

A131

ADVANCE FOR AMS OF TUESDAY, NOV. 22

21 NOV. 1966

KENNEDY MEMORIAL (900)

BY TOM STUCKEY

ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

(ADVANCE) DALLAS, TEX., NOV. 21 (AP)-THERE ARE FEWER FLOWERS AND WREATHS, AND TEARS ARE SHED RARELY, IF AT ALL, BUT MOST FIRST-TIME VISITORS TO DALLAS STILL MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE FOOT OF MAIN STREET.

THERE THEY WALK AROUND THE ROUGHLY TRIANGULAR GRASSY PLOTS OF DEALEY PLAZA, INSPECT THE ORANGE BRICK TEXAS SCHOOL BOOK DEPOSITORY ACROSS ELM STREET, AND POINT TO THE SIXTH FLOOR WINDOW AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER. FOR IT WAS HERE ON NOV. 22, 1963, THAT AN ASSASSIN ENDED THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY.

SINCE THAT MOMENT, THE SPOT WHERE THREE MAJOR DALLAS STREETS SLIP BENEATH A RAILROAD OVERPASS AND HOOK UP WITH A FREEWAY SYSTEM HAS BEEN A FOCAL POINT FOR THE SORROW OF A NATION.

THE SLOPES OF DEALEY PLAZA, CUT INTO SECTIONS BY ELM, MAIN AND COMMERCE STREETS, WERE BANKED FOR MONTHS WITH FLORAL TRIBUTES TO KENNEDY.

MOURNERS PENNED THEIR DEVOTION TO THE FALLEN PRESIDENT ON PAPER SACKS, ENVELOPES OR SCRAPS OF PAPER AND LEFT THEM AMONG THE FLOWERS.

A VISITOR FROM TOKYO WROTE ON THE BACK OF A JAPANESE FAN:

"I LOVED YOU. I ADMIRE YOU FOREVER. I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO FORGET YOU. YOUR IMAGE WILL NOT DIE."

AS TIME DULLED THE ANGUISH, THE OFFERINGS OF FLOWERS TAPERED OFF, UNTIL TODAY ONLY OCCASIONAL WREATHS OF BOUQUETS ARE LEFT AT THE PLAZA.

IN THE TUMULTUOUS DAYS FOLLOWING THE ASSASSINATION, THERE WAS A FLOOD OF SUGGESTIONS FOR MEMORIALS TO HONOR KENNEDY AND MARK THE SITE OF THE TRAGEDY.

EA132

THE SUGGESTIONS WERE NARROWED TO TWO--A SIMPLE MARKER AT THE PLAZA RELATING THE EVENTS OF THE DAY AND A MEMORIAL TO KENNEDY ONE BLOCK NORTH ON A PLOT OWNED BY DALLAS COUNTY AND ALREADY INTENDED FOR A PARK.

BUT IF DECIDED ON THE MEMORIALS WAS SIMPLE, BRINGING THEM TO REALITY WASN'T. CIVIC PRIDE, FEELINGS OF GUILT AND CONTRASTING FEELINGS THAT THE CITY DESERVED NO BLAME MESHED INTO A CONTINUING CONTROVERSY.

WHILE MEMORIALS WERE BUILT AROUND THE WORLD FOR JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY, PLANS REMAINED JUST PLANS IN THE CITY WHERE HE WAS SLAIN.

FINALLY, MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND DAYS LATER, THE CITY OF DALLAS RUSHED TO COMPLETE IN TIME FOR THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSASSINATION THE BRONZE HISTORICAL MARKER AT THE SHOOTING SITE.

THE TWO LARGE PLAQUES WERE HOISTED INTO PLACE ON A SLAB OF GRANITE LAST WEDNESDAY. MAYOR ERIK JONSSON SAID THE CITY PLANS NO CEREMONY, ADDING THAT PERSONS CLOSE TO THE KENNEDY FAMILY HAD INDICATED THE KENNEDYS PREFERRED IT THAT WAY.

HOWEVER, A LEADER OF THE CAMPAIGN TO GET THE CITY TO ERECT THE \$8,000 MARKER, MRS. HARRY LANGLEY OF SUBURBAN RICHARDSON, SAID SHE PLANNED A SHORT MEMORIAL SERVICE. A SPOKESMAN FOR THE COUNCIL OF DEMOCRATIC CLUBS SAID THE ORGANIZATION WOULD PARTICIPATE.

A BLOCK TO THE EAST THE SITE FOR THE KENNEDY MEMORIAL PLAZA IS STILL COVERED ONLY BY A PARKING LOT AND A SHALLOW, L-SHAPED HOLE DOTTED WITH PILES OF BRICKS AND WAIST-HIGH WEEDS.

THE MARKER, ABOUT 200 FEET FROM WHERE THE FIRST BULLET STRUCK KENNEDY, BEARS THIS INSCRIPTION:

"ON NOV. 22, 1963, JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY, THIRTY-FIFTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, VISITED DALLAS. A PRESIDENTIAL PARADE TRAVELED NORTH ON HOUSTON STREET TO ELM STREET AND WEST ON ELM STREET. AS THE PARADE CONTINUED ON ELM STREET AT 12:30 P.M., RIFLE SHOTS WOUNDED THE PRESIDENT AND TEXAS GOV. JOHN CONNALLY.

"FINDINGS OF THE WARREN COMMISSION INDICATED THAT THE RIFLE SHOTS WERE FIRED FROM A SIXTH-FLOOR WINDOW NEAR THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF THE TEXAS SCHOOL BOOK DEPOSITORY BUILDING, ELM AND HOUSTON, A BLOCK NORTH OF THIS MARKER.

EA133

"PRESIDENT KENNEDY EXPIRED AT PARKLAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL AT 1 P.M. THE JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY MEMORIAL PLAZA IS NEARBY, BOUNDED BY MAIN, RECORD, MARKET AND COMMERCE STREETS."

THE OTHER PLAQUE HAS A BAS-RELIEF MAP OF THE AREA SHOWING THE PARADE ROUTE.

THE CITY COUNCIL FIRST APPROVED A MARKER OF FOUR PANELS, TWO OF THEM TELLING THE HISTORY OF DALLAS.

MANY DALLAS RESIDENTS WERE OUTRAGED.

A SPOKESMAN FOR THE COMMITTEE FOR A KENNEDY ASSASSINATION SITE MEMORIAL SAID VISITORS WOULD BE "STUNNED AND INDIGNANT."

THE DALLAS TIMES HERALD ASSERTED IT WOULD APPEAR TO MANY "AS AN ATTEMPT TO EVADE THE STARK FACT THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES WAS ASSASSINATED HERE."

THE COUNCIL RETREATED AND ADOPTED THE TWO-PANEL MARKER.

PROGRESS ON THE MEMORIAL PLAZA HAS BEEN EVEN SLOWER.

DALLAS LEADERS SET UP A MEMORIAL FUND LESS THAN A WEEK AFTER THE ASSASSINATION AND CITIZENS CHIPPED IN MORE THAN \$200,000.

THE COUNTY OFFERED THE SITE, AND ARCHITECT PHILIP JOHNSON BEGAN WORK ON THE MEMORIAL, GUIDED BY A REQUEST FROM MRS. JOHN F. KENNEDY THAT A "MODEST AND DEGNIFIED" MONUMENT BE ERECTED.

JOHNSON DESIGNED A ROOFLESS CONCRETE BUILDING 30 FEET HIGH AND 50 FEET SQUARE, TO BE BUILT OF PRECAST CONCRETE AND PERFECTED STONE. THE BASE WOULD BE SET TWO AND ONE HALF FEET OFF THE GROUND ON EIGHT PILLARS TO GIVE A FLOATING EFFECT.

THE DESIGN WAS APPROVED AND EVERYTHING SEEMED TO BE READY FOR WORK TO BEGIN LAST SPRING.

A134

THEN DOWNTOWN BUSINESSMEN ASKED THAT A PARKING GARAGE BE PUT UNDER THE MONUMENT, AND DISSENSION BROKE OUT AGAIN.

THERE WERE CHARGES THAT A PARKING GARAGE WOULD DETRACT FROM THE BEAUTY OF THE PLAZA. SUPPORTERS REPLIED THAT PARKING SPACES ARE VITALLY NEEDED IN DOWNTOWN DALLAS.

FINALLY JOHNSON AND THE CITIZENS COMMITTEE AGREED TO INCLUSION OF THE GARAGE, PROVIDED IT DIDN'T DETRACT FROM THE MEMORIAL, AND THE COUNTY LET A CONTRACT FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY.

COUNTY JUDGE LEW STERRETT SAYS AS SOON AS THE STUDY IS COMPLETED THE COUNTY WILL "GO AHEAD WITH THE PLANS, ADVERTISE BIDS AND SELL REVENUE BONDS" FOR THE GARAGE. HE ADDS THAT "I'M HOPING IT WILL NOT BE TOO LONG."

PLANS ARE ALMOST COMPLETED, ALSO, FOR A HISTORICAL PLAQUE AT DALLAS' LOVE FIELD WHERE LYNDON B. JOHNSON TOOK THE OATH OF OFFICE AS PRESIDENT ONLY HOURS AFTER THE ASSASSINATION. THE DALLAS COUNTY HISTORICAL SURVEY COMMITTEE WILL PUT UP THE BRONZE PLAQUE.

END ADVANCE FOR AMS OF TUESDAY, NOV. 22; MOVED NOV. 17

LU/TS934PES