

MANCHESTER TELLS OF TEXAS FEUD

Kennedy Saw Trip as an Imposition

Jacqueline Kennedy complained to her husband the night before his death that she couldn't stand Texas Gov. John Connally, William Manchester says in his book, "The Death of a President."

Copies of Look magazine, containing the first installment of a four-part condensation of the book, were distributed to news media yesterday for use at 6 p.m. Monday.

But the Chicago Daily News printed a story based on the magazine article this morning, the Associated Press said in releasing its own version of the story.

Emerges as Villain

Connally clearly emerges as the villain of the piece in this first installment, with Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson little more than a vague figure still moving in the overwhelming shadow of the presidency.

The first installment covers the period leading up to the President's Texas trip and ends on the night before the assassination.

On that night, Manchester writes, the Kennedys retired exhausted in their suite in Fort Worth; Johnson "jovially entertained members of his tong," Connally "held court" in the hotel coffee shop, and Lee Harvey Oswald went mad while watching a World War II movie on television.

The President's brother, Robert F. Kennedy, is quoted as saying that his brother was often gloomy in the days immediately preceding the Texas trip.

And Manchester says the President regarded the trip as an "imposition," an "unappetizing and vexing" journey to try to heal a party dispute that Johnson should have been able to handle.

But Johnson, he writes, had become a cipher because, as Vice President, he had no power base. His problems in Texas,

Manchester says, were "authentic."

On one side were Connally—"spinning his intricate webs"—with his conservative associates. On the other were Sen. Ralph Yarborough, a staunch Kennedy man, and his liberal associates.

At each stop on the trip, Manchester says, there was a heavy-handed Connally effort to push Yarborough into the background—and a brusque effort by the senator to keep himself in the limelight.

Even the choice of the Trade Mart as the site for the Dallas luncheon, the author says, was a political one because Yarborough could be relegated to a lower place at the table.

'On Sudden Impluse'

If, he implies, the luncheon had been scheduled for one of two other possible locations, the President would not have passed the Texas Book Depository—and the course of history might have been vastly different.

Mrs. Kennedy's complaint about Connally came on the evening of Nov. 21, 1963, when she and President John F. Kennedy were resting in their \$150-a-day suite at the Rice Hotel in Houston.

"On a sudden impluse," Manchester writes, "she blurted out that she disliked Governor Connally."

When the President asked

why, Manchester said, 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."

Explains His Trip

The President explained that he had come to Texas to try to heal a rift in the party—and it would be harmful for her to "get a thing on him" and to display her dislike publicly.

Manchester's account of the inflamed situation in Dallas—described by the Warren Commission as a "general atmosphere of hate"—corresponds to that of the commission. But he draws a much closer connection between the city's atmosphere and Oswald's lethal act than the commission did.

In the days before the Texas trip, Manchester says, the President was urged by five prominent Democrats to stay away from Dallas.

"Don't You Go"

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

The commission, influenced by expediency and a desire to obtain the widest possible acceptance for its report, hedged on the connection between the mood in Dallas and Oswald's action, Manchester says.

But, likening the situation to that in Washington at the time of the Lincoln assassination, he says: "... no man lives in a void. His every act is conditioned by his time and his society."

Mrs. Kennedy objected last month to publication of the Manchester book and the Look serialization. But she withdrew her objections to the publication by Look after about 1,600 words had been removed. The editing does not appear to have affected the first article.

Her objection was to personal matters, she said, and not to what she regarded as unfair descriptions of other people.

The first installment does not cast Johnson in a bad light—a later installment reportedly does—but there is one reference to a meeting between Kennedy and Johnson in which loud words were exchanged.

Mrs. Kennedy heard "raised voices" in a hotel room to which Kennedy had summoned Johnson. "He (Johnson) did not define the nature of the discussion," Manchester wrote.

"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 said, "he looked furious."

Mrs. Kennedy, the book says, asked, "what was that all about? He sounded mad."

"That's Just Lyndon"

Her husband replied, "That's just Lyndon... but he's in trouble."

The first installment of Manchester's book shows that most of his information came from President Kennedy's admirers. Therefore it is subject to their interpretation of events which took place under great emotional stress.

Some sources said that, because it deals in considerable detail with some of the emotion-

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—Associated Press

President Kennedy, speaking in Fort Worth on the morning of his assassination, is flanked by feuding Texas political leaders, Sen. Ralph

Yarborough, Gov. John Connally and Vice President Lyndon Johnson (left to right). The group later flew to Dallas.

BOOK

'Just One Thing I Couldn't Stand ...'

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al events, quoting various individuals, it cannot be taken as a definitive history of the assassination.

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, Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy, that he would "feel better if the President's itinerary did not include Dallas."

Flew to Washington

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, adding that Skelton's efforts came to "an enormous zero."

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

Kennedy replied, "Well that always creates interesting crowds." He said the thought that a President of the United States could not go into any American city was totally unacceptable to him.

Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota and Ambassador Adlai E. Stevenson also harbored misgivings about the Dallas stop for the President.

"In Dallas itself, there was genuine alarm," Manchester writes, "both newspapers ran editorials calling for restraint. Police Chief Jesse Curry publicly put Dallas on notice that his department would take 'immediate action to block any improper conduct.' He drew on every available reserve."

Luncheon Site Changed

The book discloses that Kennedy's motorcade might never have passed the Texas Book Depository Building—where Lee Harvey Oswald was lurking—but for what the author calls a "political decision."

Those arranging the Presi-

dent's program in Dallas once considered the Woman's Building as the site of the luncheon to be given for him. Instead, the Trade Mart was chosen and Kennedy's automobile passed beneath the windows of the book building.

"The decision was a political decision made by politicians," Manchester wrote.

The Warren Commission found that Lee Harvey Oswald, stationed in a sixth floor window of the book building, fired the shots that killed Kennedy and wounded Texas Gov. John B. Connally Jr. Its report says Oswald acted alone.

"Diametric Opposite"

Manchester evidently came to the same conclusion. For he attempts to probe for Oswald's motive. He attributes it to the fact that Oswald was the "diametric opposite" of Kennedy, contrasting their respective records in the armed forces and writing that Kennedy was "all-powerful" while Oswald was "impotent."

"Kennedy was cheered; Oswald ignored," the book says. "Kennedy was beloved; Oswald despised. Kennedy was a hero. Oswald was a victim."

Of Oswald's possible motive, the Warren Commission Report said:

"It is apparent, however, that Oswald was moved by an overriding hostility to his environment. He does not appear to have been able to establish meaningful relationships with other people. He was perpetually discontented with the world around him."

"A Place in History"

"Long before the assassination he expressed his hatred for American society and acted in protest against it . . . He sought for himself a place in history—a role as 'the great man' who would be recognized as having been in advance of his times. His commitment to Marxism and communism appears to have been another important factor in his motivation."

"Out of these and the many other factors which may have moulded the character of Lee Harvey Oswald there emerged a man capable of assassinating President Kennedy."

Why Did He Go?

Why did Kennedy, against his wishes, go to Texas at all?

Manchester goes into considerable detail about the feuding between Texas liberals, whose "hero" was Sen. Ralph Yarborough and Gov. Connally, a conservative. The senator, Manchester writes, considered Johnson a "co-conspirator" of Connally's.

The book notes that the Kennedy-Johnson ticket had carried Texas "by an eyelash" in the 1960 presidential election. And Manchester concluded that if the Yarborough-Connally feud could not soon be patched up, "the national ticket wouldn't stand a chance there next fall." Hence, Kennedy's decision to go to Texas.

During the planning stages for it, Mrs. Kennedy was in Greece recuperating from the loss of her third child. She wrote her husband 10-page letters, sprinkled with dashes, telling him how much she missed him and how she wished he could be with her, away from the tensions of Washington.

"There's just one thing I couldn't stand," she said, "if I ever lost you . . ."

'We'll Campaign . . .'

But when the President's wife returned to Washington Oct. 17, her spirits were high. Manchester says she told her husband: "We'll campaign. I'll campaign with you anywhere you want."

The President was delighted. For the first time in their marriage, Manchester reported, he talked about her wardrobe. He wanted to know, especially, what she would wear at the scheduled luncheon in Dallas. He told her:

"There are going to be all these rich Republican women at that lunch, wearing mink coats

and diamond bracelets. Be simple—show these Texans what good taste really is."

The book says Mrs. Kennedy thereupon came in and out of his room, showing him dresses she liked.

A last-minute contretemps with respect to her wardrobe developed.

Kennedy's Air Force aide had advised the President that the weather in Texas would be cool during his three days there, beginning Nov. 20. As the presidential party was about to leave for the airport, it was learned that the weather had turned hot.

"Kennedy cried in dismay," Manchester writes. "He lunged for his telephone and dialed his

wife's maid's extension. 'Pack some cool dresses,' he said urgently."

But his wife's dresses already were in a helicopter which had left for the airfield. Kennedy "chewed out" McHugh, the book says.

The departure also caused Kennedy to miss his 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."

Eyed De Gaulle Talks

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," Kennedy replied.

He was brimmingly confident about the political outlook, too, the book reports.

Manchester writes that Kennedy expected to be re-elected in a "historic landslide" in 1964. His expectations were accentuated by his feeling that the "GOP would yield to its death wish and nominate Barry Goldwater."

Pondered New Cabinet

He was already pondering the makeup of his second cabinet.

Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara would become secretary of state and McNamara "almost certainly" would head up the new cabinet.

Robert F. Kennedy wished to resign as attorney general and be appointed assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs. Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Manchester writes, was "aware that the President intended to be his own foreign minister" and "had leaned on him increasingly in other ways."

On the day of the departure for Texas, Kennedy took his son, John, by helicopter to the airfield. The child wanted to fly to Texas and began to cry when he was told he could not go. Kennedy kissed him and the plane departed.

The political duelling involving Johnson, Connally and Yarborough began immediately when the tour started in Texas.

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."

Planned Two Tables

The book says that one of Connally's planned strategems 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.

In the motorcades, agents notified Yarborough that he was supposed to ride with 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."

Big and friendly crowds greeted the presidential party wherever it appeared and the tour approached its tragic climax in an aura of good feeling.

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