

Date December 4, 1963

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Sergeant JAMES A. PUTNAM, Dallas, Texas, Police Department, who resides at 2015 Joan Drive, Dallas, Texas, was contacted concerning the shooting of LEE HARVEY OSWALD on the morning of November 24, 1963, at the Dallas City Hall. PUTNAM was advised he did not have to make a statement; that any statement he did make could be used against him in a court of law, and that he could consult an attorney at any time he desired. PUTNAM voluntarily advised as follows:

At 9 a.m. on the morning of November 24, 1963, Sergeant P. T. DEAN, Patrol Division, Dallas Police Department, acting on orders of Lieutenant R. S. PIERCE, Patrol Division, assigned PUTNAM to assist Sergeant DEAN with a search of the basement area of Dallas City Hall. He said that he, Sergeant DEAN, Officer L. E. JEZ, Reserve Captain ARBETT, and several other unknown reserve Police Officers searched the basement area for any unauthorized persons or weapons. He added that their search, which was completed at approximately 8:30 a.m., developed nothing unusual and the entire area was considered safe and secure. He added, however, that during the search several building maintenance employees were asked to leave the basement area, which they did.

Sergeant PUTNAM advised that he and other officers in the basement, from about 9:30 a.m. until approximately 11:20 a.m., were securing the area and checking out any unidentified persons there. He said to his knowledge no unauthorized person was located in the basement during that time.

He related that the following officers were assigned to the positions listed below:

- R. C. NELSON - basement entrance from Police and Courts Building;
- R. E. VAUGHN - north ramp entrance on Main Street;
- B. G. PATTERSON, south ramp exit on Commerce Street;
- A. R. BROCK, elevators in basement.

Sergeant PUTNAM advised that at about 11:19 a.m. he received instructions from Sergeant P. T. DEAN to accompany Lieutenant PIERCE in his car which was to lead the armored car, in which OSWALD was to be placed, to the County Jail. Sergeant PUTNAM added that he and Lieutenant PIERCE were accompanied by Sergeant MAXEY.

At approximately 11:20 a.m. Lieutenant PIERCE's car left via the Main Street exit, where Officer R. E. VAUGHN was on duty, turned left

on 12/3/63 at Dallas, Texas File # DL 44-1639  
 by Special Agents JAMES E. GARRIS and J. C. E. [unclear] Date dictated 12/4/63

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on Main Street, then left on Harwood, then left on Commerce to the Commerce Street ramp. Immediately upon arriving there, at about 11:21 a.m. or 11:22 a.m., Detective (FNU) REYNOLDS ran out of the basement shouting that OSWALD had been shot and to "cover off the building." Sergeant PUTNAM said he got out of the car and ran to secure the Harwood Street entrance to City Hall. Moments after securing that entrance, Sergeant PUTNAM saw a Negro, male, running down the hall. Sergeant PUTNAM stepped into the hall, stopped this individual, searched him, and then turned him over to Detective REYNOLDS (same REYNOLDS mentioned above). Sergeant PUTNAM said since he had to return to the Harwood Street entrance, he did not take the time to ask this individual's name or why he was running.

From the time Sergeant PUTNAM departed from the Main Street exit at approximately 11:20 a.m. until shortly after OSWALD was shot, he gave the following precise account of his movements and observations:

Sergeants PUTNAM and MAXEY accompanied Lieutenant PIERCE in PIERCE's car which left the basement area at approximately 11:20 a.m. Lieutenant PIERCE was driving, Sergeant PUTNAM occupied the front seat with PIERCE, and Sergeant MAXEY was in the rear seat behind Lieutenant PIERCE. As the car approached the top of the ramp on Main Street, Officer VAUGHN was the first person seen by Sergeant PUTNAM. There was no other police officer stationed at that point. VAUGHN was directly in front of the ramp at a point near where the sidewalk joins the street. He believes VAUGHN moved slightly to the right (PUTNAM's right) and took one or two steps into the street, then waved PIERCE's car onto Main Street.

Sergeant PUTNAM said as the car approached the top of the ramp he noticed four to six people standing on the sidewalk near the curb, to his left. He indicated he saw this group out of the corner of his eye and did not look directly at anyone in the group. Sergeant PUTNAM was unable to say if JACK RUBY was one of the individuals in that group.

Sergeant PUTNAM stated that the Main Street exit presented no spectator or vehicle traffic problem, since OSWALD was to leave via the Commerce Street exit and spectators at the Commerce Street exit had been moved across the street earlier. He added that pedestrian and vehicle traffic appeared to be light at that time.

He is well acquainted with Officer VAUGHN and knows VAUGHN to be "a forceful officer." Sergeant PUTNAM said he knows VAUGHN well enough to feel certain, in his own mind, that VAUGHN would have stopped RUBY or any unauthorized person attempting to gain entrance into the basement.

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Sergeant PUTNAM said he is positive no one entered the basement from the Main Street exit as Lieutenant PIERCE's car was going up the ramp at approximately 11:20 a.m. He pointed out that the Main Street Ramp exit is somewhat narrow and anyone walking down the ramp, as a car departed, would most certainly step close to the wall to avoid being hit.

He knew of no other cars that entered or left the basement via the Main Street ramp immediately before or after Lieutenant PIERCE's car departed.

Sergeant PUTNAM stated that he carefully observed each individual in the basement the entire time he was on duty there from 9 a.m. until he left that area at approximately 11:20 a.m. He said on several occasions he asked unknown newsmen to identify themselves, which they did. He added that in his opinion there was no unauthorized person in the basement during that period. He said that he did not see JACK RUBY in the basement just prior to his leaving that area and as Lieutenant PIERCE's car was leaving the basement via the Main Street ramp he saw no one except officer VAUGHN at that exit.

Sergeant PUTNAM advised he does not know JACK RUBY and has never had any contact or association with him. He heard Sergeant DEAN, Sergeant MAXEY and Lieutenant PIERCE comment that they knew RUBY, but in his (PUTNAM's) opinion, RUBY is not a friend or associate of any of the above officers. He understands, as a matter of fact, that none of the three officers liked RUBY. PUTNAM knew of no other Dallas Police Officers who knew RUBY. He also was of the opinion that no officer of the Dallas Police Department would have knowingly let RUBY into the basement area of City Hall on the morning of November 24, 1963.

PUTNAM understands that RUBY claims in a statement that he entered the Main Street entrance to the basement of City Hall on the morning of November 24, 1963, and passed two officers stationed at that entrance, who were talking.

Sergeant PUTNAM stated it is his understanding that it has been established that RUBY was at a Western Union Office near the police station at 11:16 a.m. on November 24, 1963. PUTNAM stated that he, himself, walked from that Western Union Office to the ramp, where OSWALD was shot, on three occasions, using a different entrance to the ramp on each occasion -- namely, Commerce Street entrance, Main Street entrance, and stairway to lobby to ramp. He said, time-wise, RUBY could have reached the ramp via any of the above routes in sufficient time to fire the fatal shot at OSWALD.

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Sergeant PUTNAM said that after OSWALD was shot there was some talk that RUBY may have entered the basement by assisting a television cameraman. He added, however, that the last television equipment was moved into the basement area at about 10:50 a.m. by two cameramen known to him by sight but not by name. PUTNAM added that RUBY was not among the crowd at that time or at any time while he was on duty in the basement, to the best of his knowledge.

PUTNAM estimated that at approximately 11:20 a.m. there were about 75 persons in the basement ramp and lobby. He estimated there were some 35 or 40 Police Officers and all others were representatives of the press, radio and television.

He advised he knew of no association between RUBY and OSWALD. He stated he did not know OSWALD and never had any contact with him.

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