

Dallas Group Plans Assassination Film To Clear Their City

By NICHOLAS C CHRISS

DALLAS.—Dist. Atty. Henry Wade is heading efforts to produce what he describes as an "authentic, factual" movie about President John F. Kennedy's death here but which appears to be aimed at cleansing the city's reputation, tarnished by the 1963 assassination.

A campaign to raise \$500,000 to finance the proposed 96-minute film, "Countdown In Dallas," is expected to begin soon.

Wade and commercial film producer Robert Larsen said Marina Oswald, widow of the accused assassin: Mrs. J. D. Tippit, widow of the policeman shot by Lee Harvey Oswald, and 40 to 50 others involved in various aspects of the assassination tentatively agreed to act their real-life roles.

Larsen said none of the principals had signed contracts yet.

For A Percentage

He said the main stumbling block to the signing of Oswald's widow, now Mrs. Kenneth J. Porter, has been financial. Larsen said that if she accepts the role, she will receive a percentage of the receipts.

But Mrs. Oswald, who lives in suburban Richardson, said she did not plan to sign a contract soon, adding "they just talk a lot."

Larsen said the influence of Wade, District Attorney at the time of the assassination and prosecutor of Oswald's slayer, Jack Ruby, had been helpful in gaining the confidence of the principals.

Wade will play himself in the film. So will former police chief Jesse Curry and Judge Joe B. Brown, who presided over Ruby's trial, Larsen said.

A corporation, Flag-Star, Inc., of Texas, has been set up to

produce and sell the film and has exclusive rights to Wade's extensive confidential files covering the assassination. The firm is headed by Marvin Thomas, a partner in Wade's private law practice. Directors are Wade and Bob Benson, a private investigator who has worked with Wade and Melvin Belli, Ruby's one-time attorney.

Discussion about the film began about eight months ago. Wade said he had not thought about such a story until after Ruby died of cancer last January in Dallas.

Six background scenes have been filmed thus far, but no definite date has been set for the actual start of the story.

Factual Dialogue

In a foreword to the current screenplay, Larsen states: "The dialogue is factual and is based on the files of the Dallas Police force . . . and the district attorney's office. Actual filming details will be reconstructed on the site."

However, there has been some change in these plans. Larsen said that about 60 per cent of the movie would be filmed in mock-up studios and that, when necessary, voices would be dubbed in.

The producer said that many of the quotes attributed to Oswald, Ruby and officer Tippit were not necessarily their own but were taken from various

files or based on the recollection of Oswald's wife or Ruby's roommate, George Senator.

Wade said he thought he would have no difficulty raising the \$500,000. Larsen said he thought the film "would make money even if it is bad."

As presently written and outlined by Larsen, who heads Robert Larsen Production of Hollywood and Colorado Springs,

Colo., the film would begin with a "scene setter" showing newsreel clips of the late President and his wife holding hands and walking in a Ft. Worth hotel the morning of the assassination, Nov. 22, 1963.

"Chicago and Louisiana"

Then the action moves to Dallas. The narrator describes the window from which the assassin is believed to have fired at Mr. Kennedy: "It's the window that a Louisiana sniper with a Chicago-bought Italian rifle killed a President of the United States . . . a man from Massachusetts."

The concluding scenes show a "Majestic view of the Dallas skyline" but the movie actually would end with a street scene in New Orleans.

The narrator relates: "No city or its citizens are guilty . . . Men murder . . . not cities . . . Then the film switches to a 'low angle shot of a typical street in New Orleans . . . camera moving slowly.'"

Narrator: "The eyes of the world are turned to New Orleans, La. . . some of their authorities . . . including three district court judges feel that there is some evidence which indicates that Lee Harvey Oswald did not act alone." The final scene in the script shows "New Orleans harbor . . . camera sees ships leaving in distance."

Both Larsen and the district attorney said a prime consideration throughout the filming would be respect for the Kennedy family and for the Warren Commission Report. They said no one had contacted the Kennedy family.

Big D Police

Both said they were not attempting to "hide anything" or de-emphasize errors attributed to the Dallas police dept. But Dist. Atty.

In stressing some positive sides of the police dept's role, Wade cited the arrest of Oswald about an hour and a half after the assassination and the stringent security precautions at the jail after Oswald's arrest. niShMspotc

Larsen said Dr. Earl Rose, who was in Parkland Hospital when the President was brought there, had consented to take part in the film. But Dr.

Rose said he had no knowledge of the film. Some scenes are supposed to take place inside the hospital, Larsen said, but hospital administrator Jack Price said he was unaware that permission to film there was granted.

Larsen said he had issued a nationwide casting call for actors resembling Oswald or Ruby. He said he found them by accident in Colorado Springs, while dining at a nightclub.

Los Angeles Times-Washington Post