

Newsweek

July 25, 1966

PRESS

'With Kennedy'

At 1 p.m. on Nov. 3, 1960, John F. Kennedy, his family and most of his staff gathered in front of a television set at Hyannis Port and waited for Richard M. Nixon to concede defeat. But Nixon did not appear. Instead, the Vice President's press secretary, Herb Klein, read a brief statement of concession. Noting Klein's sharp tailoring and trim waistline, the President-elect turned to his own press secretary, ruffled, paunchy Pierre Salinger, and cracked: "He looks more like a New Frontiersman than you do."

He may never have looked the part, but Salinger became very much a New Frontiersman. And like two thinner associates—Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. and Theodore C. Sorensen—Salinger, 41, has put down his recollections of the election campaign and of Frontier life in



Fred Ward—Black Star

JFK, Salinger: Looks were deceiving

"With Kennedy," a 500-page book to be published by Doubleday this fall and now being previewed in Good Housekeeping magazine.

Though a former newspaper reporter and magazine writer (The San Francisco Chronicle, Collier's), Salinger's style is a good deal less graceful than either Schlesinger's or Sorensen's. Salinger is also weighing in late, but he doesn't feel he's picking over the same material. "I made a point not to read either of their books until I was finished with mine," Salinger said last week. "About 80 percent of my book is brand new."

Much of his material is unquestionably the stuff of history. Salinger even adds a new dimension to the often-told story of how and why Kennedy picked Lyndon B. Johnson as a running mate. To Salinger, the selection controversy resulted from a misunderstanding. "When Bob Kennedy told the Johnson forces that certain labor leaders and Northern politicians were against his nomination for Vice President," Salinger writes, "Bob's prime reason was to ascertain whether

LBJ was willing to put up a fight for it. But Johnson's people interpreted this as an effort to talk him out of the race. This was not Bob's intention and he certainly was not acting on his own, as some accounts have intimated."

But did Kennedy actually expect Johnson to accept the second spot, or was the offer a pro forma gesture? A day or two after the convention, Salinger writes, Kennedy told him cryptically: "The whole story will never be known. And it's just as well that it won't be."