

Newsweek Says Johnson Is Unhappy With Reports About Book on Kennedy

By ROBERT E. DALLOS

Newsweek magazine says it has learned that President Johnson is unhappy with some of the accounts of events following the assassination of President Kennedy as they are said to appear in William Manchester's forthcoming book, "The Death of a President."

The magazine, in its issue that will reach newsstands today, quotes the President as telling "intimates" that his own recollections of a number of events differ from descriptions that are reported to be in the book.

The Manchester book, excerpts of which are scheduled to be published in Look magazine beginning with the issue on Jan. 10, is said to picture Mr. Johnson as being insensitive to Mrs. John F. Kennedy's feelings in the hours immediately after the shooting.

"Now," says Newsweek, "intimates say, he is as puzzled as anyone about the flap. Unhappy about the evolving portrait of himself in the 'Shopes' about the Manchester book, he understands at the same time that the Kennedy set would have resented anyone who succeeded John Kennedy."

White House Comment

According to Newsweek, for example, the President has been quoted as saying that the Secret Service wanted him to board Air Force One with its "super communications gear," while the Kennedy coffin was to return to Washington in the Vice Presidential plane, Air Force Two.

But Mr. Johnson, according to the magazine, ordered the body placed on the Presidential jet. "I wasn't going to let Mrs. Kennedy fly back alone with his body," Mr. Johnson is quoted by Newsweek as telling intimates. A White House spokesman

said last night that the magazine in its report had apparently matched past comments made by Mr. Johnson to what is reported to be detailed in the book scheduled for publication in April.

"The President has not given any interviews," said the spokesman. "In fact he has not spoken in any way to the issue of the Manchester book."

Newsweek also reports that Mr. Johnson has a version of the circumstances under which he took the oath of office before returning to the capital. That is different from the version that is said to be in the book.

According to the President's memory, Newsweek says, Robert F. Kennedy, who was then Attorney General, was non-committal about when Mr. Johnson was to take the oath of office.

Phone Call Detailed

Mr. Johnson is quoted as saying that he telephoned Mr. Kennedy, the slain President's brother, in Washington, saying, "I hate to bother you at a time like this, but..." and then asking for a ruling. Mr. Johnson said, according to Newsweek, that Mr. Kennedy told him that he thought the swearing-in should take place in Dallas, but that Mr. Kennedy would check and call him back.

Mr. Johnson, according to this version, said the return call came from Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, the then Deputy Attorney General, who advised Mr. Johnson to take the presidential oath at once and then dictated its wording to a secretary.

Reached at his home in Washington last night, Mr. Katzenbach now an Under Secretary of State, said that he recalled being telephoned from the plane and dictating the oath

from the Constitution to a secretary.

According to the magazine Mr. Johnson's recollections of the assassination "have a touch of quality all their own."

"What raced through his mind when he learned the President was dead," the magazine says, "was no personal thrust for power but rather the memory of the day Franklin D. Roosevelt more than 18 years

ago. Mr. Truman took the Presidential oath, Newsweek says, as soon as his wife, Mrs. Bess Truman, and their daughter, Margaret, arrived at the White House.

"The moral Mr. Johnson seemed to be drawing last week, without spelling it out," says the magazine, "was that no one at the time suggested that Truman had shown unseemly haste in promptly taking the Presidential oath."

"Small misunderstandings" Newsweek says that there are many examples in the Manchester book of small misunderstandings, "mostly innocent standings," between the Kennedy and Johnson factions before and during the journey to Washington.

"L. B. J. is reported to have repeatedly called Mrs. Kennedy 'honey'—a well intended gesture that she found gratifying," says the magazine. In the Newsweek account, Mr. Johnson is reported to have admitted "probably" calling Mrs. Kennedy "honey."

"It's a word that comes easy to me as a Texan," he is quoted as explaining. "You know, I'll call some guy's office, and he isn't in, I'll say to his secretary, 'Honey, have him call me when he comes in.'"

Another misunderstanding related in the Manchester manuscript, according to Newsweek, concerns Mrs. Johnson's recollection "that, in an effort to console Jackie, she had mentioned her sorrow that the tragedy took place in Texas and then immediately realized that what an unfortunate thing that was to say under the circumstances."

Some accounts immediately following the assassination suggested, Newsweek says, Mr. Johnson had "all but dictated" the photograph of Mrs. Kennedy in the swearing-in ceremony.

But Newsweek says that "actually Mr. Manchester's version is that Mrs. Kennedy recognized the historical imperative of standing at LBJ's side as a symbol of the continuity of the presidency and took her place by choice."

Newsweek says Mr. Johnson admitted at least one instance in which he had to exert his new authority right after the assassination—when President Kennedy's Air Force aide, Brig. Gen. Godfrey McHugh, went forward to get the plane off the ground.

Newsweek says that according to its correspondent, Charles Roberts, who was on the plane, General McHugh got

his cue for the order from Kenneth O'Donnell, a Kennedy aide, after the coffin had been placed on the plane.

Newsweek says that "LBJ remembers intercepting the general and telling him he would tell the pilot when to take off."

"I did tell him off," Newsweek quoted Mr. Johnson as saying in reference to General McHugh.

A State of Shock General McHugh has retired and is reported to live in Paris. He could not be reached for comment last night. But Malcolm Kilguff, who was serving as Presidential press secretary on the day of the assassination, Nov. 22, 1963, said in a telephone interview yesterday that everyone was in such a state of shock at the time that the general was not aware of Mr. Johnson's presence on the plane.

"If there was any exchange of harsh words between LBJ and General McHugh," Mr. Kilguff said, "I was not a witness to them."

Although Mrs. Kennedy had authorized Mr. Manchester to write the book, she filed suit against Look and Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., Haiti & Row, after the author

violated her rights by planning to publish the book without prior approval of the Kennedy family.

Mrs. Kennedy later reached agreement with Look after the magazine agreed to make certain changes she had requested. Negotiations with Harper & Row are still under way.