

Johnson Solicitude for Widow Recalled

By Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson

The public at first did not know of the tension aboard the presidential plane as the dead President John F. Kennedy and the new President Johnson flew back from Dallas. But shortly after the return, signs began to appear that all was not well between the two most powerful political families in the United States—the Johnsons and the Kennedys.

Immediately following the assassination, members of the Kennedy staff spoke savagely of the fact that President Kennedy had gone to Texas at all and seemed to blame Mr. Johnson for luring him down there. Apparently they did not know—or else had forgotten—that it was Kennedy who took the initiative, that Johnson discouraged the trip.

Ted Sorenson, counsel to JFK, said he wished Texas could be blown off the map. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., remarked that he simply couldn't bear to hear American foreign policy proclaimed in a Texas twang.

The day after his return to Washington, the new President sent an aide, Richard Nelson, to the White House for two sheets of presidential stationery. Snarled a Kennedy aide: "Can't he even wait until the body is cold?"

Johnson wanted the sta-

tionery to write longhand letters to the late President's two children, Caroline and John, Jr.

The Kennedy Ambitions

It was reported that on the night after the assassination, members of the Kennedy staff and family stayed up in the White House most of the night planning how they could rebuild the Kennedy image and take the headlines away from Mr. Johnson. Plans were laid for a state funeral in which the presidents, the prime ministers, and the kings of all the allied countries would march behind the casket.

When Franklin Roosevelt died in Warm Springs, Ga., and when Vice President Truman was immediately sworn in as his successor, Mrs. Roosevelt was asked by the man who replaced her husband: "What can I do for you?"

"The question, Mr. President, is what we can do for you," replied Mrs. Roosevelt. She moved out of the White House the next day.

The Johnsons remained in their home in Spring Valley for 14 days, during which Mrs. Kennedy lived in the White House. The period was so prolonged that newsmen started asking Mrs. Johnson when Mrs. Kennedy was expected to move. Mrs. Johnson retorted almost angrily: "I would to God I could serve Mrs. Ken-

nedy's comfort. I can at least serve her convenience."

\$50,000 for Press Aide

Some of the late President Kennedy's staff stayed away from their jobs for days at a time. Nevertheless, Johnson invited each one of them with their wives to the residence part of the White House to discuss their future. He offered them a chance to stay on with him or take other appointments in the Government.

When Mrs. Kennedy asked that the Cape Canaveral missile site be named after her husband, Mr. Johnson complied immediately, despite opposition from Florida residents. And he also sent a bill to Congress asking for \$17,500,000 to finance the John F. Kennedy Cultural Center in Washington, an enterprise started by the Kennedys and supposed to be financed by private funds.

In addition, he put \$50,000 in his own White House budget to be paid to Mrs. Kennedy annually for a public relations assistant, Pamela Turnure, plus a secretarial staff. This was the first time in history that the widow of a President had received funds for such an office.

Mrs. Kennedy, whose husband left her a \$10 million estate, received \$50,000 plus \$10,000 until last year when the office expense was cut to \$30,000. Her allowance is still double the expenses allowed

former Presidents Truman and Eisenhower.

What President Johnson didn't know was that in February, 1964, three months after the assassination, the office which he had given Mrs. Kennedy in the White House was used by William Manchester to begin collecting material for the book, "The Death of a President"—material in part critical of him.

Nor did President Johnson probably realize the bitterness of Mrs. Kennedy's feelings toward him — until the late spring of 1965, when he and Mrs. Johnson invited her to Washington to participate in the dedication of the Rose Garden in her name. When Mrs. Kennedy refused to come, the President sent her a picture of the garden, warmly inscribed. He was a little hurt to learn that she had laid it on a shelf.

In November the Johnsons invited all the descendants of previous Presidents to come to the White House for a reunion. The grandchildren of President Eisenhower accepted with pleasure, as did various other descendants. The Kennedy children did not show. They are much too young to know anything about the bitter resentment of their mother and their Uncle Bobby for the Johnsons, but they were made to play a part in the Kennedy feud.