

Trade Mart as the luncheon site, Lawson and Sorrels met with Dallas Chief of Police Jesse E. Curry, Assistant Chief Charles Batchelor, Deputy Chief N. T. Fisher, and several other command officers to discuss details of the motorcade and possible routes. The route was further reviewed by Lawson and Sorrels with Assistant Chief Batchelor and members of the local host committee on Nov. 15. The police officials agreed that the route recommended by Sorrels was the proper one and did not express a belief that any other route might be better. On Nov. 18, Sorrels and Lawson drove over the selected route with Batchelor and other police officers, verifying that it could be traversed within 45 minutes. Representatives of the local host committee and the White House staff were advised by the Secret Service of the actual route on the afternoon of Nov. 18.

The route impressed the agents as a natural and desirable one. Sorrels, who had participated in Presidential protection assignments in Dallas since a visit by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936, testified that the traditional parade route in Dallas was along Main Street, since the tall buildings along the street gave more people an opportunity to participate. The route chosen from the airport to Main Street was the normal one, except where Harwood Street was selected as the means of access to Main Street in preference to a short stretch of the Central Expressway, which presented a minor safety hazard and could not accommodate spectators as conveniently as Harwood Street. According to Lawson, the chosen route seemed to be the best.

It afforded us wide streets most of the way, because of the buses that were in the motorcade. It afforded us a chance to have alternative routes if something happened on the motorcade route. It was the type of suburban area a good part of the way where the crowds would be able to be controlled for a great distance, and we figured that the largest crowds would be downtown, which they were, and that the wide streets that we would use downtown would be of sufficient width to keep the public out of our way.

Elm Street, parallel to Main Street and one block north, was not used for the main portion of the downtown part of the motorcade because Main Street offered better vantage points for spectators.

To reach the Trade Mart from Main Street the agents decided to use the Stemmons Freeway (Route No. 77), the most direct route. The only practical way for westbound traffic on Main Street to reach the Stemmons Freeway is via Elm Street, which Route No. 77 traffic is instructed to follow in this part of the city. Elm Street was to be reached from Main by turning right at Houston, going one block north and then turning left onto Elm. On this last portion of the journey, only five minutes from the Trade Mart, the President's motorcade would pass the Texas School Book Depository Building



AERIAL VIEW and skyline of Dallas, Texas, the "Big D" city where violence reigned during black days in the nation's history.

on the northwest corner of Houston and Elm Streets. The building overlooks Dealey Plaza, an attractively landscaped triangle of three acres. From Houston Street, which forms the base of the triangle, three streets — Commerce, Main, and Elm — trisect the plaza, converging at the apex of the triangle to form a triple underpass beneath a multiple railroad bridge almost 500 feet from Houston Street. Elm Street, the northernmost of the three, after intersecting Houston curves in a southwesterly arc through the underpass and leads into an access road, which branches off to the right and is used by traffic going to the Stemmons Freeway and the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike.

The Elm Street approach to the Stemmons Freeway is necessary in order to avoid the traffic hazards which would otherwise exist if right turns were permitted from both Main and Elm into the freeway. To create this traffic pattern, a concrete barrier between Main and Elm Streets presents an obstacle to a right turn from Main across Elm to the access road to the Stemmons Freeway and the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike. This concrete barrier extends far enough beyond the access road to make it impracticable for vehicles to turn right from Main directly to the access road. A sign located on this barrier instruct Main Street traffic not to make any turns. In conformity with these arrangements, traffic proceeding west on Main is directed to turn right at Houston in order to reach the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike, which has the same access road from Elm Street as does the Stemmons Freeway.

The planning for the motorcade also included advance preparations or security arrangements along the route. Sorrels and Lawson reviewed the route in cooperation with Assistant Chief Batchelor and other Dallas police officials who took notes on the requirements for controlling the crowds and traffic, watching the overpasses, and providing motorcycle escort. To control traffic, arrangements were made for the deployment of foot patrolmen and motorcycle police at various positions along the route. Police were assigned to each overpass on the route and instructed to keep them clear of unauthorized persons. No arrangements were made for police or building custodians to inspect buildings along the motorcade route since the Secret Service did not normally request or make such a check. Under standard pro-

cedures, the responsibility for watching the windows of buildings was shared by local police stationed along the route and Secret Service agents riding in the motorcade.

As the date for the President's visit approached, the two Dallas newspapers carried several reports of his motorcade route. The selection of the Trade Mart as the possible site for the luncheon first appeared in the Dallas Times-Herald on Nov. 15, 1963. The following day, the newspaper reported that the Presidential party "apparently will loop through the downtown area, probably on Main Street, en route from Dallas Love Field" on its way to the Trade Mart. On Nov. 19, the Times-Herald afternoon paper detailed the precise route:

From the airport, the President's party will proceed to Mockingbird Lane to Lemon and then to Turtle Creek, turning south to Cedar Springs.

The motorcade will then pass through downtown on Harwood and then west on Main, turning back to Elm at Houston and then on Stemmons Freeway to the Trade Mart.

Also on Nov. 19, the Morning News reported that the President's motorcade would travel from Love Field along specified streets, then "Harwood to Main, Main to Houston, Houston to Elm, Elm under the Triple Underpass to Stemmons Freeway, and on to the Trade Mart." On Nov. 20 a front page story reported that the streets on which the Presidential motorcade would travel included "Main and Stemmons Freeway." On the morning of the President's arrival, the Morning News noted that the motorcade would travel through downtown Dallas onto the Stemmons Freeway, and reported that "the motorcade will move slowly so that crowds can 'get a good view' of President Kennedy and his wife."

Before The Trip

The President's intention to pay a visit to Texas in the fall of 1963 aroused interest throughout the State. The two Dallas newspapers provided their readers with a steady stream of information and speculation about the trip, beginning on Sept. 13, when the Times-Herald announced in a front page article that President Kennedy was planning a brief one-day tour of four Texas cities — Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, and Houston. Both Dallas papers cited White House sources on

Sept. 26 as confirming the President's intention to visit Texas on Nov. 21 and 22, with Dallas scheduled as one of the stops.

Articles, editorials, and letters to the editor in the Dallas Morning News and the Dallas Times-Herald after Sept. 13 reflected the feeling in the community toward the forthcoming Presidential visit. Although there were critical editorials and letters to the editors, the news stories reflected the desire of Dallas officials to welcome the President with dignity and courtesy. An editorial in the Times-Herald of Sept. 17 called on the people of Dallas to be "congenial hosts" even though "Dallas didn't vote for Mr. Kennedy in '64." On Oct. 3 the Dallas Morning News quoted U.S. Representative Joe Pool's hope that President Kennedy would receive a "good welcome" and would not face demonstrations like those encountered by Vice President Johnson during the 1960 campaign.

Increased concern about the President's visit was aroused by the incident involving the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai E. Stevenson. On the evening of Oct. 24, 1963, after addressing a meeting in Dallas, Stevenson was jeered, and spat upon by hostile demonstrators outside the Dallas Memorial Auditorium Theater. The local, national, and international reaction to this incident evoked from Dallas officials and newspapers strong condemnations of the demonstrators. Mayor Earle Cabell called on the city to redeem itself during President Kennedy's visit. He asserted that Dallas had shed its reputation of the twenties as the "Southwest hate capital of Dixie." On Oct. 26 the press reported Chief of Police Curry's plans to call in 100 extra off-duty officers to help protect President Kennedy. Any thought that the President might cancel his visit to Dallas was ended when Governor Connally confirmed on Nov. 8 that the President would come to Texas on Nov. 21-22, and that he would visit San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas, and Austin.

During November the Dallas papers reported frequently on the plans for protecting the President, stressing the thoroughness of the preparations. They conveyed the pleas of Dallas leaders that citizens not demonstrate or create disturbances during the President's visit. On Nov. 18 the Dallas City Council adopted a new city ordinance prohibiting interference

with attendance at lawful assemblies. Two days before the President's arrival Chief Curry warned that the Dallas police would not permit improper conduct during the President's visit.

Meanwhile, on Nov. 17 the president of the Dallas Chamber of Commerce referred to the city's reputation for being the friendliest town in America and asserted that citizens would "greet the President of the United States with the warmth and pride that keep the Dallas spirit famous the world over." Two days later, a local Republican leader called for a "civilized nonpartisan" welcome for President Kennedy, stating that "in many respects Dallas County has isolated itself from the main stream of life in the world in this decade."

Another reaction to the impending visit — hostile to the President — came to a head shortly before his arrival. On Nov. 21 there appeared on the streets of Dallas the anonymous handbill mentioned above. It was fashioned after the "wanted" circulars issued by law enforcement agencies. Beneath the photographs of President Kennedy, one fullface and one profile, appeared the caption, "Wanted for Treason," followed by a scurrilous bill of particulars that constituted a vilification of the President. And on the morning of the President's arrival, there appeared in the Morning News a full page, black-bordered advertisement headed "Welcome Mr. Kennedy to Dallas," sponsored by the American Factfinding Committee, which the sponsor later testified was an ad hoc committee "formed strictly for the purpose of having a name to put in the paper." The "welcome" consisted of a series of statements and questions critical of the President and his administration.

Visits Other Cities

The trip to Texas began with the departure of President and Mrs. Kennedy from the White House by helicopter at 10:45 a.m., on Nov. 21, 1963, for Andrews AFB. They took off in the Presidential plane, Air Force One, at 11 a.m., arriving at San Antonio at 1:30 p.m. (C.S.T.) They were greeted by Vice President Johnson and Governor Connally, who joined the Presidential party in a motorcade through San Antonio. During the afternoon, President Kennedy dedicated the U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine at Brooks AFB. Late in the afternoon he flew to Houston where he rode through the city in a motorcade, spoke at the Rice University Stadium, and attended a dinner in honor of U.S. Representative Albert Thomas.

At Rice Stadium a very large, enthusiastic crowd greeted the President. In Houston, as elsewhere during the trip, the crowds showed much interest in Mrs. Kennedy. David F. Powers of the President's staff later stated that when the President asked for his assessment of the day's activities, Powers replied "that the crowd was about the same as the one which came to see him before but there were 100,000 extra people on hand who