

JOHNSON TERMED UNHAPPY ON BOOK

Newsweek Issues a Report
on Manchester's Work

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 sale 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 stories about the Manchester book, he understands at the same time that the Kennedy set would have resented anyone who succeeded John Kennedy."

But Newsweek says that Mr. Manchester's account "is not nearly so anti-Johnson as some reports in the press suggest."

"The Kennedy staff's animus towards Johnson was directed only in part at the new President personally," says the magazine. "It was a function as well of their sense of loss and their almost inevitable hostility to anyone taking JFK's place."

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 "superior 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."

Originally, Newsweek said yesterday in a press release that was distributed to newspapers with advanced copies of the magazine that it had based its article on an "exclusive interview" with Mr. Johnson.

It said later there had been no interview with the President, and that the original reports had been the error of the person writing the release.

The magazine would not reveal the sources for its article but said they were friends and intimates of the Johnsons.

Manchester Letter

Meanwhile, in a letter published on the editorial page of today's New York Times, Mr. Manchester mentions the Kennedy family's request that he write the book.

"I vividly recall that after the telephone call from Washington asking me to undertake this project," he says, "I turned to my secretary and said, 'How can I say no to Mrs. Kennedy?'"

"She replied, 'You can't.'"

"Nor could I. One did not, I felt, bargain over a national tragedy."

Mrs. Kennedy filed a suit against Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., and Look contending that publication of the manuscript in either serial or book form would violate a memorandum that Mr. Manchester and Senator Robert F. Kennedy, the late President's brother, signed in March, 1964.

The memorandum specified that the book would not be published before Nov. 22, 1968, five years after the assassination, and that it must be approved by both Mrs. Kennedy and the Senator.

In her suit, Mrs. Kennedy said the approval had never been given.

Mr. Manchester said that he had signed no contract with Mrs. Kennedy but did sign an agreement with "another member of the family who was representing her." He said that when he completed the manuscript in the spring of 1966, "we looked toward publication in late 1966 or early 1967."

He said a team of men, each of whom had been close to the late President, had been designated by the family to read the text. At the end of four months, the team, according to Mr. Manchester, assured the family that the manuscript was "satisfactory."

Mr. Manchester could not be reached for comment last night.

Mrs. Kennedy's suit against Look was settled after the magazine agreed to make certain changes in the 60,000-word, four-part serialization.

Negotiations with Harper & Row and Mr. Manchester are still under way. Simon H. Rifkind, Mrs. Kennedy's attorney,

said last night no negotiations had taken place yesterday.

"No one is talking to anyone," he said. "But I will be available on Monday."

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 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, then the 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 touching 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 Harry Truman suddenly inherited the Presidency from Franklin D. Roosevelt more than 18 years before."

'Small Misunderstandings'

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."

Newsweek says that there are many examples in the Manchester book of small misunderstandings, "mostly innocent, that caused friction" 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 grating," 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, if I 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 an unfortunate thing that was to say under the circumstances."

Some accounts immediately following the assassination suggested, Newsweek says, Mr. Johnson had "all but dragged" Mrs. Kennedy into position for the photograph of 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 in Air Force One to tell the pilot 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'Connell, 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 Kilduff, 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. Kilduff 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., maintaining that the author had 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.

Kennedy's Son in Hospital

SUN VALLEY, Idaho, Dec. 25 (AP)—Joseph Kennedy will stay in a Sun Valley hospital "for a couple of days longer at least," a nurse said today. The 14-year-old son of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy broke his leg skiing at this Idaho winter resort Friday.