limousine immediately behind the ambulance. The motorcade was accompanied by motorcycle police and arrived at the White House at 4:24 a.m. The casket was taken immediately to the East Room and placed in the center of the room on a cataphalt.

[signature]
Clinton J. Hill
Special Agent
U.S. Secret Service