
Kennedy Record Ordered Shut

DALLAS (AP)—The Dallas Bureau of Vital Statistics has cut off access to routine public records on the deaths of principals in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the Dallas Times Herald said Saturday.

City Atty. Alex Bickley said the press is included in the restrictions, which he said have been in effect for some time.

He said the ban prohibits copying the death certificates or any information from the bureau's records on President Kennedy, accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald and Oswald's killer, Jack Ruby.

Bickley said the Texas Health Commission made the restriction but that city officials concurred in it.

The newspaper said the rule now is being interpreted to include persons now dead and only indirectly involved in the events of the assassination.

A registrar at the vital statistics office, recognizing a name put forth by a reporter as having been publicly questioned in the investigation of the assassination, refused information, the newspaper said, saying it was the order "of the Texas Health Department and the Secret Service."

State Health Commissioner

J. E. Peavy said in Austin the rule was made to preclude anyone duplicating the certificates, which he said he considered a matter of good taste. Peavy said members of the press have seen the records and could still do so.

Bickley said, however, that the term "press" can be interpreted in differing ways.

"There are sensational and lurid publications," he said, adding that concessions probably could be made to the "legitimate press" but it would depend on what use they planned to make of the information.

"If they want it for a straight news story of some kind, they probably could have it. If it is for speculation on events, I don't know. We would have to take it case by case," he said.

"There have been letters, telephone calls from all over the country from fortune hunters, investigators and those little people just trying to make a buck off his (President Kennedy's) death," Bickley said.

"We felt we should exercise discretion in the matter. There is a lot more concerned here than just the question of public records—there is a national investigation involved."
