

The Knights of Camelot

Scattered in Many Fields,

a Few Have Little But Memories

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IT BEGAN with a triumph mocked by snowflakes, a bitter, driving storm which would have closed the town any other night. But the aging Knights of Camelot remember it with a glow as warm as the toasts they pour to what is left of their legend.

For them, John F. Kennedy's inaugural represented not only the start, but the essence, of a stewardship that lasted 1,065 days.

What of Camelot? And what of the men who made it?

Did their experience, sweet then bitter, leave any lasting marks? What are their whereabouts? Their successes? Their failures? Have they heeded John Fitzgerald Kennedy's summons — the summons to public life that he surely hoped would live on?

At the top, the President surrounded himself with both friends and strangers. He had never met **Robert McNamara** before he asked the Ford Motor Co. executive — a Republican, at that — to be his secretary of defense. Another Republican, **Douglas Dillon**, he had seen only once. Dillon became secretary of the Treasury.

A third, **McGeorge Bundy** of Harvard, became Kennedy's top foreign affairs adviser at the White House, with Democrat **Walt Whitman Rostow** as his deputy. **Adlai Stevenson** yearned to end his career as secretary

of state, but Kennedy chose instead another man he hadn't known, **Dean Rusk**.

Then, the Irish Mafia: the inner circle upon which the brothers Kennedy — notably excluding Ted — pinioned their political fortunes.

THERE WAS **DAVE POWERS**, the President's story-telling friend whom he called his "other wife," an unassuming man of wit and down-home politics.

And **Larry O'Brien**, Kennedy's legislative liaison and an old Massachusetts hand who built a reputation as a political Merlin on sheer method and sweat.

Ted Sorensen the man who framed so many of the Kennedy speeches; tough, shrewd, a lawyer and drafter of laws.

Arthur Schlesinger, the chief link to academia, a Harvard historian who won a Pulitzer Prize for his study of Andrew Jackson and would win another for his study of John Kennedy.

There was **R. Sargent Shriver**, the energetic brother-in-law who would make the Peace Corps—even if it was **Hubert Humphrey's** idea—one of the administration's most cherished legacies.

Kenneth P. O'Donnell, the appointments secretary and an early veteran of the shoe leather days in Massachusetts. Chief of staff **Fred Dugan**, Press Secretary **Pierre Salinger** and, of course, brother **Rob-**

A JFK Glossary

Some terms associated with the John F. Kennedy Administration are:

BAY OF PIGS: Usually accompanied by the word "fiasco." Refers to an abortive invasion of Cuba endorsed by President Kennedy early in his administration.

CAMELOT: The site of King Arthur's palace and court in Arthurian legend and the title of a hit Broadway play that ended its run in January, 1963. The vision of the Kennedy people as knights in shining armor was evoked by the President's widow in an interview after Kennedy's assassination.

CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS: A Soviet offensive buildup in Cuba was observed in 1962 and revealed to the American people in October by President Kennedy. "The "eyeball-to-eyeball" confrontation between Kennedy and Soviet Premier Khrushchev resulted in dismantling of Soviet missile bases in Cuba.

IRISH MAFIA: The inner circle of aides upon whom the Kennedy brothers John and Robert depended heavily, including Dave Powers, Lawrence O'Brien, Theodore Sorensen, Arthur Schlesinger, R. Sargent Shriver, Kenneth P. O'Donnell, Fred Dugan and Pierre Salinger.

NEW FRONTIER: A label applied to the Kennedy Administration and its programs, similar to Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" and Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society." The term was used by Kennedy several times in his speech accepting the Democratic nomination in 1960.



O'BRIEN



SORENSEN



BUNDY



McNAMARA



SALINGER

ert F. Kennedy the attorney general.

Too, there were the party men, those who gave the Kennedy government a geographical and philosophical spread and whose appointments helped to pay the political bills. Gov. Orville Freeman of Minnesota as agriculture secretary, Gov. Luther Hodges of North Carolina at commerce, Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut at HEW. Rep. Stewart Udall of Arizona was the West's choice as Interior secretary, and Arthur J. Goldberg, general counsel to the AFL-CIO, Labor secretary.

Even Vice President Lyndon Johnson was impressed. Johnson's excitement was widely shared. Journalists found angles in the number of Rhodes scholars who had come on board, in counting the books they had written, the Ivy diplomas they held. The Kennedy man was portrayed as tough mentally, and physically as well. They climbed mountains, ran the whitest rapids and played handball and, naturally, touch football.

THEN DALLAS, Nov. 22, 1963. Lyndon Johnson. Indochina. The assassination of Robert Kennedy. Chicago. The election of Richard M. Nixon.

A decade. And where are the Knights of Camelot?

Larry O'Brien is in his apartment, at Washington's Sheraton Park Hotel. He greets his visitor in shirtsleeves, an unknotted tie—the usual Countess Mara—dangling from his collar. He is busy, he says, on his book, and he has those Democratic Party lawsuits tied to the Watergate bugging to tend to.

"I was with them both, you know," he says. "I guess the only one who was with them both." He doesn't explain. He doesn't have to. He was in Dallas when John Kennedy was shot; in Los Angeles when Robert was shot.

He speaks of John Kennedy.

"I considered him the most outstanding man I ever met. He was a leader. I guess the one word for him is courage. No, I think guts is a better word."

Mac Bundy was, in 1966, elected president of the Ford Foundation,

where he still serves at a salary three times what he got at the White House. He stayed with Lyndon Johnson until the Vietnam war was in full swing.

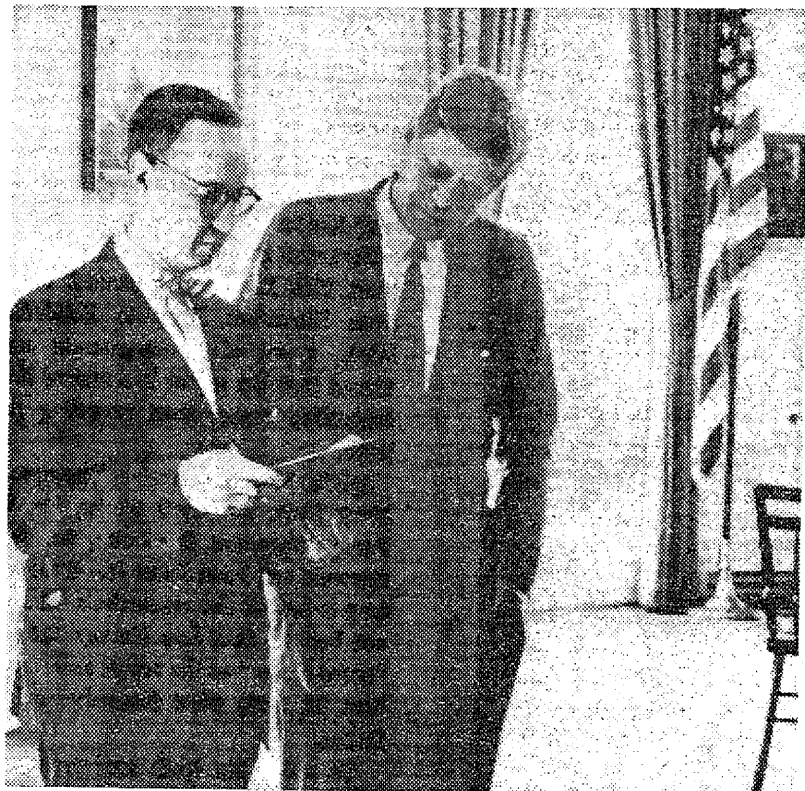
As for McNamara, he is comfortably ensconced — when he's in town — in the glass and polished steel of the World Bank. As president there he earns \$50,000 net per year and generally stays out of the public eye. He'll observe the anniversary of John Kennedy's death, said his secretary, "somewhere out of the country. He's on holiday."

RUSK AND ROSTOW, who like Bundy and McNamara stayed with Johnson through the darkest days of the Vietnam war, have returned to academic life, Rusk at the University of Georgia, Rostow at the LBJ school at the University of Texas.

Others who stood at the fringe of Kennedy's inner circle have also returned to lives and professions akin to their pre-Camelot days. Douglas Dillon is back at his New York investment firm, Luther Hodges has a host of corporate interests in North Carolina. Abe Ribicoff won a seat in the Senate. Udall stayed in Washington to work for conservation groups and is much in demand as a speaker on that topic.

But the men of the Irish Mafia, like O'Brien, have known professional and personal turbulence even beyond what seems to be the norm for politicians these days. For them the John Kennedy magic didn't work without John Kennedy.

Pierre Salinger, for example, left the White House in 1964 and became, by appointment, a senator from California. When he ran for the job, sweeping to the nomination with



Kennedy with Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Harvard historian who was a member of the "Irish Mafia" and Kennedy's chief link to academia.

characteristic energy and flamboyance, he lost the general election — while other Democrats, including Johnson, were rolling to their biggest landslide since 1936. Republican actor George Murphy was the winner.

Salinger, \$100,000 in debt, then tried the business world.

Now, his calling card reads "Grand Reporter," a title bestowed upon him by the Paris magazine L'Express. He spends a good deal of time in Paris, just as he did during his intermittent involvement in George McGovern's Presidential campaign last year.

Schlesinger is now the Schweitzer professor of humanities at the City University of New York. He says he feels no disenchantment over the way the country was run in the Kennedy days and, on the contrary, is offended by the growing stack of literature about Kennedy Administration failures.

Sorensen is another who tried to win office on his own, running in New York for the seat held by the assassinated Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. He was an expensive defeat. Now, though his law practice is thriving, "I'm saddened enough by my previous experience to doubt" that he would ever run again.

O'DONNELL, THE MASTER of Kennedy's political back rooms in the early days, was another who couldn't sell himself to the voters. He tried for the Massachusetts governorship twice, in 1966 and 1970, and both times failed to get through the primaries.

But he still envisions a return to some political role.

"You could sit around and sulk," he says. "But then you're in real trouble. I love politics. I don't think there's anything that isn't politics."

Arthur Goldberg ran for governor of New York. He lost, too. Now, as a man once secretary of Labor, once a Supreme Court Justice, once ambassador to the United Nations, he is again a private lawyer.

Perhaps the most fitting—if bittersweet—fate belongs to Powers. He was closer to President Kennedy during the White House years than perhaps any other man, sharing his hopes along with his anger.

Now, he is the curator of the yet unbuilt Kennedy Library. He strolls the aisles of a huge government warehouse in Waltham, Mass., arranging and cataloguing the memorabilia and telling visitors the story that goes with each item.

"People ask me," Powers goes on, "how I can stand walking around here days after day. I'll tell you, it's a labor of love. Now I'm able to do something for a man who did so much for me. He was the greatest man I ever met and the greatest friend I ever had."