



BOB CONSIDINE

Stirring Memories

WASHINGTON — Publication of the Warren Commission Report will stir a flood of intimate memories through the country and the world. People instinctively relate themselves to momentous events. In the case of JFK's assassination they'll remember in astonishing detail just what they were doing when the news exploded like a clap of thunder; where they were doing it, and why.

"I just happened to turn on the radio and, well, I thought it was somebody making a joke . . ." some incalculable number of human beings must have said to friends and fellow mourners in the wake of the shooting. Everybody wants in the act; particularly when the act is an American tragedy.

I was en route to Omaha from New York, via Chicago. As the jet neared O'Hare, in the customary bad weather, I read a Time magazine story about the President's trip to New York the previous week. Seems that he decided to dispense with the customary police escort and came into town from the airport as other folks do. The car stopped for red lights 12 times.

At one stop, a woman raced to the car's rear window, reached a camera within inches of the President's head, and took a flashlight shot of him. A cop nearby muttered, "Good God, that could have been an assassin."

I put the magazine on my lap, leaned back against the head rest, and closed my eyes. There was a scratching sound in the plane's loudspeakers and the pilot could be heard clearing his voice.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "we

have just received an unconfirmed report—I repeat, unconfirmed—that President Kennedy has been assassinated."

President Lincoln was shot while watching a play he did not want to attend. President Kennedy was shot in a city whose conservative and extremist factions had shown such hostility to him and his proconsuls that he was urged to drop Dallas from his schedule.

JFK's determination to visit Dallas had been firmed up, not weakened, by the warnings. He and LBJ lost Dallas County in 1960, in winning Texas. He wanted to win Dallas in 1964 and the best way to do that was to face his opposition. He waded with relish into the lair of his political foes and there he met his death, not from a source that ostensibly wished him ill but from a lone loco of the left.

THE President was killed on what was frankly a political jaunt. The tide was rising against his Administration in Texas. There were early indications that Sen. Goldwater would in time show power there. The Dallas speech, never delivered, contains language that is paraphrased every day in the 1964 campaign.

He planned to lambast certain unnamed "voices" which "preach doctrines wholly unrelated to reality, wholly unsuited to the Sixties, doctrines which apparently assume that words suffice without weapons, that vituperation is as good as victory and that peace is a sign of weakness."

He was going deer-hunting the next day at the LBJ ranch.

[Hear Bob Considine on KGO Radio (810) Monday through Friday, 6:50 p.m.]