

8 Oakland Tribune Tues., Oct. 29, 1968

Book Chronicles

JFK, LBJ Rancor

NEW YORK (AP) — Jim Bishop's "The Day J.F.K. Died" draws a picture of rancor between Kennedy and Johnson personnel and says President Johnson would not have been able to order a response to a Soviet missile attack for a 30-minute period because of a blunder.

Bishop also writes that Johnson had not been briefed on making a decision to launch a counterattack.

A portion of Bishop's account of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy appears in the November issue of Ladies' Home Journal.

In a note accompanying the article, Bishop says President Johnson has confided in him in relating how he felt on that day.

President Kennedy had been dead several minutes before Johnson was informed, Bishop writes. Also, he says, the Army warrant officer who carried the coded device by which a president can order a nuclear attack was away from

Johnson for 30 minutes at one point. *

"The men around Kennedy had kept the secret of power from Lyndon Johnson," Bishop writes of the period immediately after Kennedy's death.

Bishop describes tension between Kennedy and Johnson people aboard Air Force One before and during the flight back to Washington. And he emphasizes what he presents as basic dislike for Johnson among Kennedy people.

"The confinement of the Johnsons and the Kennedys in the plane for a period of 150 minutes was sufficient to cleave the families in permanent schism," Bishop writes.

"Johnson was not, and could not, aspire to be 'Kennedy people.' He could be tolerated as a vice president because his loyalty to John F. Kennedy was complete and unquestioned.

"Within the family, only Bobby (Robert F. Kennedy) and Kenny O'Donnell could not abide him as vice president. To them, he was a rump-d wheeler-dealer-part Southerner, part Westerner, with cowdung on his heels. He lacked 'class.'"

Bishop also alleges coldness between Jacqueline Kennedy, now Mrs. Aristotle Onassis, and Kennedy's mother, Mrs. Rose Kennedy.

* See "1:33" by Bruce Henderson and Sam Summerlin, p. 32:

"At the moment that John Kennedy was pronounced dead, [Ira D.] Gearheart quietly rose from his seat [just outside Trauma Room One], picking up his briefcase. He walked past the Emergency Room desk, pushed open the door to a surgery room and stepped inside. There, behind drawn shades, sat Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson.

"Gearheart moved in close to the new leader he would shadow.

Those few steps marked the first real, if not formal, transfer of power."