

MANCHESTER'S WORK RECALLS RIFT

The Bitter Flight From

William Manchester's book sharply points up how the old rift between Lyndon Johnson and the Kennedy circle deepened in the tragic hours just after John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

A man who has read the full manuscript of "The Death of a President," which the Kennedys are now challenging in court, told the New York Post today:

"It's pretty well known that many of the old hurts of the 1960 nominating convention had never healed, but in the Manchester book you see even greater bitterness develop almost hour by hour as that plane flies both the body of the dead President and the Kennedy and the Johnson parties back to Washington."

The situation was such, this source told The Post, that some of the Kennedy contingent turned bitter even towards military functionaries on the plane who seemed (to them) overzealous in trying to help Lyndon Johnson in his first hours of office. Manchester, the source said, reports that a military aide who was solicitous to Johnson drew a bitter barb from one Kennedy aide, while another military aide, who took the opposite position and was outspoken in declaring aboard the plane that Kennedy was still "my President", disappeared from the service very soon after LBJ moved into the White House.

It has been revealed before that Manchester painted a picture of a "sick, bitter" trip aboard Air Force One from Dallas to Washington. According to Manchester, the Kennedy people didn't think Johnson belonged on the plane at all; they thought he should have used his own plane.

Shortly before the plane landed at Andrews Air Force Base, Manchester writes, Mrs. Kennedy sent for Mac Kilduff, who was the press secretary on the trip, and instructed him to inform all reporters that she had made the flight by her slain husband's coffin.

Misunderstandings

Some of the incidents aboard the plane may have resulted from misunderstandings or just simple embarrassment, the source said.

For example, he revealed, Mrs. Kennedy arrived at the plane to find Johnson in the President's cabin dictating to a secretary. When Jackie appeared at the door, Johnson got up and left the cabin without a word.

Entourage Outraged

For another example, as Manchester relates it, Mrs. Kennedy, in the back cabin, was waiting impatiently for the plane to take off while Johnson and his party were in the front cabin

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Dallas



Scene on the plane from Dallas. President Johnson has just taken the oath of office. He turns away from Mrs. Kennedy to the new First Lady, who is smiling at Federal Judge Sarah Hughes.

Associated Press Photo

waiting for her to appear for the swearing-in ceremony before the takeoff.

Mrs. Kennedy agreed to appear in the swearing-in photographs but her entourage was outraged because they felt she was being "used," Manchester says.

Johnson also intended to leave the plane with Mrs. Kennedy and the casket. But the Kennedy aides were jammed in the passageway as the door slid open, and the new President was left standing back in the cabin alone.

Johnson soon was informing friends, according to the book, that he was "having trouble with the family."

The rift between Johnson and Robert Kennedy dated back to the campaign for the nomination, but twice, according to the man who read the Manchester book, there were moments of bitterness in the first days after the assassination.

For one thing, Johnson hap-

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pened to be visiting the President's oval office in the White House on the day after the assassination when Bobby happened in. It appeared as though Johnson was trying to move in too fast when actually, according to Manchester, it was Johnson who was quieting his own aides as they urged him to take charge immediately.

For another thing, Johnson wanted to address a joint session of Congress on Tuesday. Bobby Kennedy thought that was too soon. He preferred to wait until Wednesday. Johnson agreed to do this.

Johnson, according to Manchester, showed considerable compassion for the family. One of his first acts after he returned to Washington was to write letters of condolence to John and Caroline Kennedy, to be read at some future date when they were older.

Manchester conducted 10 hours of tape-recorded interviews with Mrs. Kennedy and did massive reporting jobs on his own beyond these interviews. It is not clear how much of his account comes from the Jacqueline tapes, now the center of the dispute between the Kennedys and the author, and how much comes from other sources.

Johnson never consented to an interview by Manchester, but he did supply written answers to some of the questions which Manchester submitted.

Jackie and 'Look' Near Settlement on Book

Jacqueline Kennedy and Look magazine are close to a settlement on the disputed tapes William Manchester used in his book, "The Death of a President."

A source close to Mrs. Kennedy told The New York Post that a meeting between representatives of both sides today could resolve the fight short of the court action filed by the Kennedys last week.

The source said that it was not too late for Look to make the deletions which Mrs. Kennedy is seeking in the first instalment of the 80,000-word digest, for which the magazine paid Manchester \$665,000.

When Mrs. Kennedy's objections to portions of the manuscript were first publicly confirmed last week, the magazine said that its Jan. 10 issue, con-

taining the opening instalment, was on the presses and could not be changed. This apparently is no longer true.

The Post's source stressed that the requested change involved only "very personal" portions of the 10-hour tape which Mrs. Kennedy made with Manchester and in no way involved anything bearing on the relations between President Johnson and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, who is a party to a law suit against Look and Harper & Row, publishers of the book.

Harper & Row is not involved in today's discussions, and meetings between the Kennedy side

and the book publisher will be held later.

Manchester presumably has agreed to go along with Look on the requested changes, since his contract with the magazine gives him final say over what is carried in the digested version.

Despite the continuing talks, Mrs. Kennedy's lawyers were going ahead today with plans to file new court papers to back up the injunction suit. The papers, drawn by former federal judge Simon Rifkind, reportedly will cite legal precedents for Mrs. Kennedy's charges of breach of contract against Manchester, Look and Harper & Row.

The legal basis for Mrs. Kennedy's lawsuit also will be outlined by Rifkind's "memorandum of law," pending a hearing of the case by Supreme Court Justice Streit next Tuesday.

More fuel was added to the controversy today, by former White House press aide Malcolm Kilduff, who was with Mrs. Kennedy on the chaotic Dallas-to-Washington flight after the assassination.

Kilduff told CDN reporter William J. Eaton that he is awaiting Manchester's version of those troubled hours, and said:

"If he distorts it, I'll come out with the facts."

Kilduff said he talked with Manchester for six or seven hours about the Dallas events, with the author's assurance that nothing would be published until late 1968.

When he heard that Look would serialize the book in 1967, Kilduff said, "I felt a little bitter about it." He wrote a protesting letter to Manchester, and got a reply dated last Sept. 2.

It disclosed that later editions

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of "The Death of a President" may contain material not included in the first printing.

"All material is being treated with taste and reverence for history," Kilduff said. Manchester wrote him, "and wiser men than the author are sitting in judgment on the text."

"And years later, perhaps another edition will be published with material that is not published in the first edition."

Kilduff has refused to talk at length about the reported bitterness between the Kennedy and Johnson factions aboard Air Force One.

"I consider that privileged information," he told Eaton. "I've turned down a lot of money to write articles about that."

Speculation that Mrs. Kennedy might be liable for \$5,000,000 in damages—if Look is forced to scrap its Jan. 10 issue but then wins an appeal of the verdict—is being discounted on the theory that she would almost certainly be bonded against such damages.

The defendants in the suit have until tomorrow to answer Mrs. Kennedy's charges. Some legal experts believe Look may cite a clause in Manchester's agreement with Sen. Robert Kennedy saying the Kennedys would not try to prevent sale of the serial rights—interpreting this as permission to Manchester to dispose of the rights at his discretion.