

HAD STAFF SIGN PLEDGE

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# Mrs. Kennedy's Act Insured Her Privacy

Exclusive to The Times from the Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Immediately following the Presidential election in November, 1960, Jacqueline Kennedy shrewdly took legal steps to protect her privacy.

The full extent of her precaution has never been revealed until now, but her foresight in handling her employes from that day until this is the reason that not one of the best-selling books

about the Kennedy administration currently in print is concerned with gossipy, undignified backstairs trivia.

Before Mrs. Kennedy moved into the White House, she had a lawyer draw up pledges of silence to be signed by everyone then working for her and her husband. She personally summoned the half dozen mem-

bers of her household staff into the dining room of their Georgetown house to sign their names to the typewritten promises. Those gathered included the cook, the nurse, two maids, her husband's valet and her personal secretary.

The documents they signed made them legally liable if they should ever break their oaths of allegiance and betray confidences of a domestic and personal nature.

At the same time, Mrs. Kennedy folded other copies of the agreement into an envelope and dispatched it all to her husband's office.

The packet was accompanied by a request that the papers be signed and returned to her. This was never done, according to a

source close to Mrs. Kennedy, because the President persuaded her that it was unnecessary among her most trusted aides and secretaries.

He did agree with her, though, on the wisdom of continuing the practice among servants. That was why, at the White House in February of 1961, cooks, butlers, maids, laundresses, etc., were required to sign the unprecedented pledges that they would never commercialize on their intimate workaday relationship with the Kennedy family.

None was honor-bound by any long-standing loyalties to the Kennedys and would otherwise have been free to offer their reminiscences to the highest bidder without

suffering anything more than the twinge of a guilty conscience.

But today, because of the contractual relationship instigated by Mrs. Kennedy, not one of them thus far has dared test the court's attitude toward a breach of good faith.

Mrs. Kennedy's three secretaries certainly don't plan to tell any secrets until they are old, old ladies recalling past glories for their grandchildren.

Of the trio, neither Tish Baldrige nor Pam Turnure had committed herself in writing not to do any writing. But both still are allied to the Kennedy interests in one way or another.

Pam is still handling Mrs. Kennedy's press relations in

She has been putting her memories on tape, but she wouldn't and couldn't consider letting anyone make them public. She was the first person to sign Mrs. Kennedy's pledge.

Mrs. Gallagher, who now works part-time for an Alexandria insurance firm during the hours her children are in school, decided last year that she wanted to

leave her experiences for the historic record and maybe publish them "years from now if Mrs. Kennedy didn't mind."

She began keeping notes after she was interviewed in depth by Baltimore writer Bill Manchester, the H. L. Mencken protegee who has been commissioned by the Kennedy family to do a depth study of the thoughts and actions of the people involved in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Mrs. Gallagher was with Jacqueline Kennedy that day and has some very poignant recollections. One vignette which Manchester will include in his book is a statement made by Mrs. Kennedy as she looked in a mirror that morning after donning

the pink Chanel suit no one will ever forget.

"One day like this," she said with prophetic irony that was really a reference to the rigors of campaigning, "can age a woman 30 years."

New York. Tish is now the public relations firm of "Leticia Baldrige Enterprises, Inc." in Chicago and the Kennedy family's Merchandise Mart is among her biggest accounts.

Mary Gallagher, was Jacqueline Kennedy's private secretary and probably the person closest to her while she was first lady.