

Connally's Story of the Shooting

United Press

Dallas

Governor John B. Connally, wounded in the assassination of President Kennedy, said yesterday that Jacqueline Kennedy cried, "Oh, my God! They've killed my husband!" as the bullets struck him.

The President slumped over and said nothing.

"We had just turned the corner (onto Elm street) and I heard the shot," Connally said during a closed-circuit television news conference from his bed in Parkland Memorial Hospital.

"I think the man did what he intended to—shoot both of us," Connally said, wiping his eyes as he spoke.

MOTORCADE

The governor and Mrs. Connally had been riding at the head of the motorcade touring Dallas when the President was assassinated last Friday.

When the first shot hit the President, he said: "I turned to the left.

"The President had slumped. Then I was hit. I knew I was hit bad.

"Mrs. Kennedy said 'Oh my God! They've killed my husband! Jack! Jack!'"

Connally said his wife, Nellie, who was sitting next to him on a jump seat facing

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the Kennedys, said; "My God! They're going to kill us all."

Connally said that after he was shot, the President was shot again.

This means the President was hit first, Connally was hit by the second bullet and the President was hit with the third and last shot fired by the sniper, apparently hidden in the Texas Schoolbook Depository building 100 yards away.

It could have happened anywhere, the 46-year-old Governor said. "It was a manifestation of extremism.

"I feel President Kennedy has been asked to do something in death that has not been done in life:

"To so shock and stun the Nation and the world that it will realize what is happening — that cancerous growth affecting all of us . . . breeds hatred and intolerance."

Asked when he knew the President was dead, he replied: "Saturday, after I was conscious enough to understand.

"Nellie told me. It was no news. I was almost sure he was killed after the two shots I knew he had taken.

"I felt I had been killed, too, after I was shot."

Saved by four hours of surgery, Connally had been shot through the back. The bullet fragmented. It broke three ribs, cut a lung, shattered his right wrist and made a slight wound above the left knee.

"My God! What a horrible, horrible tragedy!" he said.

"We were so happy, so happy. We had had tremendous ovations. And in a second, this thing happened that changed all our lives."

"This is how a moment of joy can turn to sorrow," he said. "It was a beautiful day. Two young men, almost the same age, with the most beautiful women in the world as wives. In seconds, it turned to tragedy."

He said there had been "real warmth and understanding" by the people who crowded the motorcade route in Dallas Friday to see the President.

"Not 30 seconds before the tragedy, Nellie said, (to the Kennedys) 'You can never say that some people in Dallas don't love you.'"

Connally, who had been Mr. Kennedy's first Secretary of the Navy and had resigned to run for Governor, said:

"Within the space of a few seconds, you can't believe what can happen. You go

from great joy to great tragedy."

There should be a monu-

ment to Mr. Kennedy in Dallas, he said.

"But the people should not erect it out of penitence. The hate in our society manifested itself in this thing in Dallas."

The same hate was present, he said, in the bombing of the Negro church in Birmingham last summer when four children were killed.

Lying in his hospital bed, he said, he thought of many things and "Why my life was spared."

"I know there has been some speculation that I was the intended victim. I have traveled many thousands of miles all over the state, riding in cars and making speeches in public many times. I could have been easy prey at any time. With no security, no protection."

Questions for the Governor had been prepared in advance and brought to him by one reporter while others watched on closed-circuit television outside the room.

The interview in the hospi-

tal was conducted by Martin Agronsky of NBC, picked by Connally as the pool reporter.

Prior to the news conference, two still photographers and one silent movie cameraman were allowed in Connally's room.