

JUL 3 - 1966

USIA FILM IS BOOKED

Kennedy 'Years'

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By VIRGIL MIERS
Amusements Editor

THE BULLETIN from this front today is that "Years of Lightning, Day of Drums"—the new historic documentary film dealing with the 34 months of John F. Kennedy's presidency—has been signed for an opening at the Festival theater here on Sept. 21.

The engagement of this film originally made by the U.S. Information Agency for showing abroad was made possible by a recent Special Act of Congress that permits the unprecedented move of a USIA picture to be shown in American film houses.

The showings are being sponsored by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

The Festival theater has decided to employ a more or less regular policy in presenting the film, showing it perhaps three times a day on weekdays with extra showings on weekends.

The picture, which has already opened in New York, is being distributed in this country through the facilities of Joseph E. Levine.

THE FILM primarily follows the late president from his Inaugural Day through the shattering tragic assassination day in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963 and immediately after. After it was seen privately by government and newspaper figures, a great outcry was made for the film to be shown the American people.

Becoming a controversial sub-

ject since so-called USIA propaganda films have never been permitted to be shown in American film houses, Congress nevertheless did vote to make this one exception to its rules.

Gregory Peck narrates the picture which was written and directed by Bruce Herschensohn. It was produced by George Stevens, Jr., director of the International Motion Picture and



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Television Service of the USIA and the son of the celebrated movie-maker, George Stevens.

The Festival had been previously committed to the engagements of "The Shop on Main Street," the Czechoslovakian film winner at this year's Academy Awards which has just opened, and to the black comedy, "Morgan!," which is to open on Aug. 3.

"Years of Lightning, Day of Drums" was, of course, not eligible to be considered in the Oscar awards; the year's winning documentary, "The Eleanor Roosevelt Story," has not yet received a Dallas date.

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THE KENNEDY FILM will be arriving here, ironically, at about the time another documentary film dealing with both the assassination and the killing of Dallas police officer J. D. Tippit—"Rush to Judgment"—will be premiering, perhaps even in Dallas.

"Rush to Judgment" has been made by Emile deAntonio and Mark Lane, the latter having just completed a book based on the 26 volumes of the Warren Commission Report that carries the same name of the picture. The book is to be published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston on Aug. 15. The film was made in Dallas and utilized taped and filmed reports of "eyewitness" accounts.

This film reportedly challenges the findings of the Warren Commission.



OF DOCUMENTARY — The years of presidency of the late John F. Kennedy (at top) are recalled in "Years of Lightning, Day of Drums," the film booked to open at the Festival theater on Sept. 21. Made by the U. S. Information Agency, it is narrated by Gregory Peck, pictured below Kennedy.