

TESTIMONY OF MRS. ARTHUR CARL (GLADYS J.) JOHNSON

The testimony of Mrs. Arthur Carl (Gladys J.) Johnson was taken at 3:40 p.m., on April 1, 1964, in the office of the U.S. attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. Joseph A. Ball, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. BALL. Come in, Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, and sit down. My name is Joe Ball and Mrs. Johnson, I think we will start with you. Will you stand up, Mrs. Johnson, please, and hold up your right hand?

[Complying.]

Mr. BALL. Do you solemnly swear the testimony given before this Commission will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I certainly do; yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Mrs. Johnson, my name is Joe Ball and I am a staff counsel for the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. You have received a letter from us, did you not?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, I did.

Mr. BALL. Asking you to appear today and you are appearing voluntarily?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. You will be asked questions concerning certain facts of which you have knowledge that have to do with our investigation of the assassination of the President, and particularly your knowledge of Lee Harvey Oswald and his place of residence and various things that you might know concerning Lee Harvey Oswald.

Mr. BALL. What is your address?

Mrs. JOHNSON. 1026 North Beckley.

Mr. BALL. How long have you lived there?

Mrs. JOHNSON. 21 years.

Mr. BALL. And you live there with your husband?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; I do.

Mr. BALL. What is his name?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Arthur Carl Johnson.

Mr. BALL. First of all, before I ask you any more questions, can you tell me something about your background, where you were born, where you went to school?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. How long you've been married and everything.

Mrs. JOHNSON. I was born in 1902 in Cherokee County at Alto and I was married to my first husband in 1920 and he is deceased. I had two children by him and he is deceased and I have been married to this Mr. Johnson will be 18 years in August.

Mr. BALL. You are a housewife by occupation?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, I have a restaurant. I have a little restaurant of my own for 28 years, 1029 Young Street, Johnson's Cafe.

Mr. BALL. You still operate it?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; I still do.

Mr. BALL. You said you had lived at this place, 1026—

Mrs. JOHNSON. About 21 years.

Mr. BALL. North Beckley?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. You and your husband own that property?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I do; I owned it before I married. I don't own it. I am paying for it but I had bought the property before I married Johnson.

Mr. BALL. What size house is that, how many rooms?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Well, it has about 20-odd—22 rooms.

Mr. BALL. 22 rooms?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. In October, last October, November, 1963, who lived there?

Mrs. JOHNSON. October?

Mr. BALL. Yes, October and November last year; you and your husband lived there?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; my husband and I; that's our home.

Mr. BALL. Anyone else live there with you?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I had a housekeeper.

Mr. BALL. What is her name?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Earlene Roberts.

Mr. BALL. Anyone else live there?

Mrs. JOHNSON. That's all except tenants.

Mr. BALL. Then you rented out rooms?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; I rent out bedrooms, don't give board, just bedroom and living room privileges.

Mr. BALL. How many tenants did you have in October last year?

Mrs. JOHNSON. You know, I'm sorry I didn't bring my register. I couldn't tell you exactly; I imagine I had about 10 or 12.

Mr. BALL. Was it full?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; I don't—I most always have vacancies.

Mr. BALL. You do?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I have had more even since this happened.

Mr. BALL. Oh, you have?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; I have; people are funny about things like that, you know.

Mr. BALL. Well, now, you knew Lee Oswald, didn't you?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Well, I just knew him when I seen him. I knew him as a renter, that's all.

Mr. BALL. Where was he when you first met him, at what place?

Mrs. JOHNSON. At my home—I was between serving hours and I come home for relaxation and to kind of help out. I cooperate in keeping the house and seeing after it, too, and I had returned home that afternoon and he seen the room for rent sign—the first time that he came by, I happened to have just rented the last room that one time. Occasionally, I will have them full and then they just go vacant; people just come in and out, stay a week and then are gone, anyway, at that time, I didn't have a room.

Mr. BALL. The first time he came to see you?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; that's something about 3 weeks before he came back.

Mr. BALL. This was 1026 North Beckley?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. He talked to you?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; the first time and the last time; the first time, he told me he wanted a room and I told him I was very sorry, I just rented the last room and he said he was very sorry, he wanted to get near his work and he didn't have a car and it being on the bus line, he was sorry he missed it. I said, "You noticed the sign." I hadn't had time to take the sign up and I told him, "I will take the sign up and if you notice the sign up again, you might stop by and I will have a room" and sure enough, he came by this second time and so this tiny, little room—it was at one time my library; that's what it was built for, and he came by and I said I only have this small room at the present time. I run an ad, it seems like, at that time, and I said I only have the small room and he looked at it and said, "I will take this room with the understanding I can have a larger room at the time you have one go vacant" and I said to him that's agreeable, so, at the time, I had other vacancies which in just 2 or 3 days I had two or three more accommodations go vacant, so I told him I had other accommodations that are larger and he said, "I find this room to be light and comfortable." It was four windows on the outside wall; it was all light. He said, "I find it to be light and comfortable and worth the money, if you don't mind, I will remain in this room," so he didn't even look at the other rooms. He just remained in that room, what I call my library. When I utilized it into a bedroom, my father-in-law lived with a family of people on a farm and they went to Arkansas to live and he was getting old and he didn't want to be that far away from his son, so he wanted to come and make his home with us and I fixed this little library room—it was off and private from the other roomers—for "Pappy" to sleep in and the living room for him to sit in and he was—that's about 9 years before he was deceased.

Mr. BALL. Do you remember the date Oswald rented the room?

Mrs. JOHNSON. October 14.

Mr. BALL. What time of day did he come by?

Mrs. JOHNSON. It was between 4 and 5 o'clock, I do know that because I was home that day when he came back by and I said, when he came by, I said, "You did come back by."

Mr. BALL. Was your sign out at that time?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; it was; he seen the sign.

Mr. BALL. How much did you charge him?

Mrs. JOHNSON. \$8 a week, refrigerator and living room privileges.

Mr. BALL. The refrigerator was located where?

Mrs. JOHNSON. In my kitchen—he wanted to know if he could put milk and lunch meat in my refrigerator and I told him he could.

Mr. BALL. Did he tell you what his name was?

Mrs. JOHNSON. O. H. L-e-e [spelling].

Mr. BALL. Did he sign anything with that name?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; I have it in my purse.

Mr. BALL. May I see it?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I will be glad to—I don't want you to keep it. I want you to—I brought it for your information. I knew you was going to ask that.

Mr. BALL. Now, is this in his handwriting?

Mrs. JOHNSON. This "O. H. Lee" is in his handwriting and this other is in the housekeeper's handwriting—Mrs. Roberts.

Mr. BALL. And these are the rates you gave him?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. I would like this marked as an exhibit to this deposition. Mark this Exhibit A.

[Exhibit so marked.]

Mr. BALL. Could we make a copy of this and return this to you, Mrs. Johnson?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; I have been told that I could sell this and I haven't gotten any money. I think about \$30 is what I have received, all the trouble and all I've had and I've had to take the rugs up once or twice. People like to have driven us crazy before we asked for any information what to do. I hated to be rude to people. I didn't know what to do but they got so—

Mr. BALL. We will make a picture of this and give it back to you.

Mrs. JOHNSON. May I have something to erase this November 13, 15—I got that wrong, anyway. I was looking at the calendar and this, I was thinking it was November 13 that he left—he left my place on a Wednesday before this assassination on Friday.

Mr. BALL. That was the last time you saw him?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yeah; the last time I saw him was on a Wednesday but my housekeeper seen him on a Friday morning right after this assassination, he came by the house hurriedly.

Mr. BALL. Were you at home at the time?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; I wasn't. I was at my restaurant, so I got this copied wrong. It was November 20; the assassination was on the 22d and he left my house on the 20th and then didn't return until right after this assassination.

Mr. BALL. By this, you mean the last time you saw him was Wednesday, the 20th?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. He did not come home on Thursday night?

Mrs. JOHNSON. He did not; no, sir.

Mr. BALL. The 21st?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Friday, the 22d, you did not see him, either?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; I didn't. The housekeeper did.

Mr. BALL. We will make a copy of this and give the original back to you and we will mark this "A." Did he sign that "O. H. Lee" in your presence?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. On that day?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; the day he rented the room, they sign the register—they sign the register before I accept any money.

Mr. BALL. I'm talking about this "O. H. Lee" signature on this document; he signed that on that date?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Did he give you the money?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. \$8?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. Did you ever know his true name was Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; not until we saw his picture flash on the television as the officers were out. Those particulars was found in his pocket after he killed Tippit, after his arrest. So I came from the restaurant, I guess 1 or 1:30, and these officers were there 1:30 or 2, something like that, anyway, it was after this assassination, and as I drove in, well, the officers were there and they told me that they was looking for this character and I told them I didn't think I had anyone by that name there but we went through the register carefully two or three times and there was no Oswald there and I had two new tenants, rather new tenants, so we had carried them around the house to show them and we was going to start in the new tenants' rooms and my husband was sitting in the living room and seen this picture flash on the television and he said, "Please go around that house and tell him it was this guy that lived in this room here"; and it was O. H. Lee.

Mr. BALL. That is the first time you learned his name was Oswald?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. You knew him as O. H. Lee?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; I knew him as O. H. Lee.

Mr. BALL. The first time you knew the man to be Lee Harvey Oswald that you had known as O. H. Lee?

Mrs. JOHNSON. That's right.

Mr. BALL. Were you there when Oswald brought his clothes into the room?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; what do you mean?

Mr. BALL. Now, you rented the room to him on the 14th?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. Did he move in on that same day?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; and he had his clothes with him.

Mr. BALL. He had his clothes with him?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; he just had a little old bag of clothes, these little bags you get when you are in the service.

Mr. BALL. A duffelbag?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. That's all he had?

Mrs. JOHNSON. That's all he had.

Mr. BALL. He was there only—you say he rented it on the 14th of October?

Mrs. JOHNSON. He rented the 14th of October.

Mr. BALL. Then he paid his rent every week until when?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Every week, every week, I tell you, when he rented the room, he told me that he was—I told him the rules of the house before I accepted any renter I rent to, I tell them the rules of the house.

Mr. BALL. What did you tell him?

Mrs. JOHNSON. That we definitely do not entertain in bedrooms, strictly the living room, and, too, they cannot come in intoxicated. If they drink, they must sober before they come in and I do not allow drinking at the home. That's the rules of the house and he accepted it.

Mr. BALL. He was there a little better than a month?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Five or six weeks?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; he was.

Mr. BALL. Did he eat any of his meals there at the home?

Mrs. JOHNSON. He had sandwiches and had milk. He drank about a half gallon of sweet milk a day. He kept a half gallon of sweet milk in my refrigerator a day and he kept lunch meat.

Mr. BALL. Anything else?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Jelly and preserves, something like that.

Mr. BALL. Did he eat in the evening after work?
Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; he did, most every afternoon.
Mr. BALL. He ate where, in his room?
Mrs. JOHNSON. Sometimes take it in his room, but he was just spotless with it.
Mr. BALL. Did he eat in the kitchen with it sometimes?
Mrs. JOHNSON. Occasionally, if there was no one in the kitchen, he would sit in the kitchen, but if there was anyone in there, he would take it in his room and every bit of that was put in the trash can. He never kept anything cluttered, never kept anything outside, no papers, books, or nothing.
Mr. BALL. Did you see him eat anything but lunch meat?
Mrs. JOHNSON. I never did, just lunch meat, all he ever put in there and preserves, I think he had some preserves and milk; but he put about a half gallon of sweet milk in that box each day.
Mr. BALL. Did you ever see him eating his evening meal?
Mrs. JOHNSON. Well, I don't think I had seen him but I have seen him come in and get the lunch meat and carry it into his room.
Mr. BALL. Did he go out nights, any?
Mrs. JOHNSON. I just really never did see that man leave that room.
Mr. BALL. After he came back from work?
Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; he stayed very closely but he did tell me he would be leaving to go home over weekends—no; he didn't say "home," he said, "I will leave to go to Irving over weekends and won't return until Monday."
Mr. BALL. Was he gone almost every weekend?
Mrs. JOHNSON. Every weekend but one and that was the weekend previous to the assassination.
Mr. BALL. What did he do that weekend?
Mrs. JOHNSON. Well, I actually didn't see him leave the house but I know he did because I heard some of the renters say they seen him leave and I also heard—remember something that he went to the rifle range—I read he was at the rifle range.
Mr. BALL. You say you did not see him leave. Were you there over the weekend?
Mrs. JOHNSON. I surely was.
Mr. BALL. But you did not see him leave?
Mrs. JOHNSON. That's right.
Mr. BALL. You say you heard some people say that; who said that?
Mrs. JOHNSON. I have read.
Mr. BALL. Don't tell me what you read.
Mrs. JOHNSON. I actually read it in the newspaper; I just don't remember.
Mr. BALL. Is there anybody that you know of at your house that you say saw Oswald leave the house the weekend before the assassination?
Mrs. JOHNSON. I'm trying to think. I just don't believe that I remember anyone who said definitely that they seen him leave.
Mr. BALL. Did anybody tell you that lived in your house there?
Mrs. JOHNSON. They could come in and out that door and we never would notice it because the house is large and we stayed a lot in the back of the house.
Mr. BALL. You mentioned rifle range. Where did you get information that Oswald went to a rifle range?
Mrs. JOHNSON. I read it in the paper.
Mr. BALL. Did anybody in your house tell you he went to a rifle range?
Mrs. JOHNSON. No.
Mr. BALL. Did you ever see him go to a rifle range?
Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir.
Mr. BALL. Did he ever tell you he went to a rifle range?
Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir; that man never talked; that was the only peculiarity about him. He would never speak. If we would speak to him and some of the men renters he would speak to the housekeeper and I everytime we would speak and we would speak to him just most every time we would meet him and, of course, he would speak after we would speak, but he would come in and watch television maybe 30, 40 minutes at a time and never speak to a man.
Mr. BALL. He would watch television sometimes?
Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; watch television with the other men renters and he

wouldn't speak to them. Maybe they would speak to him but he wouldn't speak.

Mr. BALL. Did you ever see him with a rifle?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Never did; and he never brought that rifle in my house; I just know he never had that rifle in there. He could have had this pistol, I don't know, because they found the scabbard.

Mr. BALL. The pistol holster is what they found?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Pistol holster is what I'm trying to say.

Mr. BALL. They found that after the assassination?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes sir; I seen the holster.

Mr. BALL. Had you ever seen it before?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir; he kept that packed away. We never go through people's personal things. I instruct my housekeeper never go through people's personal things. We are not in a position to do that and it's rude and we do not.

Mr. BALL. How is this room furnished that Oswald rented?

Mrs. JOHNSON. A very small room; it had an old fashioned clothes closet that had a place to hang your clothes and drawer space for your underwear, your socks and everything, and then it also had a cabinet space anyone could have stored food or, well I mean bundles of things, you know, and then I had a dresser and a bed and a heater and a little refrigerated unit.

Mr. BALL. A refrigerating unit?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; a window unit.

Mr. BALL. You mean it cooled the room?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; and it had curtains and venetian blinds.

Mr. BALL. What kind of curtains did it have?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Well, it just had side drapes and panels.

Mr. BALL. Were the curtains on curtain rods?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. They were in the room when he rented it?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Did Oswald ever talk to you about redecorating his room?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir; never mentioned it.

Mr. BALL. Did he ever talk to you about putting up new curtains in his room?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir.

Mr. BALL. Did he ever tell you he was going to get some curtain rods?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; he didn't.

Mr. BALL. The room had curtain rods on the window when he came in there?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; sure did.

Mr. BALL. Also curtains?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Was there one weekend when he was gone in which he didn't return on Monday but he came back the next day, on Tuesday?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Was there?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; there was one and it must have been on Labor—no—

Mr. BALL. Armistice Day?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Armistice Day; it was on Monday, was it not?

Mr. BALL. Yes.

Mrs. JOHNSON. That was Monday he wasn't home. He didn't come home until Tuesday; that's the first time and only time he failed to pay his rent when it was due. It was due on Monday.

Mr. BALL. When did he pay it?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I would say the next 5 minutes after he walked into the house from work.

Mr. BALL. What time did he come home from work on Tuesday?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Something like 5 o'clock, 4:30 or 5—5, I think.

Mr. BALL. Did he tell you where he had been?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, no; he didn't tell us anything; no; we didn't ask.

Mr. BALL. Now, in the next weekend, that would be the weekend before the assassination, he stayed there?

Mrs. JOHNSON. He remained there.

Mr. BALL. Did you or did you not see him go out any that weekend?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I did not see him go out; I did not; no, sir.

(At this point Mr. Johnson left the room.)

Mr. BALL. Let me ask you this: did he, that weekend, that was the weekend before the assassination, on a Saturday, make a trip to a place where they wash clothes?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Well, I think that he did go across to that washateria. I think he did.

Mr. BALL. Did you see him go any place, go out of the house except for that on that weekend?

Mrs. JOHNSON. That's the only time and I had just forgotten that but I do remember he carried some clothes out of that house that morning and the washateria is right across the street, less than a block.

Mr. BALL. But he left his room?

Mrs. JOHNSON. And he wasn't gone long and I didn't see him return with any clothes but I do know he was gone just about long enough to do a wash.

Mr. BALL. Did he watch television every evening?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Not every evening but just every time he took a notion but maybe 95 percent of the time he would sit in his room.

Mr. BALL. Did he have any visitors?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir; he never had a visitor.

Mr. BALL. Do you ever remember him spending an evening away from home except for these times you told us about?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Not an evening that I remember him being away but other than weekends he would. He would leave on Friday mornings and return Monday evenings.

Mr. BALL. Did he tell you when he rented your room where he was working?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; he didn't, but he did tell me he would be returning to Irving each weekend.

Mr. BALL. Did he ever tell you where he was working?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir.

Mr. BALL. Did he ever tell you what his job was?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; he told me he was anxious to rent the room being on the busline and near his work and he didn't have a car and he would be returning to Irving.

Mr. BALL. Did you ever see him in the company of anyone?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Never did see him in the company of nobody.

Mr. BALL. Did he drink?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir; no more than sweet milk.

Mr. BALL. He never drink intoxicating liquor?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir; I don't believe he drank.

Mr. BALL. You never saw him drink anything?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir.

Mr. BALL. You never saw him intoxicated?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir.

Mr. BALL. Did he smoke?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I don't believe he did.

Mr. BALL. Miss Earlene Roberts was your housekeeper at this time?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, she was.

Mr. BALL. How long have you known her?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I have known Mrs. Roberts, oh, I guess it was 6 years, something like that, 6 years.

Mr. BALL. Where did you first meet her?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I hired her as a housekeeper.

Mr. BALL. At 1026 North Beckley?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BALL. Has she been working for you for that period of time?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No, sir; I let Mrs. Roberts go a time or two, then I would hire her back.

Mr. BALL. Was there some reason why you let her go?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Well, she would just get to being disagreeable with renters and I don't know, she has a lot of handicaps. She has an overweight problem and she has some habits that some people have to understand to tolerate.

Mr. BALL. What are they?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Talking, just sitting down and making up tales, you know, have you ever seen people like that? Just have a creative mind, there's nothing to it, and just make up and keep talking until she just makes a lie out of it. Listen, I'm telling you the truth and this isn't to go any further, understand that? You have to know these things because you are going to question this lady. I will tell you, she's just as intelligent—I think she is a person that doesn't mean to do that but she just does it automatically. It seems as though that she, oh, I don't know, wants to be attractive or something at times. I just don't know; I don't understand it myself. I only wish I did.

Mr. BALL. She was working for you in October and November while Oswald was a renter with you?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, she was. This Saturday night will be 3 weeks she left.

Mr. BALL. She quit 3 weeks ago?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, sir; I didn't know she was going.

Mr. BALL. Where did she go?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I do not know. I called her sister to try to find out. I don't think she knows.

Mr. BALL. Who is her sister?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Mrs. Bertha Cheek.

Mr. BALL. She lives here in Dallas?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; on Swiss, I think.

Mr. BALL. Have you talked to her within the last few days?

Mrs. JOHNSON. A number of times I talked to her, trying to find Earlene. I thought it was important we did come to this Commission and I wanted to ask Earlene just why she did leave because I didn't know there was a thing in the world wrong. Well, I carried her to Pleasant Grove to a doctor and spent a half day that I should have been even with my brother that had had a heart attack, been assisting my sister-in-law and her chores that day.

Mr. BALL. When was this?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Three weeks ago Saturday.

Mr. BALL. That's the day you took her to the doctor?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; I took her every 2 weeks just as regular.

Mr. BALL. She quit that day?

Mrs. JOHNSON. That night, and everything was just as agreeable; I went and shopped for vegetables and her special meats for her diet. She is a diabetic, too, while she was in the doctor's office, and I had everything for another week for her diet.

Mr. BALL. Did she come to you and tell you she was going to quit?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; she never mentioned such a thing. I thought everything was just agreeable.

Mr. BALL. What did she do, move out?

Mrs. JOHNSON. After midnight, after everyone was in bed.

Mr. BALL. She didn't tell you she was going?

Mrs. JOHNSON. She didn't tell me she was going.

Mr. BALL. You haven't see her since?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I haven't seen her since.

Mr. BALL. Did a letter come to your house to Earlene Roberts from the Commission?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. What did you do with it?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I held it until the last minute and returned it to you.

Mr. BALL. Your letter and your husband's letter came to the house?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. You called Mrs. Cheek?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, I did.

Mr. BALL. To find out where Earlene was?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. What did she tell you?

Mrs. JOHNSON. She told me she had called her and told her she had left my house and she said, "I just proceeded to tell her what I thought about it because you are so good and so nice to her. She should never have quit you like

that." She said. "You know how she is, she hasn't called back. She might swell up and pout and it will be months before she calls me again."

Mr. BALL. Do you know any reason why she should have left you?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Mrs. Cheek, the sister, says when she was talking to her she brought up a little old lady that does room with me and she is a retired woman who is drawing her social security and she was a housekeeper previous to this last time Mrs. Roberts was there—Katy Gage, a precious woman, gets along with everybody. She's got children but doesn't want to live with them. She prefers living with my husband and I, renting a room and lives with us. She tells—and Mrs. Cheek says first thing she brought up was Katy. She says she's jealous of Katy and I don't know why she is. There is no reason to be.

Mr. BALL. Did Earlene Roberts ever talk to Oswald in your presence; did you ever see them talk to each other?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Listen here, no; I don't believe that Lee talked to anybody. I just really don't.

Mr. BALL. Did Earlene ever talk to you about Oswald?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No.

Mr. BALL. Say she thought he was a peculiar one?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No.

Mr. BALL. She never mentioned him?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; she just didn't like him because he wouldn't speak but that's all.

Mr. BALL. She told you she did not like him?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yeah, she would say "I would like to know if he thinks he is too good to speak to me when he comes through the kitchen." I said, "If you speak to him, he will speak," I said, "I will speak to him" and he says, "Good morning" but he didn't speak if I didn't speak.

Mr. BALL. On the day of the 22d of November, were you home around 1 o'clock?

Mrs. JOHNSON. It must have been 1:30 or 2, something like that.

Mr. BALL. When you came home?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; after serving lunch.

Mr. BALL. Did Earlene Roberts say anything to you whether or not this man had returned?

Mrs. JOHNSON. No; after these officers came in, well, then she began to tell them that he did come rushing in and she had gotten a phone call or had made one, anyway, she was on the phone—no, there was someone called her, that's what she said, said someone called her and she says, "Did you know that the President had been assassinated" and she says, "Why, no" and she says, "Well, it's on the television now" and she says, "I will run and turn it on" and she run in and turned this television on to get this information and this Oswald walked in hurriedly and she said, she said to him, "You seem to be in a hurry." She was the only one in that place. She said he didn't say a word but went on in his room and she said he changed his little zip-up coat, way I understand it, and just went right back out. He evidently got the gun; now, we don't know.

Mr. BALL. Did she tell the officers that?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yeah, she told the officers that.

Mr. BALL. When they came out there, did they have a search warrant?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, surely.

Mr. BALL. Did you permit them to search his room?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes; they taken everything immediately out of his room.

Mr. BALL. Did you look in the room while they were searching it?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I certainly did. It had French doors to it; folding open, you couldn't help but see everything, the books and all they took out of these chests of drawers. They was throwin' them down on the bed.

Mr. BALL. Did you see a pistol holster?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes, I did.

Mr. BALL. Where was it?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I don't know; they took it out of one of the drawers of this chest.

Mr. BALL. It was in a drawer?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Yes.

Mr. BALL. I think that's all. Now, you can look this over and sign it, if you wish, or you can waive your signature and we will have it written up and send it on to Washington.

Mrs. JOHNSON. How is this?

Mr. BALL. If you wish, we will have this written up and you can read it over and sign it or you can waive signature, if you wish, and you won't need to read it over and sign it. What do you prefer?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I would think that you people—of course, the way I worded it, it probably sounds terrible.

Mr. BALL. I thought it sounded very good.

Mrs. JOHNSON. I put it just as straight as I could because we did know such a little about this man but you know I have rented rooms a long time and I find people, around boys, especially, about this age, some of them are shy. They don't prefer a lot of yakking and you will get to where, actually, you appreciate a person that goes in his room and takes care of his own business rather than sit around and quiz and ask personal questions and wants to change from one television program to another. You get tired of that.

Mr. BALL. Are you satisfied to waive your signature, Mrs. Johnson?

Mrs. JOHNSON. Why, yes.

Mr. BALL. And leave it just as you said it?

Mrs. JOHNSON. I have said the truth, nothing but the truth.

Mr. BALL. Then, you won't have to sign it. We will send it on to the Commission this way.

Mrs. JOHNSON. I have told you the truth.

TESTIMONY OF A. C. JOHNSON

The testimony of A. C. Johnson was taken at 3:45 p.m., on April 1, 1964, in the office of the U.S. Attorney, 301 Post Office Building, Bryan and Ervay Streets, Dallas, Tex., by Mr. David N. Belin, assistant counsel of the President's Commission.

Mr. BELIN. Will you stand up and raise your right hand, Mr. Johnson?

Do you solemnly swear in your testimony to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. JOHNSON. I do.

Mr. BELIN. Please be seated, sir. Your name is A. C. Johnson?

Mr. JOHNSON. A. C.

Mr. BELIN. Where do you live, Mr. Johnson?

Mr. JOHNSON. 1026 North Beckley.

Mr. BELIN. That's here in Dallas?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, sir.

Mr. BELIN. How long have you lived there?

Mr. JOHNSON. I've lived there 17 years, I believe.

Mr. BELIN. Now what's your occupation?

Mr. JOHNSON. Carpenter.

Mr. BELIN. Are you originally from Texas, or did you move here?

Mr. JOHNSON. No, I'm from Kentucky—was born in Kentucky. My folks came here when I was 5 years old.

Mr. BELIN. They came here to Texas?

Mr. JOHNSON. When I was 5 years old. And I've been in and around Dallas ever since.

Mr. BELIN. Did you go to school here?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes—not in Dallas, but country schools—county schools, you know.

Mr. BELIN. How far did you go through school?

Mr. JOHNSON. Sir?

Mr. BELIN. How far did you go through school?

Mr. JOHNSON. Uh—just grade school.