

23 NOV.
1966
514 PCS

ANS DIGEST

NIGHT LEAD ASSASSINATION-CONNALLY (500)

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AUSTIN, TEX., NOV. 23 (AP)-GOV. JOHN CONNALLY, GRAVELY WOUNDED WHEN PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY WAS ASSASSINATED, HELD FIRMLY TODAY TO HIS BELIEF THAT ONLY ONE SNIPER FIRED.

HE SAID HE DOES NOT BELIEVE THE INVESTIGATION SHOULD BE REOPENED AS SOME PERSONS DEMAND.

INSTEAD, THE GOVERNOR SAID, TIME WOULD BE BETTER SPENT INVESTIGATING THE CREDENTIALS OF THE PERSONS WRITING BOOKS OF CRITICISM OF THE WARREN COMMISSION, THE OFFICIAL ASSASSINATION INVESTIGATING BODY.

AT THE END OF HIS PRESS CONFERENCE, HOWEVER, CONNALLY TOLD A QUESTIONER THAT HE HAD NOT READ ANY OF THE BOOKS, BUT SAID HE HAD READ A NUMBER OF NEWS STORIES AND BOOK REVIEWS ABOUT THEM.

THE HANDSOME GOVERNOR WAS RIDING IN THE JUMP SEAT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL LIMOUSINE IN DALLAS NOV. 22, 1963 WHEN KENNEDY WAS SHOT TO DEATH. THE WARREN COMMISSION SAID LEE HARVEY OSWALD, A LABORER IN THE TEXAS SCHOOLBOOK DEPOSITORY, WAS THE SOLE ASSASSIN.

OSWALD WAS KILLED TWO DAYS AFTER KENNEDY BY JACK RUBY, A NIGHT CLUB OPERATOR WHO SLIPPED INTO THE CROWD IN THE BASEMENT OF CITY HALL AND SHOT THE ACCUSED MAN WHEN HE WAS MOMENTARILY EXPOSED.

A BULLET PLOWED THROUGH CONNALLY'S BACK, THROUGH HIS CHEST, PENETRATED HIS RIGHT WRIST AND ENTERED HIS THIGH.

THE WARREN COMMISSION SAID THERE WAS "PERSUASIVE" EVIDENCE THAT CONNALLY WAS HIT BY A BULLET THAT HAD PASSED THROUGH KENNEDY. BUT CONNALLY SAID HE IS CONVINCED A SEPARATE BULLET STRUCK HIM.

THE GOVERNOR WAS KENNEDY'S SECRETARY OF NAVY UNTIL EARLY 1962, WHEN HE RESIGNED TO RUN SUCCESSFULLY FOR GOVERNOR.

THE TWO WERE HIT DURING A MOTORCADE IN DOWNTOWN DALLAS EN ROUTE TO A SITE FOR A KENNEDY SPEECH DURING A LONG PRESIDENTIAL TOUR OF TEXAS.

"IT IS SHOCKING TO ME," SAID THE GOVERNOR AT A NEWS CONFERENCE, "THAT IN THE BACKLASH OF TRAGEDY, JOURNALISTIC SCAVENGERS SUCH AS MARK LANE ATTEMPT TO IMPUGN THE MOTIVES OF THESE MEMBERS OF THE (WARREN) COMMISSION, CAST DOUBTS UPON THE COMMISSION AS A WHOLE AND QUESTION THE CREDIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF.

EA60DN

LANE, A NEW YORK ATTORNEY REPRESENTED LEE HARVEY OSWALD'S MOTHER, MRS. MARGUERITE OSWALD, BEFORE THE WARREN COMMISSION. LANE WROTE A BOOK, "RUSH TO JUDGMENT," IN WHICH HE CONTENDED THERE WAS AN ASSASSINATION PLOT INVOLVING MORE THAN ONE RIFLEMAN.

EA157

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AUSTIN, TEX.--NL ASSASSINATION (A59, 50) INSERT AFTER 11TH GRAF "LANE IS X X X FINDINGS."

IN NEW YORK, LANE REPLIED THAT CONALLY "DISPLAYED AN ABYSMAL IGNORANCE TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF HIS OWN TESTIMONY."

"IT IS TO BE REGRETTEED," LANE SAID, "THAT GOVERNOR CONNALLY HAS SOUGHT TO TERMINATE THE SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH--AN EFFORT THAT HAS BEGUN IN THIS COUNTRY SO RECENTLY. IT IS EVEN MORE ASTONISHING THAT HE HAS SOUGHT TO BRING BACK THE DAYS OF MCCARTYISM, BY QUESTIONING THE LOYALTY AND MOTIVES OF THOSE WHO WILL NOT ACCEPT A FALSE GOVERNMENTAL EDICT."

LANE IS ONE X X X PICKING UP 12TH GRAF A59-50.

FIRST BULLET," CONNALLY SAID. "...I RETAIN MY ORIGINAL VIEW AND ALWAYS SHALL." HE REFERRED TO THE BULLET WHICH PASSED THROUGH THE PRESIDENT'S THROAT AND WHICH THE COMMISSION SAID APPARENTLY STRUCK THE GOVERNOR.

"BUT JUST BECAUSE I DISAGREE WITH THE WARREN COMMISSION ON THIS ONE FINDING DOES NOT MEAN I DISAGREE WITH THEIR OVERALL FINDINGS," THE GOVERNOR SAID.

CONNALLY SAID HE IS "SATISFIED BEYOND ANY DOUBT" THAT THERE WAS ONLY ONE ASSASSIN, NOT TWO OR MORE AS SOME CRITICS OF THE WARREN COMMISSION HAVE THEORIZED.

ASKED AGAIN IF HE FELT ANY NEED FOR FURTHER OFFICIAL INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE ASSASSINATIONS, CONNALLY SAID HE SAW "NONE WHATEVER UNLESS AND UNTIL NEW EVIDENCE OF SIGNIFICANT VALUE IS DISCOVERED."

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(430)

AUSTIN, TEX., 1ST ADD NIGHT LEAD ASSASSINATION-CONNALLY BUDGET, (A59-60DN) X X X VALUE IS DISCOVERED."

CONNALLY REPEATED THAT HE HEARD ONLY TWO SHOTS, BUT SAID HIS WIFE, WHO WAS NEXT TO HIM, HEARD THREE SHOTS. HE SAID BOTH WERE CONVINCED ALL SHOTS CAME FROM OVER HIS RIGHT SHOULDER, IN THE DIRECTION OF THE TEXAS SCHOOL BOOK DEPOSITORY.

SOME WITNESSES SAY THEY HEARD AT LEAST ONE SHOT FIRED FROM A GRASSY KNOLL IN FRONT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CAR. CONNALLY SAID THERE ARE SO MANY BUILDINGS IN THE AREA THAT WHAT THESE WITNESSES HEARD WAS AN ECHO OF SHOTS FIRED FROM BEHIND KENNEDY'S LIMOUSINE.

CONNALLY AND HIS DOUBTS ABOUT THE WARREN COMMISSION'S FINDINGS THAT A SINGLE BULLET HIT BOTH HIM AND KENNEDY WERE FEATURED IN THIS WEEK'S LIFE MAGAZINE. LIFE SAID THERE WAS "REASONABLE DOUBT" ABOUT ASPECTS OF THE WARREN REPORT AND THE INVESTIGATION SHOULD BE REOPENED.

CONNALLY SAID HIS DISAGREEMENT WITH LIFE IS NOT REMARKABLE, SINCE TIME--LIFE'S SISTER PUBLICATION--HAS COME OUT AGAINST A FURTHER PROBE.

CONNALLY CONFIRMED THAT HE STILL HAS A FRAGMENT OF THE ASSASSIN'S BULLET IN HIS LEG. HE SAID IT CAUSES NO DISCOMFORT. DOCTORS TOLD HIM THREE YEARS AGO THE FRAGMENT WAS IMBEDDED SO DEEP IT WOULD BE BEST NOT TO REMOVE IT, HE SAID.

THE GOVERNOR PRAISED MEMBERS OF THE WARREN COMMISSION AS "MEN OF UNQUESTIONED INTEGRITY...AND LONG AND DEVOTED SERVICE TO THIS NATION."

ALTHOUGH FIRMLY HOLDING TO THE THEORY THAT SEPARATE BULLETS HIT HIM AND KENNEDY, HE SAID, "THERE IS ROOM FOR DISAGREEMENT BECAUSE OF THE TIME FACTOR INVOLVED...NO ONE CAN SAY AT WHICH PRECISE 1/18 OF A SECOND PRESIDENT KENNEDY WAS HIT. THIS PROVIDES SUFFICIENT LEeway TO PROVIDE AN AREA OF DISAGREEMENT."

B13

THE GOVERNOR SAID HIS FIRST IMPRESSION WAS THAT EITHER THERE WAS MORE THAN ONE PERSON FIRING OR ELSE THE ASSASSIN HAD AN AUTOMATIC RIFLE "BECAUSE OF THE RAPIDITY OF THE SHOTS." HE ESTIMATED THERE WAS "ALMOST TWO SECONDS" BETWEEN SHOTS.

REFERRING TO AN 8 M.M. MOTION PICTURE FILM OF THE ASSASSINATION WHICH LIFE USED TO ILLUSTRATE IN ITS ARTICLE, CONNALLY SAID IT IS "ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW THE POINT AT WHICH EITHER OF US WAS HIT... EITHER ONE OF US COULD HAVE BEEN HIT SOMETIME BEFORE" REACTIONS WERE PHOTOGRAPHED ON THE FILM.

ASKED WHY HE FELT THE WARREN COMMISSION ADOPTED THE "ONE-BULLET THEORY" CONNALLY SAID HE "WOULD NOT WANT TO PRESUME AND READ SOMEONE ELSE'S MIND." HE SAID HE HAD "NO WAY OF KNOWING" WHETHER THE ONE-BULLET THEORY WAS DEvised BEFORE HE APPEARED BEFORE THE WARREN COMMISSION."

CONNALLY SAID HE BELIEVES THERE WAS ONLY ONE ASSASSIN, RATHER THAN MORE AS HE FIRST IMAGINED, BECAUSE OF "ALL THE TESTIMONY... BECAUSE I HAVE COMPLETE TRUST IN THE COMMISSION. THERE IS NO REASON WHY A FLEETING THOUGHT OF MY OWN SHOULD BE GIVEN GREAT PROBATIVE VALUE."

CONNALLY SAID THE WARREN REPORT HAS COME UP INCIDENTALLY IN HIS TALKS WITH PRESIDENT JOHNSON, AN OLD FRIEND WHOM HE VISITS AT THE LBJ RANCH AND THE WHITE HOUSE. BUT, HE SAID, THEY HAVE NEVER CENTERED A TALK ON THE REPORT.

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