

TEXAS
PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU
DALLAS

San Angelo (Tex.) Standard-
Times

JAN 15 1949

Johnson Rights A Wrong

Senator Lyndon Johnson "went to bat" for a fellow Texan this week and arranged for the reburial of a Latin American soldier, killed during the fighting on Luzon, in the Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors.

Action on the reburial gained momentum and the final push after a South Texas funeral home "discouraged" the use of its facilities.

After considerable discussion between the funeral home director and a representative of the Good Neighbor Commission, the funeral home director condescended to handle the reburial at the South Texas city "if the family insists".

No matter what the creed of a fallen soldier, they all should be considered equally and the fullest respect should be accorded to their return and reburial.

Certainly, it shouldn't take the combined efforts of a United States Senator, a veteran's organization, and the Good Neighbor Commission to arrange for the reburial of a Texan who died fighting in defense of his country.

Senator Johnson recognized these facts and acted accordingly and without delay. His move brought commendable results.

"I deeply regret to learn that the prejudice of some individuals extends even beyond this life," Johnson said to soldier's widow. "This injustice and prejudice is deplorable. I'm happy to have a part in seeing that this Texas hero is laid to rest with honor and dignity his service in the nation deserves."

Such an attitude as displayed by the funeral home director is not in keeping with the principles fought for by American youths during World War II.

By the same token, such actions will not lead to the acclaim that should be received by the country that is endeavoring to lead the entire world toward peaceful living.

By an example of unity, tolerance, and consideration within our own boundaries the people of the United States can present an actual picture of the program which we have to offer for the world in general.

Those with the right spirit in cases of this type should be commended—those with the wrong spirit should be educated.

TEXAS
PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU
DALLAS

Fort Worth (Tex.) Star-
Telegram (Morning)

JAN 14 1949

Return of a Soldier

Whatever the reasons for a Texas funeral home's reluctance to provide its chapel for the funeral of an American soldier killed in action in the Philippines, whether it was discrimination because of his Mexican ancestry or whether it was a misunderstanding, the harm has been done.

So many explanations have been bandied back and forth that the facts are obscured but the publicity given the affair will extend to parts of the world in which this government is attempting painstakingly to build understanding and good will and to erase some of the mistakes of the past. The ill effect will not be removed entirely even by this nation's decision to accord the soldier full military honors and burial in the sacred soil of Arlington National Cemetery.

People in other countries and in other states will not stop to reflect that the bulk of the Texas people were as shocked at the affair as they themselves. They will simply and bitterly observe that in a supposed stronghold of human freedoms an American soldier who was killed in war wasn't considered of the proper caste to be buried among the people he was defending. True or not, that will be the reaction.

The humiliation of the soldier's widow can be imagined, but it is to the credit of state and federal officials, led by Senator Lyndon Johnson, that they acted promptly and feelingly to set matters right. The soldier himself is beyond caring whether he lies among the nation's heroes in Arlington or in a lonely Pacific grave. It is vastly more important that the nation cares.

GI of Mexican Origin, Denied Rites In Texas, to Be Buried in Arlington

By WILLIAM S. WHITE

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 12—A soldier's funeral and burial were arranged today by the Government of the United States for Felix Longoria, late private, Infantry, Army of the United States, who died in action on Luzon.

It will be with full military honors, in Arlington National Cemetery, where lie some of the more illustrious dead—such, for example, as John J. Pershing, the General of the Armies.

Private Longoria's widow, Beatrice, and such of his friends as live in his little town of Three Rivers, Tex., had reported some difficulty in having funeral services there for him.

Dr. Hector P. Garcia informed Senator Lyndon D. Johnson of Texas, in fact, that the manager of the one undertaking parlor in Three Rivers had refused the use of his facilities with the explanation: "Other white people object to the use of the funeral home by people of Mexican origin."

Dr. Garcia is president of a vet-

erans' organization known as the American GI Forum.

"In our estimation," he telegraphed to Senator Johnson, "this action in Three Rivers is in direct contradiction of those same principles for which this American soldier made a supreme sacrifice in giving his life for his country and for the same people who now deny him the last funeral rites deserving of any American hero regardless of his origin."

Mr. Johnson telephoned to old friends in South Texas and, he said, found that the case in its substance had been correctly reported. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee he got in touch with the high military authorities and made arrangements for a different sort of burial.

He sent then to Dr. Garcia a telegram of his own, which said in part:

"I deeply regret to learn that

Continued on Page 11, Column 2

GI DENIED FUNERAL TO LIE IN ARLINGTON

Continued From Page 1

the prejudice of some individuals extends even beyond this life.

"I have no authority over civilian funeral homes, nor does the Federal Government."

"However, I have today made arrangements to have Felix Longoria reburied with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery here at Washington where the honored dead of our nation's wars rest. Or, if his family prefers to have his body interred nearer his home, he can be reburied at Fort Sam Houston National Military Cemetery at San Antonio (Tex.). There will be no cost."

Mr. Johnson then asked Private Longoria's widow to indicate her preference "before his body is unloaded from an Army transport at San Francisco on Jan. 13."

Mrs. Beatrice Longoria, in a telegram to the Senator, then closed these exchanges.

"Humbly grateful," she said, "for your kindness in my hour of humiliation and suffering. Gladly accept your offer for reburial of my husband at Arlington National Cemetery. Please arrange for direct shipment to Washington. Forever grateful for your kindness."

Senator Johnson, during the war, was a lieutenant commander, U.S.N.R., and was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in the Pacific theatre.

Private Longoria was born on April 19, 1919. He began active military service on the anniversary of an old armistice, Nov. 11, 1944. He fell less than a year later—on June 16, 1945, in the last months of action in the Philippines. This is all that could be learned from the War Department records available here.

"I am sorry," Mr. Johnson said, "about the funeral home at Three Rivers. But there is, after all, a fine national funeral home, though of a rather different sort, out at Arlington."

TEXAS
PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU
DALLAS

Port Arthur (Tex.) News

JAN 13 1949

Texas Hero Will Be Interred in Arlington Grave

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13 (AP).—A GI of Mexican ancestry who has been denied burial facilities in his home town of Three Rivers, Tex., will be buried with full military honors in Arlington National cemetery.

Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson (D-Tex.) said he arranged for the re-burial after he was advised by the American GI forum in Corpus Christi, Tex., that a Three Rivers funeral home had refused to handle the soldier's remains "solely because of his Mexican ancestry."

The GI, Felix Longoria, died in action on Luzon in the Philippines.

"Others Might Object . . ."

The Senator said Dr. Hector Garcia, president of the forum, told him in a telegram that the funeral home refused service because "other white people might object to use of the funeral home by people of Mexican origin."

The Texas Good Neighbor commission, a state agency, said in Austin that the funeral home director reported he did not refuse to handle the reburial although he did discourage it. Gov. Beauford H. Jester of Texas telegraphed Dr. Garcia "deeply regretting the incident." Mayor J. K. Montgomery of Three Rivers termed the incident a "mistake" and offered the American Legion home or his own home for the services.

Johnson wired Dr. Garcia that he has arranged for Longoria's reinterment without cost either in Arlington or, if his family wanted it nearer home, in Fort Sam Houston national military cemetery at San Antonio.

Mrs. Beatrice Longoria, the soldier's widow, notified the Senator today that she prefers Arlington.

Services Not Complete

The soldier's remains are scheduled to arrive via Army transport at San Francisco today. Final funeral arrangements have not been completed.

Sen. Johnson told Dr. Garcia, "I deeply regret to learn that the prejudice of some individuals extends even beyond this life. . . . This injustice and prejudice is deplorable. I am happy to have a part in seeing this Texas hero laid to rest with the honor and dignity his service deserves."

TEXAS
PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU
DALLAS

Longview (Tex.) News -

Journal

JAN 16 1949

Undertaker Replies

Latin-American Vet Burial Causes Kick

THREE RIVERS, Jan. 15. (AP).—The manager of the Rice Funeral Home here says he did not refuse to handle the reburial service for a Latin-American soldier.

In fact, said T. W. Kennedy, "There was no question whatever of discrimination involved."

Senator Johnson (D-Tex.) had arranged for Felix Longoria of Three Rivers to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. Johnson said he was informed the funeral home refused to handle the service "solely because of his Mexican ancestry."

Kennedy said:

"The report that we refused to handle the reburial of a Latin-

American soldier is incorrect. We did not refuse, either, the use of our chapel. When making arrangements with the deceased's wife, I did discourage the use of the chapel but not the burial facilities. I discouraged the use of the chapel, frankly, because of friction that I heard existed between members of the family. Due to this friction, I thought it would be better that the services be held at the widow's home or some other private home.

"There was no question whatever of discrimination involved. I have many good friends of Latin-American ancestry. I am a disabled veteran of the second world

TEXAS
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DALLAS

Laredo (Tex.) Times

Date JAN 13 1949

Johnson Is Praised For Reburial Stand

The Webb County Chapter, Disabled American Veterans, sent a telegram this morning to Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, congratulating him for arranging to have the body of World War II hero Felix Longoria buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, with full military honors, instead of at his home in Three Rivers, where use of a South Texas funeral home was reportedly "discouraged."

Local Commander Juan Garza Gongora also reported receipt of a telegram today from State Adjutant DeWitt Kirby at Waco, in reply to a DAV protest on the Three Rivers incident.

war and I have fought alongside many Latin-Americans."

Johnson said his information came from Dr. Hector Garcia, president of the American GI Forum in Corpus Christi, an organization of Latin-American war veterans. Dr. Garcia wired Johnson the funeral home declined service because "other white people might object to the use of the funeral home by people of Mexican origin."

Kennedy said, "The first World War II soldier to be buried at Three Rivers was a Latin American. We handled the service."

Military Funeral Set in Washington For Texas Hero

WASHINGTON, Feb. 4 (AP).—Arrangements were completed Friday for a military funeral in Arlington National Cemetery for Felix Longoria of Three Rivers, Texas.

A Latin-American organization has accused a Three Rivers funeral home of refusing to arrange services for Longoria, whose body recently was returned from the Philippines where he died in the battle of Luzon. The funeral home denied the accusation.

The Army Friday notified Senator Johnson of Texas that Longoria will be buried in Arlington Cemetery with full military honors Feb. 16. It will be part of a mass ceremony for a group of war heroes whose bodies have been returned from overseas.

Blow For Friendship

A ringing blow for friendly Latin-American relations, downright Democracy, and plain ordinary humanity was struck by Texas' Junior Senator Lyndon Johnson when he took up the cudgels for an appropriate burial for the Three Rivers Texas-Mexican war hero.

The mortician who is alleged to have refused to handle the remains because of Mexican ancestry, says now he had no intention of 'discriminating' but merely 'discouraged' the use of the chapel.

At any rate, Felix Longoria, will be buried at Arlington National Cemetery, that haven where America pays its highest respect for its outstanding battle heroes.

And it is because of Lyndon Johnson, a man of goodwill for his neighbor across the Rio Grande, who despite possible political reverberations took a forthright stand.

It can be said that Texas' governor, Beauford Jester, also joined with Johnson in deploring such discrimination, if such it was.

Latin-American Texans galore fought and died for Texas in the late world war. Felix Longoria was one of the first of his ancestral background to pay the supreme penalty.

Surely the mortician who was reluctant to use his chapel for the service does not reflect the sentiments of a majority of his fellow-Texans.

Such an attitude carries racial prejudice to an extreme unconscionable on the part of free Texans.

SHERMAN (TEX.) DEMOCRAT 1-16-49

Three Rivers Up in Arms on Funeral Issue

THREE RIVERS, Jan. 13.—(UP) This little South Texas town was in an uproar Thursday night over plans for reburying one of its citizens—a youth of Mexican descent who went to war and fell in the Battle of the Philippines.

Outside of Three Rivers, most everyone knew by now of the reports that the town's funeral director, T. W. Kennedy, had declined to handle arrangements for the hometown funeral of Felix Longoria.

"Other white people might object," was the way Kennedy had been quoted.

In Washington, Texas' new US Senator Lyndon B. Johnson said, all right, if Three Rivers felt that way, Longoria should be buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Three Rivers said Thursday night, through the offices of its Chamber of Commerce president and through funeral director Kennedy, that it did not think that way.

Kennedy said he was willing to make the burial arrangements. The uproar which was heard in Washington, it was explained, was the result of Kennedy's refusing the use of his chapel for the service.

"I did not refuse the use of the chapel because he was Latin-American," said Kennedy. "I felt I was avoiding trouble here at the funeral home by asking Mrs. Longoria, the widow, if she could use her home."

Kennedy and S. F. Ramsey, banker and Chamber of Commerce president, said they understood that Longoria's widow and his parents were at odds over some personal matters and the disagreement extended to the funeral plans.

Ramsey said, "our funeral chapel here probably would not be appropriate anyway for such a service. It's small and it's used mostly—by whites and Latin-Americans, alike—only to let a body lie in state. The chapel isn't like in big cities. Most funerals here are held in churches or homes."

Three Rivers, said Ramsey, "is ashamed of the publicity, which is not deserved. You'll find no town anywhere in South Texas that has enjoyed better relations between Latin-Americans and whites."

(At Corpus Christi, Jr. Hector Garcia, president of the American GI Forum, said citizens of his city had raised \$300 to send Mrs. Beatrice Longoria, the widow, to Washington for the service at Arlington. It was, said Garcia, an effort to make amends.)

Ramsey was hopeful that plans might be made even this late to bring Longoria "home." But if the body goes to Arlington, Three Rivers will send along at least one member of Longoria's family.

"I'll underwrite it here at the bank if civic clubs don't make up enough money, which I'm sure they will," he said.

Ramsey was angry with Senator Johnson. "It is our feeling that he capitalized on this to further his own standing with the Latin-American population," said the Chamber of Commerce man.

(The body of Longoria, who died on Luzon, was reportedly due to arrive in San Francisco sometime Thursday.)

TEXAS
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Dallas (Tex.) News

JAN 20 1949

San Antonio Burial Set for Veteran From Three Rivers

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas, Jan. 19 (AP).—Felix Longoria, Latin-American citizen from Three Rivers, who was killed in the Pacific war, will be reburied in San Antonio, his family announced Wednesday.

A special funeral ceremony will be held in Washington prior to the San Antonio burial.

Scheduled reburial services for the soldier, originally planned at Three Rivers, attracted attention when the widow reported that a Three Rivers funeral home had discouraged the use of its chapel. Sen. Lyndon Johnson arranged in Washington for the soldier to be reburied in Arlington Cemetery after this report was issued.

The Longoria family decided on San Antonio as the reburial place after R. E. Smith of Houston, chairman of the Texas Good Neighbor Commission, urged that the service be held somewhere in Texas.

The body is en route to Washington, members of the family said.

TEXAS
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DALLAS

Dallas (Tex.) News

FEB 18 1949

Legislative Panel to Examine Background of Longoria Case

AUSTIN, Texas, Feb. 17.—A five-member legislative committee will investigate the Felix Longoria case. The House ordered the investigation Thursday by a vote of 104 to twenty.

The young soldier from Three Rivers, Live Oak County, was buried at Arlington National Cemetery Wednesday.

An international incident, alleging discrimination against Latin-Americans, grew out of the case. His body was brought back from Luzon, where he died in action in World War II. Mrs. Longoria claims

a Three Rivers undertaker denied them use of his chapel, because Longoria was a Latin American. The undertaker, war veteran T. W. Kennedy Jr., insists that a misunderstanding, not discrimination, occurred.

State Representatives heeded the plea from Three Rivers' Rep. J. F. Gray for an official inquiry. The committee, which has a \$1,000 expense account, is directed to report by March 15.

Rep. Abraham Kazen Jr., of Laredo asked that all hearings during the investigation be public. Gray replied that it should be "taken for granted" that hearings will be public in a free country.

Rep. Johnny Rogers of Austin suggested that the Good Neighbor Commission, a state agency, investigate the matter.

Representative Gray said he hoped to avoid mentioning the commission since he has a bill to abolish it.

"We feel, we know, that reports recently published by the Good Neighbor Commission are not true, not only concerning this incident," replied Gray. The legislator said the "undue publicity" on the Longoria case had reflected on his community, state and nation.

"My people insist that the truth be known," said Gray.

TEXAS
PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU
DALLAS

Fort Worth (Tex.) Star-
Telegram (Evening)

JAN 26 1949

Burial Plan for Three Rivers Soldier Hits a New Snag

CORPUS CHRISTI, Jan. 26 (AP).—A hitch apparently has developed again in burial plans for Felix Longoria, U. S. soldier of Latin-American ancestry who died in action in the Philippines.

The Corpus Christi Caller Times Tuesday night quoted R. E. Smith, chairman of the Texas Good Neighbor Commission, as saying difficulty had arisen in plans for a ceremony in Washington and burial in a national cemetery at San Antonio.

Original plans were for the burial to be handled by a funeral home at Longoria's home, Three Rivers, Texas. The American GI Forum, a veterans organization here, protested that the funeral home refused use of its parlor. The funeral home denied this. Senator Johnson of Texas arranged burial in Arlington Cemetery at Washington. But plans for a ceremony in Washington and burial in a national cemetery at San Antonio eventually were agreed upon.

Dr. Hector Garcia of Corpus Christi, speaking for the veterans group, said he made the San Antonio arrangement with the Longoria family.

GI Denied Reburial in Texas To Get Full Arlington Honors

By the Associated Press

Full military honors will mark the reburial in Arlington Cemetery of a Texas soldier of Mexican descent.

The soldier is Felix Longoria, of Three Rivers, Tex., who died in action on the Philippine Island of Luzon.

The Arlington reburial was arranged by Senator Johnson, Democrat, of Texas, who said the American GI Forum in Corpus Christi informed him a Three Rivers funeral

home had refused to handle the soldier's body "solely because of his Mexican ancestry."

Dr. Hector Garcia, president of the forum, told the Senator in a telegram that the funeral home declined service because "other white people might object to use of the funeral home by people of Mexican origin."

The Texas Good Neighbor Commission, a State agency in Austin, said the funeral home director

acknowledged he had discouraged the reburial but said he had not refused to handle it.

Gov. Beauford Jester told Dr. Garcia he "deeply regretted" the incident and the mayor of Three Rivers, J. K. Montgomery, offered the American Legion home or his own home for the services.

"I deeply regret to learn that the prejudice of some individuals extends even beyond this life," Senator Johnson wired Dr. Garcia. "This injustice and prejudice is deplorable. I am happy to have a part in seeing this Texas hero laid to rest with the honor and dignity his service deserves."

The soldier's body is scheduled to

arrive via Army transport at San Francisco today. Final arrangements for the Arlington funeral have not been completed.

Hero Plot Given GI Barred Burial

By Associated Press

Full military honors will mark the reburial in Arlington National cemetery of a Texas GI of Mexican descent who was denied funeral facilities in his home town.

The soldier is Felix Longoria, of Three Rivers, Tex., who died in action on the Philippine Island of Luzon.

The Arlington reburial was arranged by Sen. Johnson (D) of Texas who said the American GI Forum in Corpus Christi, Tex., informed him a Three Rivers funeral home had refused to handle the soldier's remains "solely because of his Mexican ancestry."

Dr. Hector Garcia, president of the forum, told the senator in a telegram the funeral home declined service because "other white people might object to use of Mexican origin."

The Texas good neighbor commission, a State agency in Austin, said the funeral home director acknowledged he had discouraged the reburial but said he had not refused to handle it.

Gov. Jester of Texas told Garcia he "deeply regretted" the incident and the mayor of Three Rivers, J. K. Montgomery, offered the American Legion home or his own home for the services.

The soldier's remains are scheduled to arrive via Army transport at San Francisco today. Final arrangements for the Arlington funeral have not been completed.

Texans Send GI's Family to Arlington Rite

CORPUS CHRISTI, Jan. 13 (UP)—After a funeral home reportedly refused—because "other white people might object"—to handle reburial arrangements for a GI of Mexican ancestry who was killed in World War II, the people of southern Texas today rallied to the aid of the dead soldier's family.

Following announcement that the remains of Felix Longoria, killed in action on Luzon, were to be interred in Arlington National Cemetery, Dr. Hector Garcia, president of the American GI Forum here, said a mass meeting raised \$300 to enable the widow, Mrs. Beatrice Longoria, of Three Rivers, Tex., to fly to Washington.

The Three Rivers Chamber of Commerce offered to finance the trip for Guadalupe Longoria, 62, the soldier's father. GI Forums in various other cities promised to see that the mother went along.

Mexican GI To Be Buried At Arlington

A GI of Mexican ancestry who has been denied reburial facilities in his home town of Three Rivers, Tex., will be buried with military honors in Arlington National Cemetery.

Senator Lyndon B. Johnson (D, Tex.), said yesterday he arranged for the reburial after he was advised by the American GI Forum in Corpus Christi, Tex., that a Three Rivers funeral home had refused to handle the soldier's remains, "solely because of his Mexican ancestry."

The GI, Felix Longoria, died in action on Luzon, in the Philippines.

The Senator said Dr. Hector Garcia, president of the Forum, told him in a telegram that the funeral home refused service because "other white people might object to use of the funeral home by people of Mexican origin."

Johnson arranged for Longoria's reinterment, without cost, either in Arlington or in Fort Sam Houston National Military Cemetery at San Antonio.

Mrs. Beatrice Longoria, the soldier's widow, notified the Senator she prefers Arlington.

The soldier's remains are scheduled to arrive via Army transport at San Francisco today. Final arrangements have not been completed.

Senator Johnson told Dr. Garcia: "I deeply regret to learn that the prejudice of some individuals extends even beyond this life."

-TEXAS
PRESS CLIPPING BUREAU
DALLAS

Port Arthur (Tex.) News

FEB 18 1949

Longoria Burial Probe Given OK

AUSTIN, Feb. 18 (UP).—An investigation has been ordered by the House into a dispute which arose at Three Rivers over the re-burial of a Latin-American soldier who was killed in the Philippines. The resolution, sponsored by Rep. J. F. Gray of Three Rivers, calls for appointment of a five-member committee, which will conduct the investigation at a cost of not over \$1000.

Started Last Month

The legislators will study the controversy which broke into the open last month on the re-burial of Felix Longoria, a Latin-American soldier who died in action on Luzon.

Members of his family claimed that a funeral home director suggested that the burial not be conducted from his funeral home.

The soldier was buried instead in Arlington National cemetery at Washington, after U. S. Senator Lyndon Johnson intervened.

Gray's resolution said the legislative investigation is "absolutely necessary" for the continuation of good relations between the United States and Mexico.

The vote on adoption of his resolution was 104 to 20.

However, the resolution struck opposition from Rep. A. J. Vale of Rio Grande City, who unsuccessfully raised several points of order against it.

Kazen's Move Rejected

Rep. Abraham Kazen of Laredo, asking for an amendment to provide for "public hearings" during the investigation, was turned down by Gray, who answered that "in all countries ruled by democracy that is taken for granted."

Gray is the author of a bill introduced in the House seeking to abolish the Texas Good Neighbor commission.