

The Day JFK Was Shot

The Examiner today continues with the fifth installment of the exclusive serialization of the sensational book, "The Day Kennedy Was Shot" — the book the Kennedys asked Jim Bishop not to write.

By JIM BISHOP

4 P.M.: Richard Nixon reached his home in New York, thinking of a statement of his the Dallas News had published that morning:

"Former Vice President Richard M. Nixon predicted here Thursday that President Kennedy will drop Lyndon Johnson from the No. 2 spot on the Democratic ticket if a close race appears likely next year. Nixon said Johnson is becoming a 'political liability' to the Democratic Party." He dialed J. Edgar Hoover in Washington.

(That morning, after President Kennedy had been cheered at Fort Worth, he said to Johnson, elated, "I know there are two States we're going to carry in 1964 — Texas and Massachusetts." The Vice President grinned and said, "Oh, we'll do better than that." There was irony in this, because, until this moment, Kennedy had never stated that he wanted Johnson on the ticket with him again.)

The FBI Director told Nixon the Dallas police had picked up a suspect in the assassination named Lee Harvey Oswald, a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and a self-proclaimed Marxist.

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The United States Naval Hospital, at Bethesda, Maryland, was advised to be prepared for an autopsy. Doctors at Bethesda were aware from radio reports that the President had been taken to Parkland Memorial Hospital at Dallas.

No Navy doctor thought of telephoning Parkland to ask what procedures had been tried, what wounds had been

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treated, to what surgical abuses the body had been submitted.

Nor did it occur to doctors at Parkland, when it was broadcast where the remains would be taken for an autopsy, to telephone Bethesda these details.

An Off Day

It might have helped the doctors in reaching conclusions to know that the extruding hole in the President's neck had been a small exit wound enlarged surgically for insertion of a tube to assist in breathing.

It was not a good day for professional thinking of any kind.

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A teen-ager, stature tautly straight, strode through Parkland Hospital, and was passed by Texas Rangers through a guarded door. He threw his arms around Mrs. John Connally and said:

"It's going to be all right, mother."

Mrs. Connally rocked in the embrace of John, Junior and, between sobs, asked how he could have come from Austin in so short a time.

"I hitched a ride on an airplane," he said, and in the same breath, insisted that he see his father.

Mrs. Connally took him into the next room. The governor of Texas looked like an octopus. Plastic tubes ran from overhead positions; others drained downward. The fractured right wrist was suspended above the bed. An oxygen mask was at his mouth, and the eyes turned to the wonderment in his son's face and a smile of pride shining through the tears of his wife.

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The mood at the White House was demanding and uncompromising. Men from bureaus and departments

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JFK Shot



Bobbie Kennedy holds hands with Jackie while watching body of the President being taken off Air

Force One after the big jet landed at Andrews AFB, Maryland, following the tense flight from Dallas.

—UPI photos

were making decisions about a funeral for a President. He was still on his last flight and was still to be autopsied and embalmed, but the planning was going on as though there was not a moment to lose.

They had yet to hear the wishes of the widow and those who were acquainted with Jacqueline Kennedy as White House staffers were aware that her wishes would be adamant and positive.

Shriver Takes Over

Robert Sargent Shriver, Jr., husband of Eunice Kennedy and head of the Peace Corps, had walked into the White House, selected a sizable office, and asserted authority. At this time, the government of the country was being directed by assistant secretaries and undersecretaries of the departments.

Not till the new President reached the White House would there be a decision-making power in the capital. However, in the matter of a funeral Shriver made decisions all late afternoon and evening.

It was possible that Mrs. Kennedy might desire to bury her husband in Brookline, Massachusetts, beside their infant son Patrick Bouvier Kennedy.

Shriver thought of the National Cemetery at Arlington and phoned Superintendent John Metzler. Could Arlington be considered consecrated ground for Roman Catholic interments?

Mr. Metzler said it could. Could children be buried with their parents? Yes.

Would there be any objection to the interment of a President there? No.

Was suitable space available in case the family made a decision in favor of Arlington? Yes, there could be a three-acre plot for John F. Kennedy.

As a serviceman, even as a President, Kennedy was not entitled to such a large allotment of space, but this was not a time for anyone to be rational.

Cabinets Locked

Acting independently, McGeorge Bundy, who had turned back from the big conference at Honolulu, or-

tered top-priority White House filing cabinets locked. He sealed them in the name of President Lyndon Johnson, and put the keys in his pocket.

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In Air Force One, hurtling past Roanoke and Lynchburg, minutes from Washington, stewards were still busy bringing soup, sandwiches, coffee, cheese, and liquor. Especially liquor to the Kennedy partisans. Brig. Gen. Godfrey McHugh had ordered the kitchen closed. Someone else had ordered it opened.

Lyndon Johnson who had taken only soup, was in the presidential private quarters at work. He had spent a time of fear at Parkland Hospital, but that was over. He had his own people, Jack Valenti, Ted Clifton, Malcolm Kilduff, Bill Moyers, Marie Fehmer, busy with phones. He made decisions and took the more important messages.

Kennedy people asked that the press be barred from Andrews Air Force Base. Johnson said no. "It will look like we're in a panic."

A suggestion that Mrs. Kennedy debark from the starboard of the plane so that privacy could be maintained, was rejected by the widow. Jacqueline Kennedy looked up from the glass that had held Scotch whisky and said, "We will go out the regular way," and repeated, "I want them to see what they have done."

Required Villain

Lyndon Johnson must be charged with a lack of understanding of the Kennedy mentality. They required a villain for their rancor. When their chief's head fell among the roses at Dallas, the heart of their political cult stopped. They had no standing any more, no prestige. Many of them held Johnson in such contempt that they could not endure his offer of resurrection.

Johnson was willing to submerge his pride and tell them that he required their counsel, their guidance. In spite of his own considerable ego, Lyndon Johnson lacked the confidence of a John F. Kennedy.

"When the going gets tough," Kennedy used to say, "the tough get going." Now, in the cold loneliness at the summit of power, Johnson needed a feeling of continuance of administration. And this is what the Kennedy clan would deny him.

When Air Force One began its descent, the small group in the back of the plane was discussing ways and means of keeping the President of the United States out of photos of the arrival of the casket and the mourners. The world would be watching, and the Kennedys did not want the Johnsons in their mourning pictures.

Before the plane taxied to a halt at Andrews, President Johnson had ordered a ramp

to be brought to the plane. The Secret Service men aboard would carry the casket down the ramp. The casket would be followed by Mrs. Kennedy on the arm of President Johnson.

In the back of the plane, Kenny O'Donnell issued other orders. As soon as the aircraft stopped, he wanted the Kennedy group to crowd the rear doorway. They and the Secret Service men would take the body out of this exit, via a forklift.

The plane was still in motion when they formed an unbreakable block at the rear exit, with Mrs. Kennedy among them. When the President came down the aisle, he found it impassable.

A male voice rose from somewhere: "It's all right. We'll take care of this end."

Johnson recognized a purposeful humiliation. The plane stopped and he walked back to the presidential cabin slowly, to rejoin his wife. Then he saw the Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy, rushing from the front door of the plane to the back. Sadly, the President stuck his hand out and said: "Bob!"

The Attorney General ignored the hand and kept running toward the aft section.

At the human knot, people stepped aside so that Jacqueline could fall into Robert's arms.

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TOMORROW: "Dear God, not this!" were Lady Bird Johnson's words when she reflected on the position to which fate had elevated her husband.