

Chief STEVENSON. Observed it as it came down ; yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Chief Stevenson, has there been any discussion between you and I today which has not been covered in this deposition? I mean, did we have any conversation or any discussion today that has not become a part of the recorded deposition?

Chief STEVENSON. You mean our previous deposition?

Mr. HUBERT. No; today.

Chief STEVENSON. Not to my knowledge ; no, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. That is my recollection, that we simply exchanged greetings, but other than that we have not spoken except during the time that your deposition was being taken?

Chief STEVENSON. That's right.

Mr. HUBERT. Thank you very much, sir. Do you have anything you want to add or say?

Chief STEVENSON. Mr. Hubert, I don't know what it would be. I hope I have covered everything.

Mr. HUBERT. Thank you, sir.

TESTIMONY OF ELGIN ENGLISH CRULL

The testimony of Elgin English Crull was taken at 1:40 p.m., on July 14, 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 City Manager Elgin E. Crull. Mr. Crull, my name is Leon 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.

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, Mr. Crull, 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 I understand, sir, that you have appeared here today by virtue of a letter requesting you to do so, addressed by Mr. J. Lee Rankin, general counsel of the staff of the President's Commission, is that correct?

Mr. CRULL. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. When did you receive that, sir?

Mr. CRULL. I would have to guess. He didn't stamp it. The letter is dated July the 8th.

Mr. HUBERT. Sometime last week?

Mr. CRULL. I received it about last Thursday.

Mr. HUBERT. That would be July 9?

Mr. CRULL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, sir, would you stand and raise your right hand, please? 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?

Mr. CRULL. I do.

Mr. HUBERT. Would you state your full name?

Mr. CRULL. My name is Elgin English Crull.

Mr. HUBERT. Where do you reside, sir?

Mr. CRULL. Dallas, Tex., at 9424 Hobart.

Mr. HUBERT. What is your office?

Mr. CRULL. City manager, city of Dallas.

Mr. HUBERT. How long have you held that position?

Mr. CRULL. For 12 years.

Mr. HUBERT. How old a man are you, sir?

Mr. CRULL. I am 55. I shall be 56 on the 17th of this month.

Mr. HUBERT. Are you a native of Texas?

Mr. CRULL. No; I am a native of Louisville, Ky.

Mr. HUBERT. Have you had previous experience in the field of city management?

Mr. CRULL. I have been in the city of Dallas for 25 years.

Mr. HUBERT. In what capacity, prior to becoming city manager?

Mr. CRULL. As an assistant.

Mr. HUBERT. Assistant city manager?

Mr. CRULL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Now Mr. Crull, we would like you to state, first of all, for the record, what are the duties and responsibilities, and so forth, of the city manager of the city of Dallas, the position which you have held and been associated with for some 25 years.

Mr. CRULL. The city manager, under the Dallas Charter, is the chief administrator of the city government, being charged with the overall supervision of most of the departments of the government. There are a few exceptions. Being charged with the financial control and the operation of the budget, and the operation of the different departments.

The city manager is charged with the responsibility of appointing and removing department heads, and assistant department heads, the balance of the organization being under civil service.

He is the responsible official to the city council, which is the policymaking body.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you appoint Chief Jesse E. Curry to his position?

Mr. CRULL. I did.

Mr. HUBERT. Is that a political appointment, or just how was it made?

Mr. CRULL. We don't have any political appointments. We are a council-manager government. We have no political parties as such. The national parties take no activity in Dallas.

Mr. HUBERT. If you make an appointment, does the mayor or the city council have anything to do with it by way of suggestion or rejection?

Mr. CRULL. No, sir; the responsibility for the appointment and for the performance of the appointee is with the city manager. The council does set salaries for all appointees.

Mr. HUBERT. It is possible, I suppose then, for the city council to veto your appointment by not appropriating the money for the salary, is that possible?

Mr. CRULL. It is possible. It hasn't happened in 30 years.

Mr. HUBERT. The selection of Chief Curry was your own selection?

Mr. CRULL. That is correct.

Mr. HUBERT. I take it from what you have said then, it was based upon merit?

Mr. CRULL. In my opinion; yes, sir.

Mr. HUBERT. Would you explain just what is the ordinary effect of your relationship with your department heads, including and particularly the head of the police department insofar as the administration and policies of the police department are concerned?

Mr. CRULL. The general administration is left to the chief and his staff. They are trained. The administrative policies, the general personnel regulations, and things of that nature first come out of our office to the department, and then are followed by the different departments. We do check through the budget office on any deviation in policies. Department heads request changes in policies, purchasing, financing, personnel, and operating.

In addition to that, the chief, since a police department is a delicate operation with a particularly difficult public relations problem, would discuss things which might have a particular public application so far as public acceptance.

Mr. HUBERT. Is it within your power to overrule any decision or action taken by the police department or the head thereof?

Mr. CRULL. Not any action. It would be within my power to overrule on a policy matter and on administrative matters, but of course not those things which were covered by law. Do I make myself clear?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes; but except for those duties and functions of the police department that are established by law, you would have the authority to direct the chief to do or not to do any action that you thought?

Mr. CRULL. That's right, any department head.

Mr. HUBERT. Now, Mr. Crull, I have previously handed you a document consisting of three pages, which is a report of an interview of you by FBI Agents Calvin Rice and John J. Flanagan, dated December 12, 1963, which for the purpose of identification I have marked on the first page in the right-hand margin thereof as follows:

"Dallas, Texas, July 14, 1964, Exhibit 1, deposition of Elgin Crull." I have signed my name below that, and on the second and third page I have placed my initials in the lower right-hand corner of each of those pages.

I think you have had an opportunity to read that document, and I will now ask you if that document is correct as to the nature and effect stated in the course of that interview, and whether it reflects the facts as you remember them?

Mr. CRULL. In general, it does, but there are some details which are inaccurate.

Mr. HUBERT. Now with respect to the details, I notice that you have marked on the very last line of the second paragraph on page 1, a little mark indicating that you wish to comment on that last line. Would you state what you wish to say about it, please, sir?

Mr. CRULL. I believe that says simply that I went to the lake, to a cabin. The only change is that there is no cabin. I have a boat on the lake.

Mr. HUBERT. Other than that?

Mr. CRULL. Other than that, it is accurate.

Mr. HUBERT. Now in the next paragraph, which is the third paragraph on page 1, you have put a little mark next to the statement that you heard over the radio of Oswald having been shot.

Mr. CRULL. I did not hear it over the radio. I was called by the operator of the marina, or one of his people, I do not remember which, who had heard it over the radio.

Mr. HUBERT. Now on the next paragraph on page 1, that is to say, paragraph 4, you marked next to the fifth line and also next to the sixth, seventh, and eighth lines of that paragraph; first of all, with reference to the statement that you had selected the prior chief of police. That is to say, the chief of police prior to to Chief Curry. Do you have any comments to make about that?

Mr. CRULL. Yes; I didn't select Chief Curry's predecessor. He was selected by my predecessor or one of my predecessors.

Mr. HUBERT. The chief of police who was in office prior to Chief Curry was in that office when you became the city manager?

Mr. CRULL. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. You kept him on?

Mr. CRULL. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Or perhaps it was thought that that was an appointment of him? But nevertheless, we have a clarification on that.

Now that sentence continues and reads as follows: That you never interfered with the operations of the police department, leaving it entirely in the chief's hands, as he did with other city departments. I think you indicated you wished to address yourself to that thought?

Mr. CRULL. I think perhaps that gives the wrong impression, that departments and department heads operate entirely on their own without any supervision at all.

Our department heads are experienced, and they do operate with a great deal of freedom, but not without control and not without consultation with the central office or manager's office.

Mr. HUBERT. Now turning to the second page in the last paragraph, eight lines from the bottom of the page, there is a reference to an individual in the report who quotes you as saying he was a yellow-sheet journalist. I think you wanted to comment on that?

Mr. CRULL. I think that phrase should be stricken, because it is not my phrase. I don't recall it, and it is not one I would use normally. I think someone has attempted to portray what I thought of the individual, has injected his phrase.

Mr. HUBERT. I guess to get the story complete, since you wish to delete the specific phrase, it might be a good idea for you to tell us what was your impression of him, in your own words.

Mr. CRULL. The publisher of this local newspaper is careless with facts, and is inclined toward the sensational. And quite frankly, says he does it deliberately in order to sell newspapers.

Mr. HUBERT. I notice that a little further down in this same paragraph there is a statement attributed to you by virtue of the fact that it in direct quotes says as follows: "I can't sell newspapers by telling the truth." Which according to this report, the FBI says you stated with regard to that interview.

Mr. CRULL. That is accurate.

Mr. HUBERT. Now I see no other marks indicating that you wish to comment upon any other part of Exhibit No. 1, so is it a fact then, that other than the corrections that have been made, it is your opinion that Exhibit No. 1 represents a true and faithful record of the interview?

Mr. CRULL. With the exceptions, I think it is accurate.

Mr. HUBERT. Now while we were on the subject of this statement which had appeared in the Oak Cliff Tribune with reference to the pressure being brought upon Chief Curry in regard to his relationship with the press, I would like for you, if you wish, to comment upon what role you played with reference to the matter of control of the press and the whole situation involving the press?

Mr. CRULL. I need some explanation. Over what period of time?

Mr. HUBERT. I am talking about the period of time from November the 22d, after the President was shot, until the 24th or 25th of November.

Mr. CRULL. After the President was shot, for quite some time I was at the control station at the site of the luncheon. When I finally returned to the city hall, I believed I reached there before the chief did—I went to my own office, and I can't say how long, later went across to the police department, which is in an adjoining building.

Mr. HUBERT. But there is a corridor?

Mr. CRULL. Yes; at that time the press had almost taken over. These were the visiting press. Our local press had been pushed off to one side, and the visitors who had made the trip here with the press, plus the television people, had flooded the third-floor corridors.

The chief's office—the television people had opened the switchboard on the corridor and their technicians had attached their equipment to the electrical system, and they were pretty well set up. I do not know, but I assume that all this happened while all the top men in the department were out on the job. There was no reason for top-level people being in the police department headquarters during the time of the Kennedy visit. They each had other assignments.

Mr. HUBERT. When you went there and saw the condition you just described, what time was it, about?

Mr. CRULL. I guess I would say it was about 3:30 in the afternoon.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you see any of the top officers of the police department there on the third floor when you arrived?

Mr. CRULL. I can't remember specifically. Later that afternoon, I talked to Chief Curry when he did return.

Mr. HUBERT. Where did that conversation take place?

Mr. CRULL. In his office in the police department.

Mr. HUBERT. How long after your return?

Mr. CRULL. I guess this was 30 or 40 minutes. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Mr. HUBERT. Had you left the building and gone back?

Mr. CRULL. I had gone back to my office and come back again. He had been to the airport with the President's body. At that time Chief Curry discussed the condition of things with the press, and I agreed with him that we would continue our policy of trying to cooperate with the press.

Mr. HUBERT. Did he have a formal meeting with the press, or how did that take place?

Mr. CRULL. No; but they were—the offices are small, and the corridor is not too big, and when you move that many television men and cameras and newspaper reporters into the corridor and into the offices, there was practically no space for anybody to work.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, what I was thinking about was where this conference that you mentioned took place which apparently you witnessed between Curry and members of the press?

Mr. CRULL. No; I gave you the wrong impression. It was a conference between me and the chief, and Chief Batchelor, his assistant.

Mr. HUBERT. What was the nature of that conference?

Mr. CRULL. The general situation. This was the first time I had had a chance to talk to Chief Curry, since he had left to go to the hospital after the President was killed, and we looked at the situation, and I agreed with the chief that we would continue to try to cooperate with the press, that there would have to be some order brought in to the situation, but that it was important that the police department not be put in a position in which later people could charge that this man had been beaten, and had been kept under cover, and not been allowed to see him.

Mr. HUBERT. Was any consideration given to moving the press out completely?

Mr. CRULL. No; this could have been an alternative, but we did not consider it.

Mr. HUBERT. You mentioned that there was some discussion about controlling the situation?

Mr. CRULL. We had to get them out of the offices and pushed back out into the corridor so people could work. They flooded into the chief's office and the surrounding offices too.

Mr. HUBERT. They had been in the offices of the various divisions?

Mr. CRULL. No; at the end of that particular corridor are the top administrative offices, the office of the chief, the assistant chief, and the deputy chief, the four deputy chiefs, and his clerical help, and that is the office into which they had largely flooded.

Mr. HUBERT. Was Oswald in custody on the third floor at that time?

Mr. CRULL. He was—this is hearsay—I understand in custody in the homicide bureau at the other end of the hall on the same floor.

Mr. HUBERT. Was any consideration given as to the effect of the congregation of the press in that area?

Mr. CRULL. The press was not being allowed to go beyond the midpoint in the building.

Mr. HUBERT. How was that controlled?

Mr. CRULL. There were officers there. The homicide bureau was north of the midpoint in the bureau, and there was at that time and most of the time, I understand—again I am relying on hearsay—that that part of the corridor was kept comparatively free.

Now I was there at one time, and I can't say when, when they moved Oswald from homicide back up to the jail, I believe. At that time he was brought out through the corridor and did walk with the detectives holding him through the press, which was, or part of the press.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you speak to any members of the press or otherwise gain any impression as to their attitude about what their rights were, and so forth?

Mr. CRULL. I gained an impression from talking to some of the local newspapermen who came up to me and said, "Please don't blame us for what is going on. We don't act this way."

Mr. HUBERT. Could you tell us something about what those actions were that the local press seemed to be apologizing for?

Mr. CRULL. This is something I don't know of my own knowledge at all.

Mr. HUBERT. I was thinking of what you yourself observed.

Mr. CRULL. Crowding, pushing, and attempting to take over. The free and easy use of the electrical system, which I think I noticed that most.

Mr. HUBERT. What was some example of that?

Mr. CRULL. I didn't check the details, but the switchboxes had been opened and the technicians pretty obviously had hooked on any place they could find a wire which would support the use.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know if any fuses were blown?

Mr. CRULL. I was told that there were.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you discuss with Chief Curry or any of the top officials of the police department the problem of the safety of the prisoner?

Mr. CRULL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you discuss with them the problem of the matter of the ultimate transfer of the prisoner to the county jail when and if he were charged?

Mr. CRULL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. When did you leave the police department quarters on the 22d?

Mr. CRULL. On Saturday?

Mr. HUBERT. I was thinking on Friday after this conference thing.

Mr. CRULL. I am sorry, I can't be too accurate. I imagine I finally left the city hall and periodically I checked back with the police department either by telephone or actually by walking over there. I imagine it was about 7 o'clock before we left and went home.

Mr. HUBERT. You think that in the interval before 7 o'clock, between that conference you just described and 7 o'clock, that you contacted the top officials of the police department either by walking over again or by telephone?

Mr. CRULL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Was any further discussion had about the condition of the news media?

Mr. CRULL. No; the only thing I was interested in most then, of course as everyone else, was the progress being made with Oswald making the case. I was pretty well snowed in my own office by telegrams, telephone calls, and things which had come in in great numbers.

Mr. HUBERT. You say you went home about 7 o'clock?

Mr. CRULL. Yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you return to the municipal building or police department any more that night?

Mr. CRULL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you have any further communication with them the night of the 22d?

Mr. CRULL. I have to keep this straight by days of the week.

Mr. HUBERT. This is Friday the 22d.

Mr. CRULL. This is the day of the President's death?

Mr. HUBERT. Yes.

Mr. CRULL. No; before I left the police department the last time, they told me they thought the case was pretty well wrapped up, and that there would be no particular new developments, so after I left that night, I went home that night, and the following morning I went to the lake, Saturday morning.

Mr. HUBERT. About what time did you go to the lake?

Mr. CRULL. About 10 o'clock.

Mr. HUBERT. You did not then go back to the police department?

Mr. CRULL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. So that after 7 o'clock, on Friday, you didn't have any occasion to observe the conditions in the city hall at all?

Mr. CRULL. No; not till Sunday.

Mr. HUBERT. Did you have any communication with the police department after you got to the lake?

Mr. CRULL. Not until Sunday morning.

Mr. HUBERT. At what time did you have communication, and in what way on Sunday morning?

Mr. CRULL. On Sunday morning, the specific time I can't say. A member of the marina staff called me, and said that the radio said that Oswald had been shot. So I went to the marina office and used the telephone to call Dallas. I was calling from the marina, Lake Texoma, just out of Denison, Tex. I did call the office and I talked with Chief Stevenson, and he told me, his words were, "I guess you have heard that we have lost our prisoner."

Then he told me something of the details, although it was then confused.

Mr. HUBERT. Was Oswald dead then, or did he tell you so?

Mr. CRULL. They didn't know at that time. I was talking to them at the police department, and Oswald had been moved to Parkland Hospital.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you remember what time it was?

Mr. CRULL. No; I can't say. I waited at Texoma then, a short time, until my wife came back to the lake. She had been in to Denison to church, and shortly after noon we came back to Dallas. I came to the city hall after changing my clothes at home, to the police department and talked to our mayor then and found that he had received some telephone threats, and that the police had a guard on him, that he wanted to go to Washington for the President's funeral, and that there was some concern about it. So I left the city hall and went to the home of the mayor, discussed his trip with him, decided on my own that he should have protection all the way, called Chief Curry, and suggested that he assign Lieutenant Revill, who was the head of the chief intelligence section, to make the trip to Washington with Mayor Cabell.

Over the telephone the chief did this, and I waited at the mayor's home until Revill went to his house and collected his clothes. Then, in a squad car, I went to the airport to see the mayor off on the airplane.

Mr. HUBERT. What time was that, about?

Mr. CRULL. Between 5:30 and 6 o'clock, something in that area. It was still daylight.

Mr. HUBERT. That was on Sunday, the 24th?

Mr. CRULL. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. Were you informed by anyone of any fears that existed concerning the safety of Oswald?

Mr. CRULL. I didn't hear this report until several days later that there had been some.

Mr. HUBERT. I think you have already stated that in your discussions with the head of the chief of police, the head of the police department on Friday afternoon between 4 and 7, that there had not been discussed or mentioned any fear concerning his safety, is that right?

Mr. CRULL. That's correct. The concern expressed was that with the whole world looking on, the thing be kept in the open as much as it could be, with a reasonable degree of security. Quarterbacking the game on Monday, apparently we were stressing the wrong point.

Mr. HUBERT. Apparently from the last part of your answer there, you mentioned that since the whole world was looking on, the press should be given as much freedom as possible? I think you mentioned consistent with security, or something of that sort?

Mr. CRULL. Consistent with the safety of the prisoner; yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Well, is it fair to say then that the actual safety of the prisoner was a matter of discussion?

Mr. CRULL. No; I don't think it would be accurate to say that it was a matter of discussion. It was mentioned, but I doubt very seriously that the staff of personnel was very concerned about it, because he was at that time safely in the homicide bureau surrounded by detectives.

Mr. HUBERT. But you say it was mentioned, the safety of the prisoner?

Mr. CRULL. I think so; yes.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you remember by whom?

Mr. CRULL. No; I don't remember exactly.

Mr. HUBERT. I think you have already said, too, that there was no discussion of the method of transfer or the danger or perils that might exist for the safety of the prisoner when that would come about?

Mr. CRULL. The method of transfer I did not discuss at all at the time.

Mr. HUBERT. And of course since you left on Saturday morning and did not communicate or have any communication with the police until after the shooting of Oswald, you knew nothing about any developments or about any threats, and so forth, that had been made to him?

Mr. CRULL. No.

Mr. HUBERT. Nor did you know what plans for transfer had been developed and were prepared to be carried out?

Mr. CRULL. No; quite frankly, I think this belongs in it. I never thought seriously of the prisoner being killed. I don't know whether others did or not, but I was concerned primarily with the case being wrapped up, and solid, so that there would be no question about who killed the President.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, sir; there is one statement I have noticed in the FBI report identified as Exhibit No. 1, on page 2, that I would like, if you would, to clarify, because it is not really clear to me. It is the third sentence in the last paragraph on the second page reading as follows, to wit: "He—that is you—stated on November 25 he issued instructions to his subordinates and to Chief Curry and the police department to make no comments concerning these matters. Insofar as he knows, these instructions have been followed." I would just like to get a clarification of what you had in mind. It is not clear to me.

Mr. CRULL. This may be inaccurate in my timing. This came immediately after the shooting of Oswald and the delivery of Ruby to the county jail. A problem for the district attorney's office, and for the Commission, and at that time the press had announced that President Johnson had announced that he would name such a Commission. He had actually named Chief Justice Warren to head it. I am not certain.

And my instructions were that no police officer make any comment, that no evidence be released by any police officer, that it would all be turned over to the district attorney for his control, and I talked to the district attorney by telephone and told him my instructions. This was on Monday. Later, whether it was the same day or the following day, the district attorney told the chief of police that he preferred that that responsibility go to the—what is now known as the Warren Commission. I don't believe any member of the police department, but with one exception, has yet violated the instructions on statements.

Mr. HUBERT. Mr. Crull, as you know, there has been at least one statement to the effect that Chief Curry was "taking the wrap for higher-ups who insisted that Oswald be transferred in daylight hours in order to accommodate the press and other news media."

Do you know anything about that at all, sir?

Mr. CRULL. So far as I am concerned, the higher ups would have to be either the city manager or the mayor. So far as the city manager is concerned, Chief Curry was given no instructions whatsoever as to the transfer, and I feel quite confident that Mayor Cabell didn't.

For two reasons. One, he says he didn't, and the other, that under the charter, the city manager's responsibility for the chief of police and the mayor doesn't give direct orders. I think the statement is completely untrue.

Mr. HUBERT. Do you know of anything that would indicate that Mayor Cabell or any of the members of the council did exercise any kind of pressure whatsoever on Chief Curry?

Mr. CRULL. I know of nothing, and I feel certain that it didn't occur.

Mr. HUBERT. And you did not at all?

Mr. CRULL. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, sir; is there anything else you would like to add?

Mr. CRULL. No; I guess not. Nearly all my knowledge is of course hearsay. I have no direct knowledge.

Mr. HUBERT. All right, sir; then let me close the deposition with the usual question. Am I correct in stating that nothing has been discussed between us at any time since we first met, which was today, that has not become subsequently a part of this deposition by being reported?

Mr. CRULL. That's correct.

Mr. HUBERT. I certainly thank you, sir.

Mr. CRULL. Thank you.

Mr. HUBERT. Glad you came by.

TESTIMONY OF J. W. FRITZ

The testimony of J. W. Fritz was taken at 9 a.m., on July 14, 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.