

Called Betrayer of Friend *Inquirer* 2/12/77

Douglas-Home Hit As 'Public Tattler' In Tell-All on Jackie

Editor's Note: Because of wide comment aroused by the series of articles, "Jacqueline Kennedy: A Study in Power," by Robin Douglas-Home, nephew of former British Prime Minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home, The Inquirer presents herewith a critical commentary on the conclusions drawn by Robin Douglas-Home. The appraisal is written by Ruth Montgomery, an experienced observer of the Washington scene and distinguished correspondent whose column appears regularly in The Inquirer.

By RUTH MONTGOMERY

JACQUELINE KENNEDY may recapture some of the public sympathy she lost through L'Affaire Manchester, because of an infinitely bolder tell-all penned by her so-called friend, Robin Douglas-Home, for *The Queen* magazine, and reprinted in U. S. newspapers.

By his own admission, the nephew of Britain's former Prime Minister, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, was entrusted with Jackie's frank confidences during innumerable get-togethers both before and after the tragedy in Dallas.

Unlike William Manchester, who was engaged by the family to write about the assassination, Douglas-Home was a social friend and frequent house guest to whom Jackie unwisely poured out her innermost thoughts.

For the trusted Englishman then to become a public tattler, probing the recesses of her heart for public consumption, is surely enough to outrage Jackie's hardest-hearted critics.

More Devastating Quotes

It is scarcely conceivable that Mrs. Kennedy could have approved the article, since many of the quotes that Douglas-Home attributes to her are more devastating than those she had deleted from the Manchester book.

A sample: "Even at his murder she noted her husband's bravery: 'Gov. Connally was squealing like a stuck pig; Jack never made a sound.' She told me . . . how she had literally to hold the President's head together" after the fatal shot.

The young Britisher recounts numerous occasions on which the then First Lady summoned him to spend evenings or weekends with her in various places. Sometimes her sister, Lee Radziwill, was present, but President Kennedy was absent except for a couple of times at the White House when he retired early, leaving Jackie and her British friend together for talkfests into the wee morning hours.

Unburdened Herself in Italy

According to the Douglas-Home account, Jackie first unburdened herself to him while both were guests of Lee Radziwill in 1962 at a villa in Ravello, Italy. Describing the "complete transformation that came over her when one was alone with her," he neatly stabbed her with these

words:

"Flesh and blood instead of a symbol, she no longer tried to disguise the protean quality of her character, the paradoxes, the irreconcilable desires, the incompatibilities, the illogicalities, the frustrations, the dammed outlets, and the impossible idealisms.

"At one moment she was misunderstood, frustrated and helpless. The next moment, without any warning she was the royal, royal First Lady to whom it was almost a duty to bow, to pay medieval obeisance.

"Then again without any warning she was deflating someone with devastating barbs for being such a spaniel as to treat her as the First Lady, and deriding the pomp of politics, the snobbery of a social climber. It was Pavlovian treatment."

Imperious Queen-in-Exile

Accenting the picture of Jackie as an imperious queen-in-exile awaiting the restoration of the dynasty, he said she favors the "return of a Kennedy to the White House" as "destiny's recompense to her and to (JFK's) family for his murder."

The Englishman slyly added that she seems not to realize that if Sen. Robert Kennedy "ever does" become President "it will be Ethel Kennedy (with whom she has little affinity) and not she who will be in the center of the stage."

Douglas-Home winds up his tattle-telling by this final dig at Jackie's in-laws:

"Let the other Kennedys continue to scabble for the toys of power she so rightly despises. She must live her own life. Secretly Jacqueline Kennedy knows this, too."

Except for her sister, Jackie has never had close friends of her own sex, and has always seemed more relaxed in the company of men. But heaven help her if she still believes that old canard that men gossip less than women!