



le-top: Will LBJ use it in Dallas? UPI

Back to Dallas

All through the week, the quiet men worked their way along Main Street—collecting blueprints of buildings, carefully sketching the layouts of individual rooms, asking rental agents about new tenants, asking old tenants about new employes. At police headquarters, intelligence squad detectives freshened up their files on Communists, extreme right-wingers and troublemakers of every stripe, filling thick folders with data on where they work, who they see. In two weeks, the President of the United States would be in Dallas.

In the Presidential campaign, the trip would be little more than another prop-stop sortie in the last hectic month before election day. But it would also be the first Presidential visit to Dallas since Nov. 22, 1963. And for the Secret Service, the FBI, and Dallas police—stung by the findings of the Warren report—it represented a test of the lessons of that calamitous day.

Although the White House kept discreetly mum on the President's plans, roughed-out timetables have Mr. Johnson visiting the city possibly on Oct. 19, more likely the next day, to address a rally at the pie-shaped Memorial Auditorium and meet privately with top businessmen. Once the Presidential plane lands—probably at Love Field—LBJ's projected itinerary is a starkly reminiscent road map of John F. Kennedy's last ride eleven months ago. Security officers expect the Johnson motorcade to ride into town on about the same route JFK used and to drive through the city the same way—through Main Street, and on the Stemmons Freeway—after passing beneath the windows of the Texas School Book Depository.

But now precaution is the watchword. For weeks, eight-man teams of Secret

Service men and Dallas police have been making an exhaustive survey of buildings along the motorcade's likely route—an innovation urged by the Warren commission—preparing dossiers that will be used in drafting an encyclopedic report before the visit. The full 1,205-man Dallas Police Department will be on alert, with three-quarters of the force actually on duty.

New Orders: Their posts will be meticulously blocked out, and their orders will be clear: watch likely sources of danger—buildings and people—not the President himself. Other new security arrangements call for the surveillance of a host of winos and crackpots on the day of the motorcade.

Yet, the security network apparently is still not drawn fine. There have been a number of informal meetings between Dallas Secret Service chief Forrest Sorrells, FBI special agent-in-charge Gordon Shanklin and Police Chief Jesse Curry. But by late last week, the Dallas police had received no official word of the visit. So far, Dallas police sources report, neither the FBI nor the Secret Service has forwarded names of potential assassins to the cops. Complicating the problem is the new air of hostility between the FBI and Dallas police—a legacy of Nov. 22. The police are even insisting that the Secret Service “set out in writing what is expected of us, so we will have it for the records.”

Chief Curry hopes Mr. Johnson will choose his newly outfitted bubble-top Presidential limousine for his big day in Big D. The black 1961 Lincoln, last used by President Kennedy in Dallas, has been reinforced with armor plate and equipped with a glass-paneled top strong enough, says the White House, to withstand a direct hit from a .30 cal. rifle slug. LBJ used the car for the first time last week in a Washington parade with visiting President Diosdado Macapagal of the Philippines. But Curry



As much a part of the South ... UPI

doubts that he'll have his way, and one local man grumbled last week: "It would be very insulting to Dallas for him to have a bubble-top."

Texas Ego: Indeed, Dallas plans call for generous public exposure for candidate Johnson. In 1960, Dallas County gave Richard Nixon a thwacking 60,000 vote plurality—and the possibility of losing the county this time chafes LBJ's Texas ego. The route of his motorcade will be fully publicized, and local Democrats are primed to get out the crowds.

Gov. John Connally, who will carry the scars of Dallas's last Presidential motorcade for the rest of his life, will probably share LBJ's car. "I feel no hesitancy about it whatever, at least no more than I would feel in any city," he told NEWSWEEK's Karl Fleming last week. Then he added: "I'm not fearful, but I must say I'm a little more alert these days when I'm in a parade."

Others are less sanguine about the visit. "I wish he wouldn't come," said one businessman. "We're in good shape. Why take a chance?" Said another: "If something happened to Johnson here, they wouldn't bother to write anything nasty about Dallas. They'd just drop an atomic bomb and wipe us off the face of the earth."