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Liz Carpenter Is Out Front In LBJ-Years Book Race

By VERA GLASER
WASHINGTON (N A N A)—
Johnson administration officials
are quietly making plans to
feather their nests after Janu-
ary 21, 1969.

The literary leftovers of
LBJ's regime are up for grabs,
with the nation's most promi-
nent publishers breathing down
each others' necks in the race
for "now-it-can-be-told" mate-
rial. They're dangling six fig-
ures in front of Mrs. Elizabeth

Carpenter, the First Lady's
witty press secretary, who
says:

"I'm going to write a book
if I have to mimeograph it and
put it out myself, but I haven't
signed any contracts yet."

PRENTICE-HALL offered
Mrs. Carpenter a \$100,000 ad-
vance for what she says will
be a light-hearted book, "A
Personal Story of Handling the
White House." McGraw-Hill
"upped that by a lot," ac-
cording to Frank Taylor, gen-
eral manager of their book
division. Doubleday, which now
publishes Kennedy manuscripts
in the wake of the family's ruck-
us with Harper and Row over
the William Manchester book, is
also in the Liz race.

The First Lady's first lady
apparently is not above com-
parison shopping. According to
one publisher, she reminded him
that "they offered \$750,000 to
Mrs. Martin Luther King." Sub-
sequently the King advance was

quoted in a news story as a
half million dollars.

"FROM THE MOMENT I
came into this task," Mrs. Car-
penter said, "I have known I
wouldn't like myself very much
if I didn't do a book at the
end of the time. A lot of pub-
lishers talked to me then. I
just told them to go away be-
cause I didn't have the freedom
to do it. After March 31 (the
date President Johnson an-
nounced he would not run for
reelection), they began again.
It's at the top of my agenda
and I'll decide soon."

Most avidly sought by pub-
lishers, of course, are members
of the First Family themselves.
The President has said he will
write "three or four volumes."
Lady Bird has been saving
material for five years and
daughter Lynda Bird Robb has
been keeping a diary.

HARRY MACPHERSON, the
President's counsel, is consid-
ered one of the finest writers on

the White House staff, but plans
to practice law.

Another top presidential as-
sistant, Joseph Califano, is ex-
pected to go into private law
practice.

George Reedy, who left his
position as LBJ's press secre-
tary to become president of
Struthers Research Corporation
and recently was "borrowed
back" by the White House, plans
to stay with LBJ through the
election. Then he may write a
syndicated column.