

Jackie's Last Official Letter Thanked Mrs. K for Tears

By THEO WILSON

One of Jacqueline Kennedy's last acts in the White House, before she and her children moved out after President Kennedy's murder, was to write a combination thank-you note and plea for peace to Nikita Khrushchev, then premier of Russia.

Her letter, dated Dec. 1, 1963, is published for the first time in William Manchester's book, "The Death of a President," and is used to close the fourth and final installment of the series in Look magazine.

Mrs. Kennedy explained in her letter that she had tried to give a message to the premier's representative when he came through the line at the funeral, "but as it was such a terrible day for me, I do not know if my words came out as I meant them to.

"So now, in one of the last nights I will spend in the White House, in one of the last letters I will write on this paper at the White House, I would like to write you my message."

"Policy of Restraint"

Explaining that she knew President Kennedy and Khrushchev were "adversaries" but were allied "in a determination that the world should not be blown up," Mrs. Kennedy wrote that she also knew President Johnson would continue the "policy of control and restraint" necessary to prevent war.

She referred to the kindness shown to her and JFK by the premier and his wife, and concluded with: "I read that she (Mrs. Khrushchev) had tears in her eyes when she left the American Embassy in Moscow, after signing the book of mourning. Please thank her for that."

Also in this installment, Manchester describes how JFK's children learned of his death—their nurse, Maude Shaw, told Caroline the night of the murder; Mrs. Kennedy told John Jr. the next day—and how the news was broken to his ailing father, Joseph P. Kennedy.

Ted Kennedy was the one who told the elder Kennedy, and, according to Manchester, "the accounts which stated that the President's father did not cry were untrue. The writer also reveals that during the afternoon, Joe Kennedy decided he had to go to Washington and insisted on being driven to the airport at Hyannis.

Since his stroke, Manchester states, the elder Kennedy confined his flying to the Caroline. The plane was not there and he returned home, but "had adequate transportation existed, there is little doubt that the President's father would have appeared in the White House within two hours."

In this installment, Manchester



Mrs. Nikita Khrushchev
Mourned for slain President

also describes Jackie's arrival at Bethesda Naval Hospital on the night of the assassination, still in her blood-stained suit, and quotes Ben Bradlee, a long-time JFK friend then with Newsweek:

"There was this totally doomed child, with that God-awful skirt, not saying anything, looking burned alive."

Greeted by Mother

Jackie's mother, Mrs. Hugh Auchincloss, was waiting for her in the tower suite at the hospital and as they kissed Mrs. Auchincloss said: "Oh, Jackie, if this to happen, thank God he wasn't maimed."

It was at this time that Jackie first learned, from Robert F. Kennedy that the assassin had been found and had told police he was a leftist.

Manchester writes: "She stared. Oh, my God, she thought, but that's absurd. Later, she would think about hatred and the highly charged atmosphere of Dallas; at the moment, however, she felt sickened. It was like existentialism, entirely purposeless, and she thought, it even robs his death of any meaning."

"Final Impassioned Letter"

The author tells of Jackie's successful battle to seal her husband's casket to avoid a public viewing of the body, in which she was aided by Robert Kennedy. He also reveals that before this was

done, Jackie wrote "a final impassioned letter, filling page after page" to her dead husband, and placed it, with letters from Caroline and John Jr., in the casket.

"She had become obsessed by an urge to leave something he had treasured with him," Manchester writes, and he then describes the two gifts Jackie placed in the coffin with the letters, "two gifts from her that he had really loved."

One was an \$800 pair of inlaid gold cufflinks on which she had "splurged." JFK wore them "on every possible occasion," although formerly he had never been interested in men's jewelry.

The other was a Christmas gift from Jackie, a scrimshaw, or decorative article carved from whalebone. The man who did the work for Mrs. Kennedy found "an ancient bull whale's tooth, set it in timbers from a New Bedford whaling ship and spent 180 hours embellishing it with an ornate, early 19th Century design" of the Presidential seal. JFK was "enchanted" with it, Manchester writes.

Misunderstandings & Problems

Manchester talks about the misunderstandings and problems which arose as Lyndon Johnson took over the Presidential duties.

Manchester states that Lee Harvey Oswald's slaying by Jack Ruby "almost seemed to be an intrusion" on the national interest in Kennedy's funeral. To Jacqueline, "the murder of the assassin . . . was 'just one more awful blow.'"

Describing how Jackie and Caroline knelt at Kennedy's flag-draped coffin in the Capitol rotunda, after the eulogies, and kissed the flag, Manchester writes: "The audience in the rotunda, the national audience, those who until now had been immune, those who had endured everything else were stricken in a fraction of a second.

"Douglas Felt Paralyzed"

"A chord deep in the hearts of men had been touched, and Justice William Douglas felt paralyzed, and Gen. (Chester V.) Clifton, half-blinded by his own tears, looked across the circle and saw the Joint Chiefs of Staff standing at attention, their faces set and their cheeks streaming."

Manchester also tells how John



Nurse Maud Shaw, shown with John F. Kennedy Jr. in 1962, broke the news of JFK's death to Caroline Kennedy.

Jr. saluted the coffin, at his mother's instructions, and describes Jackie's reaction when she saw the picture later.

She was "astounded," according to Manchester, because the little boy's salutes in the past had been "rather comic," but now it was precisely right.

"His bearing was military," Manchester writes, "and to see it in a three-year-old, with his bare legs stiff below his short coat, his knees dimpled and his blunt red shoes side by side—to hear the slow swell of the music, and recall how the President had idolized him—was almost insupportable. Cardinal Cushing looked down on the small face. He saw the shadow of sadness crossing it and felt a burning sensation in his chest. Eight months later, he could scarcely speak of it."

Send New JFK Data to Washington: Ford

Washington, Feb. 19 (UPI)—A member of the Warren Commission said today that any new evidence uncovered by the New Orleans district attorney's office in the death of President Kennedy should be "immediately" transmitted to officials in Washington.

The New Orleans district attorney's office said yesterday that it was probing the assassination of President Kennedy. District Attorney Jim Garrison

Blau to Take Teaching Job

Herbert Blau, recently resigned co-director of the Lincoln Center Repertory Theatre, said yesterday that he will join the City College English department staff this fall to teach English and comparative literature as a full professor. He formerly taught at the San Francisco State College.

issued a statement predicting "arrests . . . and convictions" in New Orleans, home town of Lee Harvey Oswald, the President's assassin.

Chief Justice Earl Warren could not be reached for comment.

(Informed sources told THE NEWS last night that most of the information gathered by Garrison was known to Washington officials before, during and since the assassination and that it did not change the Warren Commission findings.)

Prince Andrew Is 7

London, Feb. 19 (UPI)—Prince Andrew, the third of Queen Elizabeth's four children, celebrated his seventh birthday today at Buckingham Palace.