

Uecker, Karl - see p 7 of this interview -

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Sisler's blue attire, resembling beerboy's color uniform @ Ambassador Hotel

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TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDED INTERVIEW OF
KARL A. UECKER
RECORDED AT RAMPART DETECTIVE DIVISION
JUNE 5, 1968

QUESTIONED BY: SGT. R. L. CALKINS #7287, HOMICIDE DIVISION
SGT. M. J. MCGANN #10329, HOMICIDE DIVISION
REPORTED BY: JUDY C. HERNANDEZ, INTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

(*) INDICATES UNINTELLIGIBLE CONVERSATION.

Q Your first name, sir?

A Karl, K-a-r-l.

Q Middle name or your last--

A A. A. Initial A.

Q Uh huh (yes).

A Last name is U-e-c-k-e-r.

Q U-e--

A --e-c-k-e-r.

Q And your address?

A 3025 Glenhurst Center.

Q What city is that in?

A L. A. 39.

Q And your home phone?

A 667-3106.

Q Are you home during the daytime hours?

A I guess I'm at work.

Q You would normally work nights?

A No, all daytime, Ambassador.

Q All right. What's your business phone number?

A Extension 315.

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1 Q At the Ambassador, huh?

2 A Yes, Banquets Department.

3 Q 315?

4 A 315.

5 Q Okay, Karl, I'm Sgt. McGann from Homicide,
6 downtown. My partner, Sgt. Calkins. Could you tell us
7 what you saw and what you did tonight?

8 A Yeah. I took Senator Kennedy off the stage and
9 he was supposed to go through the kitchen, through the
10 pantry behind it, (*) wall.

11 Q What you are talking about, this area--Embassy
12 Room, over here and this being the hallway, hallway leading
13 down to the Colonial Room, which would be the working
14 press room, I think, as it was described--

15 A There's a stage here, and through here (*) on
16 my hands 'cause the crowd was very--I think it was very
17 busy there. Everybody was (*). I had it on my hands,
18 still going to shake hands with somebody and he grabbed his
19 hand again and we went straight ahead until he got about
20 beginning of the heaters. This is pantry here.

21 Q Uh huh (yes).

22 A And heaters we keep the plates hot, food hot,
23 and right in the beginning, somewhere here, that guy, he
24 must have jumped--he must have bent down and jumped up and
25 start shooting. First shot--first shot or second shot must
26 have been shortly one after another, you know, and I saw

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1 Mr. Kennedy falling down out of my hand (*) and he is
2 still shooting. And then I hit his hand down and I don't
3 know how many times he shot. I don't know. I couldn't
4 even tell you--four times, five times, six times, it was--
5 but he was shooting another direction, I think, but I was
6 trying to push the gun away from the crowd into the kitchen.
7 And then some other guys came somewhere, either same side
8 or front, took the gun away from him.

9 Q But--

10 A I kept him for about seven--between seven or ten
11 minutes, my arm, like. That's all I can tell you, until
12 the police came in. They asked me to listen and came over
13 to the police.

14 Q Was there a crowd, employees, in the building,
15 standing in this little area that apparently leads from
16 another hallway down to where the pantry area is?

17 A I don't know. Would be, I imagine, though
18 that the people were standing, from the kitchen, standing
19 around this area 'cause I saw him shaking hands with one of'
20 the dishwashers.

21 Q Uh huh (eys).

22 A I know that, and then he came back and I grabbed
23 his hand again and pulled him through, through the crowd.

24 Q This is the Senator's hand you grabbed?

25 A Yes, I grabbed his hand again and then at the
26 time that it happened.

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1 Q Where was this guy that had the gun the first
2 time you saw him?

3 A The first time I saw him, he was--I was coming
4 this way. He was standing on my left hand, coming this way
5 and about--about here, around here; this area here.

6 Q He was very close to you, then, the first time
7 you saw him?

8 A Right in front of me, right in front of me,
9 you know. He must have come up from the bottom, because
10 I don't--I didn't see him in front of me. I saw all the
11 people in front of me. He must have come up. I think he
12 must have covered the gun with something, paper or something,
13 'cause the first I didn't see no gun; then I saw something
14 white, either paper or something, and I heard a shot. Later
15 said I thought it was a fire cracker, you know. I didn't
16 even realize at the first shot that it was a gun but by
17 the second shot, I turned around and saw Kennedy falling
18 down out of my hand and then at the time that I realized it
19 must have been a gun, then I grabbed him, you know.

20 Q Did he sort of reach around you to shoot the
21 Senator?

22 A Yeah.

23 Q He sort of reached around you to shoot the
24 Senator or did he get past you or--

25 A Yes, I think he was right in front of me because
26 the way he--he was right in front of me, right in front. He

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1 turned around and shot with his right hand.

2 Q He had the gun in his right hand?

3 A In his right hand, yeah, because I kept him in
4 my right hand and he was--yes, in his right hand. He was
5 trying to pull the right hand over again. I was trying to
6 move that hand over.

7 Q He was trying to get the gun back to where he
8 could shoot people?

9 A Right.

10 Q And you were trying to prevent this?

11 A Right.

12 Q Did you see the gun?

13 A I saw the gun, yeah. Yeah.

14 Q All right. Let me show a gun, and you tell me
15 if this appears to be a gun similar to the one you saw?

16 A I tell you the truth, I don't think it was that
17 big, but could be. I really don't--

18 Q You're not sure?

19 A No, I'm not sure because I didn't pay too much
20 attention to the gun. See, I was trying to hit his hand
21 away and was trying to hold him.

22 Q Uh huh (yes). Uh huh (yes).

23 A Uh huh (yes), and he was trying to get away
24 from me and I was afraid if I let him loose, that he's
25 going to shoot me in the (*)--in my stomach, you know.

26 Q Uh huh (yes). Did he say anything to you? Do

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1 you recall did he--

2 A No.

3 Q Did you hear him say anything at all?

4 A No, just when (*) very tight and he was making
5 noise and somebody else was talking, but it was about two
6 or three minutes afterward, was talking over my back and I
7 think it was time to hit him and I told them, "Don't hit
8 him," and he was talking to him and he says something. I
9 don't know what he said.

10 Q Could you--

11 A I was so excited.

12 Q I could understand that. Could you describe this
13 man?

14 A The man standing behind me?

15 Q The man who did the shooting?

16 A Oh, yes. Oh, yes. He was smaller than me.

17 Q He was a male--

18 A Dark head--dark hair.

19 Q Dark hair?

20 A Dark hair.

21 Q How old would you think he was?

22 A I think--I wouldn't think he was more than 24
23 years old.

24 Q Uh huh (yes).

25 A Maybe less than that.

26 Q What nationality do you think he was?

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1 A I--I think he was--I couldn't tell you. He
2 never opened the mouth. He never talked, so he never had
3 any accent I could tell; but he could easily be a Mexican
4 or Puerto Rican.

5 Q Latin descent?

6 A Latin descent, yeah.

7 Q Would you know him if you saw him again?

8 A I would say yes. Yes. Yes.

9 Q What color hair do you say and how was it--

10 A Dark.

11 Q Dark hair, and would you describe it?

12 A Slightly backwards, combed slightly, but a
13 little backwards.

14 Q Was it normally normal or long or short?

15 A Yeah. He didn't have this long hair, no, I don't--
16 he didn't have that.

17 Q Uh huh (yes).

18 Q What was he wearing; do you remember?

19 A As a matter of fact, I thought it was one of
20 our banquet housemen because he had a blue suit on, a dark
21 suit on.

22 Q You mean a work suit or--

23 A Work suit, dark. I think it was blue.

24 Q Uh huh (yes).

25 A The first idea I had, I thought it was one of the
26 busboys, one of the housemen.

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1 Q Uh huh (yes).

2 A When I looked at the face, I didn't recognize
3 him.

4 Q You had never seen him before--

5 A No.

6 Q --as far as you know, anyway? Now, you say
7 when you first saw him, he was more or less appeared in
8 front of you?

9 A Right here, and we struggle about--until we get
10 about right over here somewhere in the middle, middle of it,
11 'cause I pulled him away and I--

12 Q Was he still firing?

13 A He was still firing, yeah. Oh, yeah. Like I
14 said, I don't know how many shots he shot, but I was trying
15 to get his gun away and his arm away and I was pulling him
16 on the side; so I don't know how many feet. I think we got
17 almost to the middle of the heaters, approximately.

18 Q Did you ever look back and see the Senator or
19 any other persons down, apparently wounded?

20 A I saw Kennedy laying down and saw blood coming
21 somewhere from his head, but I was holding him and people
22 came following me. Afterward I saw somebody else laying
23 almost close to him, next to him.

24 Q Now, you say you looked down and you saw other
25 persons standing down in this area, right?

26 A Right, there were people in front of me when I

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1 came out.

2 Q In other words, when you left the Embassy Room--

3 A Yes.

4 Q --and cleared these doors here and passed where
5 the employees were standing--

6 A Uh huh (yes).

7 Q --you looked down the hallway and you saw other
8 people standing--

9 A I saw them; not too many, but I don't know--six,
10 seven, eight people. I don't know.

11 Q Did you recognize anyone standing down here?

12 A Huh hu (no).

13 Q Not a soul. In other words, do you think they
14 were the employees at the hotel or news people or just
15 bystanders?

16 A I think bystanders. Maybe one of them newsmen.
17 I don't know. Really, I don't know.

18 Q Do you--

19 A Course, at the time I got to him, I didn't pay
20 no attention to anybody left or right except the guy that
21 standing behind me was talking to--the colored guy; he was
22 there.

23 Q Mr. Johnson?

24 Q Mr. Johnson.

25 Q Rafer Johnson?

26 A Mr. Johnson, yeah. He was talking to him. Then

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1 I saw somebody else hitting him on the head and then I
2 looked backwards and saw somebody else laying there; but
3 that's all I know--he had the gun in his hand and I was
4 trying--

5 Q Did you ever get any indication that there was
6 anybody in that area that was helping this man with the
7 gun, that was a friend of his or anything?

8 A No. No. No.

9 Q Nothing?

10 A No, not at all.

11 Q Did you notice any--any--any male Latins,
12 what you could describe as male Latins dressed similar
13 or dressed not in normal business suit or sports coat and
14 slacks and tie--

15 A No.

16 Q No one else?

17 A I didn't see anybody, but could have been.
18 I don't know. I don't remember.

19 Q You didn't see anybody, as far as you remember,
20 anyway?

21 A No.

22 Q Fine. You had the Senator by the left hand, did
23 you say?

24 A Yeah.

25 Q Your left hand and his left--

26 A (*) He let it go one time and he was shaking

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1 hands with somebody just shortly before and I got his hand
2 again, was trying to pull him through the crowd, get him
3 away from there.

4 Q Were you on the right side of him?

5 A On the right side of him, yes, but it was close
6 to the heaters, you know.

7 Q Uh huh (yes). Right along--when you say "heaters,"
8 you mean the steam tables?

9 A Yeah, I was in front of him just like this. I
10 was holding his hand just like this.

11 Q And he had stopped to shake hands with somebody?

12 A Shake hands with somebody, stopped, and I
13 got this hand again and was trying to pull him.

14 Q Was more or less right in front of him,
15 pulling him sideways?

16 A Right.

17 Q He stopped to talk to a dishwasher, is that right,
18 or to shake hands with a dishwasher?

19 A Yes, he shook hands with one of the--I think it
20 was one of the dishwashers (*) get ahold of him again.
21 Son of a gun.

22 Q Did it happen in the fight?

23 A It was close, you know.

24 Q Oh, the button was pulled off?

25 A Yes.

26 Q Oh, I see.

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1 A Was he bleeding? Must have been bleeding, some-
2 where.

3 Q I don't know. Did you leave the little diagram
4 here?

5 SGT. MCGANN: Yeah.

6 SGT. CALKINS: Okay. Thanks a lot. It was
7 a help.

8 (End of recorded interview.)
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