

Connally Rebuts Manchester; Plans Own Version

Special to The New York Times

AUSTIN, Tex., Jan. 10—Gov. John E. Connally Jr. said today that President Kennedy visited Texas in 1963 only to restore his waning popularity.

He called it "common knowledge" that the trip during which the President was slain was not his "own making" and that it was "planned in the wake of polls reflecting declining popularity."

The Governor, speaking at a news conference, also said that he and his wife "would assemble and present the facts and details as we know them relating to President Kennedy's visit."

In the first installment of "The Death of a President," which appeared today in Look magazine, William Manchester says that Mr. Kennedy visited Texas to help the state's Democrats settle intraparty disputes.

In particular, Mr. Manchester says that Mr. Connally, a conservative, was conducting a political vendetta against Senator Ralph W. Yarborough, a liberal.

A Tense, Clear Voice

Mr. Connally read his remarks in a tense, clear voice. He opened the news conference by announcing that he would read the statement and have nothing further to say. His statement was as follows:

"For more than three years, Mrs. Connally and I have sought to close the door on the memories of Nov. 22, 1963. We have resisted repeated efforts to enlist our assistance in the airing of more details of the trip and the tragedy. The intensity of our personal feeling and sense of helplessness as participants left deep emotional scars which we felt were best borne in silence.

"Regretfully, we have concluded that we no longer have that choice in view of recent developments.

"The first published installment of the book 'The Death of a President,' represented as an 'authorized and authentic history,' turns out to be an astonishing propaganda instrument cleverly woven to reflect unfavorably on those who gave it birth, while rudely discrediting others involved.

"It is filled with editorial comment based on unfounded rumor, distortion and inconsistency. This transparent attempt to dictate history through a captive voice is shocking.

Discounted as Fact

"The privately commissioned author has contrived a presenta-

tion which undoubtedly will achieve widespread readership. It cannot, however, qualify as factual history. It actually is a recitation of recollections and observations collected and reflected through the prisms of prejudice.

"For example, it has been reported that President Kennedy was unwillingly brought to Texas to settle a local political argument. To the extent that there was any significant argument prior to the trip, it was between then Vice President Johnson and Senator Yarborough, both of whom were readily available in Washington.

"The fact is it is common knowledge that this was part of a series of political trips of President Kennedy's own making planned in the wake of polls reflecting declining popularity.

"I purposely have refrained from publishing any personal account of the details of the trip. However, in the interest of unmanaged history, I have reluctantly concluded that we have no choice but to assemble and present the facts and details as we know them relating to President Kennedy's visit. These facts and details will be recorded in the hope that present-day writers and legitimate historians might find them useful in reaching objective judgments."

Life Interview Recalled

Such an account would not be the first time the Governor has spoken about the assassination for publication however.

In November, Life magazine carried a lengthy interview with him in which he reviewed the films of the assassination taken by Abraham Zapruder, an amateur photographer in Dallas.

Mr. Connally told Life he thought that he and President Kennedy had been hit by separate shots. The Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination, said that one of the bullets that struck the President also struck Mr. Connally.

Tower Tells of Threats

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10 (AP)—Senator John G. Tower

disclosed today that a dummy bomb had been sent to his office by mail after the Kennedy assassination by someone evidently believing political conservatives were responsible for the slaying.

The Texas Republican made the disclosure in denouncing Mr. Manchester's portrayal of Dallas as a city permeated with hate. The police had asked him at the time not to discuss the "bomb" incident, he said.

Mr. Tower said that after the assassination he had received so many threatening telephone calls and letters that he moved his family away from their home in nearby Bethesda, Md., for a few days to a secret address.

"There was an atmosphere of hate, all right," he said. "It came immediately and was viciously vociferous and strident.

It came from the Manchester ultra-details of Mr. Manchester's stripe. And it was viciously directed—before the facts were in—at myself, my family, political conservatives in general and Texas in particular."

Attack on Johnson Seen

SAN JUAN, P. R., Jan. 10 (UPI)—Gov. John J. McKeithen of Louisiana, here for the christening of a New Orleans-built tugboat, told the San Juan Star in an interview today:

"Kennedy is trying to destroy Johnson, and that's what Manchester's book is about."

A Ruby Plot Theory

ST. PAUL, Minn., Jan. 10 (AP)—Jack Ruby was once convinced that President Johnson was behind a plot to kill President Kennedy, according

to a letter Ruby wrote from jail.

Ruby wrote that Mr. Johnson "found me of the perfect setup for a frame."

"Remember, the only one who had all to gain was Johnson himself," he went on. "Figure that out."

The St. Paul Dispatch said today that the letter was recently purchased by one of its columnists, Bill Diehl, from Charles Hamilton Autographs, Inc., of New York. Mr. Diehl, who declined to say what the purchase price was, said the letter was guaranteed as to authenticity and was insured for more than \$1,000.

It was said to have been written early last year, one of five or six Ruby sent to a jail trustee, Thomas E. Miller, who is now living in Dallas.

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