

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

FILE # I-244'J

Person(s) Interviewed: Gardner, William F.

Date June 14, 1968

Time 10:00 AM

Business Address & Phone 3400 Wilshire Blvd #62 3877011

Residence Address & Phone 4932 Echo St. LA 2566592

Information (To be complete the report should include: Who, What, When, Where, Why, & How)

Witness Gardner was interviewed at the Ambassador Hotel on above date and time. Gardner is employed by the hotel as Director of Security.

The Kennedy staff was in the Ambassador Hotel for six (6) weeks prior to the election. Kennedy had reserved and used the royal suite of rooms on the 5th floor during this time. Mr. Uno Timonson, Ambassador management, did all the coordination between the hotel and the Kennedy staff. Mr. Timonson did not request any security arrangements from Gardner for the Kennedy party.

On Monday, June 3, 1968 a meeting was held between the LA Fire Dept. and the hotel staff. As a result of this meeting, six firemen were assigned to the hotel from the public Assemblage Unit of the Fire Prevention Bureau. Gardner and his staff were to assist the fire Dept with crowd control with the emphasis on overcrowding conditions and public safety.

There was no communications between the Kennedy party and Gardner. Mr. Gardner stressed the point that he at no time received any request for any security from the Kennedy party. Any security arrangements were made on his own and in cooperation with the Fire Dept.

The hotel security force on the evening of June 4, 1968 and AM of June 5, 1968 consisted of Gardner, 10 hotel security employees and 6 Ace guards.

Hotel Security:

Gardner, William F. I-248	4932 Echo St.	2566592
Murphy, Fred A. I-248	111 S. Oxford Ave	DU33653
Surtis, Lloyd I-246	2522 Lucerne	7344987
Grugan, Clarence M. I-247	3003 Leeward #17	3871073
Crites, David R. I-248	4233 Gateway ave	6647004
Perez, Thomas I-249	538 S. Lorena St.	AN94387
Pederson, Harold I-250	3654 W. 59th St.	AX17533
Kawalec, Stanley S. I-251	502 S. Westlake	HU36171
Franklin, William A. I-252	806 Edgewood St Apt 13	6740364
Rothberg, James I-253	5640 Santa Monica Blvd	H095801 Ext 218
Maddox, Arthur H. I-254	744 S. Catalina St	3898147
ACE Guards: 8720 Woodley Ave, Sepulveda 8945717		
Bell, Willie S. I-246	4515 Lexington Ave Hwd	6634822 6294789
Boombower, Elmer M. I-256	10156 Collett Ave Granada Hills	8927123
Cesar, Thame	1882 Morley St Simi	805 5260574
Merritt, Jack J. I-256, I-259	10109 S. Winston St Sepulveda	8927892 3409638
Stowers, Albert Louis I-259	13577 Mercer Pacoima	8996579 7874100
Mallard, Augustus	609 W. 94th St. #12	7798585

All the security personnel were in uniform, with the exception of Mr. Gardner and Fred A. Murphy. The key run guards were Curtis, Crites and Rothberg. They were required to make their customary runs which take approximately 20 minutes, each hour. The remaining 40 minutes they were

Investigators making interview

Varney & O'Steen

Approved by:

Higley

assigned to various locations and jobs within the hotel. The remaining personnel were assigned to locations and moved about as the need and situation dictated. prior to the shooting the following assignments were made;

Maddox - Hall door to the Colonial Room (Press Room). Perez - in the hallway back of the stage to the North of the Embassy room and East of the stage anteroom, by the double swinging doors, leading to the Embassy room from the hallway. Merritt and Stowers - Main door to the Embassy Room. Cesar - probably in the kitchen area by the portable screens. Bell & Curtis - North side of building at the bottom of the stairs N/W corner of the Embassy room. (Inside stairway).

Gardner states he was concerned with deploying his men and did not stay with the Kennedy party. At the time Kennedy entered the Embassy room from the back hallway, Gardner was at the doorway, with Perez. Gardner did not go through the Kitchen area with Kennedy.

During the speech, a Kennedy aid advised Gardner the senator was not going to return via the kitchen, but was going to go directly downstairs and out the fire exit, to his waiting car, in front of the hotel. Gardner telephoned his gate-man and verified that the car was in front of the hotel. He added two guards, and went to the bottom of the stairs, himself, to clear the area for the Kennedy party. The first indication Gardner had that something was wrong, was a young lady came down stairs and advised him that there had been a "Terrible Accident."

During the time in question, the public had access to all parts of the hotel. No invitations were issued and no passes were required to enter any of the ballrooms. The implications received by Gardner was that Kennedy wanted to talk to the "Common Man".

Gardner states he did not remove any of the guards from the kitchen area when the change in plans was made. (Or so stated to him.) The aid who gave him the information is described by him as Female, Cauc, 35+, Taller than average, Bra/red hair, conservative green dress.

At the time Kennedy was moving through the kitchen area after the speech, he was being led by Uno Timonson, and flanked by headwaiters Carl Euker and Ed Menasian. Gardner was not in the area at the time.

Gardner states a TV camera was mounted in the N/W corner of the kitchen and had been used to tape interviews at the same location.

A merchant guard was at the foot of the stairs on the outside of the North courtyard, and was employed by the TV companies. This guard was not hired by the hotel, but had made himself usefull by restricting the pedestrian traffic up and down the stairway. The guard was hired by NBC.

Merchants Fire Dispatch

Miller, Charles 123 W. 81st St. LA 9593151 7494061

Gardner states several firemen were assigned to various posts during the evening. Inspector Lynch, Fire prevention section was contacted and a list of firemen on duty was obtained.

L.A.F.D.

- Held, Kenneth Capt OIC
- Rohm, Leonard Capt
- Lynch, Cecil R. Insp
- Jones, James B.
- Fisher, Alfred
- Martin, Ray
- Burba Photographer