

Kennedy and Johnson Argued on Final Night

WIL Journal

Washington, Jan. 7—Lyndon B. Johnson angrily stamped out of a private conference with President Kennedy the night before he was assassinated.

Mrs. John F. Kennedy remarked to the President after the meeting, which concerned Texas politics, that the Vice President "sounded mad."

"That's just Lyndon," replied the President. "But he's in trouble."

The meeting the night of Nov. 21, 1963, is recounted in William Manchester's book, "Death of a President," the first instalment of which appears in Look magazine on Tuesday.

Loud Discussion

Mr. Kennedy reluctantly had come to Texas to patch up what he considered a petty dispute between Texas Democrats.

The feud was between Governor John B. Connally, Jr., and Sen. Ralph W. Yarborough, but affected Mr. Johnson indirectly.

The loud discussion between Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Johnson took place in a Houston hotel room as they prepared for the next day's agenda in Dallas, Manchester recounts.

'Like a Pistol'

"He (Johnson) did not define the nature of the discussion," the book says. "Precisely what was said is unknown . . . Johnson controlled his celebrated temper in his chief's presence, but in the words of one man on duty outside, 'he left that suite like a pistol.'" Another described Mr. Johnson's expression as "furious."

In that period, November, 1963, the book describes Mr. Johnson as a political "cipher."

'Lancer and Lace' Was Kennedy Code

New York, Jan. 7—(UPI)—President Kennedy's Secret Service code name was "Lancer" and Mrs. Kennedy's was "Lace," the serialization of "The Death of a President" noted today.

The first instalment in Look magazine of William Manchester's account of the assassination said the code names were used whenever the first family left the White House. The White House became "Castle," and wherever the President was at any given moment was "charcoal."

Other code names were:

Caroline Kennedy, Lyric; John Kennedy, Jr., Lark; Lyndon B. Johnson, Volunteer; Lady Bird Johnson, Victoria; presidential secretary Evelyn Lincoln, Willow, and Press Secretary Pierre Salinger, Wayside.

It says he had heard the "groundless but persistent" rumors that Mr. Kennedy might drop him from the ticket in the presidential election of 1964.

Describing Kennedy's feelings about the three-day tour of Texas, Manchester writes:

Expected a Landslide

"The prospect was unappetizing and vexing to the chief executive. It appeared to him that Johnson ought to be able to resolve this petty dispute himself; the trip seemed to be an imposition."

Despite the problems in Texas
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Mr. Kennedy was confident he would be reelected by a "historic landslide" in 1964.

In fact, at the time of his assassination, he was pondering the makeup of a new cabinet.

Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara was to become his secretary of state, replacing Dean Rusk.

Manchester wrote that Mr. Kennedy had said he felt the "GOP would yield to its death wish and nominate Barry Goldwater." That was one reason he was confident of a landslide

victory.

Bobbie's Wish

In the makeup of the new cabinet, Robert F. Kennedy, now Democratic senator from New York, wanted to resign as attorney general and be appointed assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs.

Secretary of State Rusk, Manchester writes, was "aware that the President intended to be his own foreign minister" and "had leaned on him increasingly in other ways."

Political Duelling

Writing on the tour of Texas that climaxed with the fatal shooting in Dallas, Manchester wrote that political duelling involving Mr. Johnson, Gov. Connally and Sen. Yarborough began immediately.

Manchester asserts that the governor was thinking ahead to the 1964 campaigning and writes: "The governor wanted to run ahead of the ticket. He wanted Yarborough to lose, and with that in mind, he planned to make political capital out of the forthcoming presidential tour."

The book says that one of Connally's planned stratagems was to have two-tiered head-tables in Dallas and Austin. With the President and Vice President, Connally planned to sit at the top table. Yarborough and other officials would be relegated to the lower one.

Called It a Snub

In the motorcades, agents notified Yarborough that he was supposed to ride with Mr. Johnson. Instead, the senator twice chose to ride with friends in other cars. Manchester says the 40 correspondents covering the tour "saw him avoiding the Vice President" and "decided to call it a snub."

The book reports that Mrs. Kennedy "blurted out" that she disliked Connally. The President asked why and she replied: "I can't stand him all day. He's just one of those men — Oh, I don't know. I just can't bear his sitting there saying all these great things about himself. And he seems to be needing you all day."

Mr. Kennedy reminded her that he had come to Texas to try to heal political wounds and said, "I'm trying to start by getting two people in the same car."

So he asked her to put aside her hostility to the governor. Manchester reports that she did so.

Three Choices

The book brings to light a

tragic fact—that Mr. Kennedy's motorcade in Dallas might never have passed the Texas Book Depository building, where Lee Harvey Oswald had positioned himself.

Three sites originally were considered for the luncheon to be given in the president's honor in Dallas, the Woman's Building, Market Hall and the Trade Mart. Each presented problems of security for the Dallas police and the Secret Service.

Eventually, the Trade Mart was chosen. And the route followed by the President's motorcade took him past the Book Depository building, where Oswald worked. The motorcade route had been published.

The thought that Mr. Kennedy would be killed in Dallas was beyond anyone's dream, but many feared he might be embarrassed, Manchester writes. "The Dallas mood was no secret."

As has been disclosed before, five prominent Democrats strongly urged Mr. Kennedy to omit Dallas from the itinerary because they feared the highly-charged atmosphere of antagonism to him in the city.

"Dallas is a very dangerous place," Sen. J. William Fulbright, of Arkansas, was quoted as telling the President. "I wouldn't go there. Don't you go."

Four other men expressed grave anxieties about Mr. Kennedy's intention to visit Dallas, Manchester writes, and he reports Mr. Kennedy himself regarded the entire Texas tour as "vexatious and unappetizing... an imposition."

Letter to Robert

Manchester reports that Texas Democratic Chairman Byron Skelton was among those who counselled against the decision to bring the President to Dallas. Skelton wrote the President's brother, Robert F. Kennedy, that he would "feel better if the President's itinerary did not include Dallas."

Skelton felt so strongly about it that he flew to Washington and talked with Democratic National Chairman John Bailey and Jerry Bruno, of the national committee, the book says.

The book quotes House Whip Hale Boggs, of Louisiana, as saying, "Mr. President, you are going into a hornet's nest."

Mr. Kennedy replied, "Well,

that always creates interesting crowds."

He said the thought that a President of the U. S. could not go into any American city was totally unacceptable to him.

Missed a Lesson

Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey, of Minnesota (now Vice President), and the late Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson also harbored misgivings about the Dallas stop for the President.

One frustration of the Texas trip was that it caused Mr. Kennedy to miss a French lesson, the book says.

The tutor for his daughter, Caroline, had been giving him language lessons for two months. This, Manchester says, was a "closely guarded secret."

Mr. Kennedy wanted to learn French so that he could conduct future negotiations with French President Charles de Gaulle in de Gaulle's own language. He asked the tutor, Jacqueline Hirsch, how long she thought it would take him to become proficient. A year, she replied.

"I bet I do it in six months," Mr. Kennedy replied.