

The Day JFK Was Shot

The Examiner continues today its sixth 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

5 P.M.: The throng of Washington officials, foreign diplomats, and military service guards of honor who had choice positions close to Air Force One when it stopped in the assigned place at Andrews Air Force Base were unaware of the taut drama taking place in the plane at that moment.

There were no implications in what they saw first when a forklift was raised to the rear hatch of the plane. Persons

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were squeezed tightly in the opening, as Kenneth O'Donnell had directed. They were blocking President Johnson from escorting the casket and Mrs. Kennedy within range of waiting cameras.

Secret Service men who had lifted the 500 pound casket aboard wanted now to take it off. So did Kenneth O'Donnell, Lawrence O'Brien, Brig. Gen. Godfrey McHugh, David Powers and others. All could not find room on the forklift. Men pushed each other about. The bronze box teetered and wobbled.

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Robert Kennedy, who had dashed past Lyndon Johnson in the plane and ignored him, watched until men on the fork-lift had steadied the box. He dropped nimbly onto the platform and, with arms outstretched, reached up for his sister-in-law.

She crouched, let go, and Robert Kennedy grasped her in his embrace again. The TV cameras caught the scene and took in the pink burlap suit, the stains of blood and brains, the twisted right stocking.

Robert Kennedy walked his sister-in-law slowly toward the ambulance that stood close to Air Force One. He bent and whispered and nodded at the responses. She was in the full glare of lights and her head was down when the chief of official protocol in Washington, Angier Biddle Duke, approached her.

He coughed and Mrs. Kennedy looked up. "How can I serve you?" he said. She told him, "Find out how Lincoln was buried." Mr. Duke turned away. He would require admission to the Library of Congress, which was closed, and hours of labor by researchers to obtain all particulars of the Lincoln obsequies.

The ambulance to which Robert Kennedy led the procession had not been driven there in compliance with two radio messages from Air Force One. Both requests had been refused, on the ground that District of Columbia law prohibited transportation of a corpse in an ambulance. This ambulance was at Andrews Air Force Base because of Captain R. O. Canada of Bethesda Medical Center.

In looking at television network bulletins, Captain Canada recalled that, eight years before, Senator Lyndon Johnson had sustained a myocardial infarction.

Johnson had been Canada's patient. The crushing events of the day could induce another heart attack. Captain Canada ordered a cardiologist and nurse to meet Air Force One. The cardiologist,

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Jackie Bared

'The Day JFK Was Shot'

Her Innermost

Thoughts...



Jackie and RFK prepare to enter ambulance at Andrews Air Force Base

—AP Photo

nurse, and driver were standing beside the ambulance as the Kennedys approached.

Takes Charge

Roy Kellerman took charge. He sent agent William Greer into the driver's seat. Dr. George Burkley was waved into the front seat, where Agent Paul Landis and Kellerman himself were to squeeze in. After the back door had been opened, Robert Kennedy and Jacqueline Kennedy stooped through. Secret Service men, the military service honor guard, and Kennedy partisans slid in the coffin. Brig. Gen. Godfrey McHugh followed.

The cardiologist and the nurse were told there was no room for them. The ambulance moved off with Mrs. Kennedy and Gen. McHugh sitting on one side of the casket, across from Robert Ken-

nedy.

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Lyndon Johnson climbed wearily into a helicopter that was to lift him away from Andrews. Mrs. Johnson sat on the couch opposite Undersecretary of State George Ball.

Defense Secretary Robert McNamara and Presidential aide McGeorge Bundy took places around the President. James Rowley, head of the Secret Service, stood inside the door. A crewman waited. The President said, "Go on" with his hand. When tense, he often made a chewing motion with his lips. He was doing it now.

As the craft moved from the field, he spoke of Dallas as though he was talking to himself, disjointedly. "It was an awful thing . . . horrible . . . that little woman was brave . . . who would have thought that this could happen . . . you fellows know I never aspired to this."

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In the White House, Sargent Shriver was working on funeral arrangements. The Secret Service told him that the new President was arriving, but he did not move to greet Johnson.

Shriver heard the first word from Jacqueline Kennedy via her and his brother-

in-law, Robert. He told the persons he had assembled, "Mrs. Kennedy feels that, above all, these arrangements should be made to provide great dignity for the President. He should be buried as a President and a former naval officer, rather than as a Kennedy."

Low Mass

A priest from St. Matthew's Pro-cathedral suggested to Shriver that the church celebrate a pontifical Mass of requiem. Shriver glanced at Dr. Joseph English, a Catholic psychiatrist and friend of the family. "Let's take the low road, Sarge," was the doctor's aside.

Shriver responded to the priest: "He made it a point to attend a low Mass every Sunday. Why should we force a high Mass on him now?" It would be a low Mass.

(All final important decisions were to be made by Mrs. Kennedy. Archbishop Patrick O'Boyle was the ranking Roman Catholic churchman in Washington. Mrs. Kennedy did not want him. She substituted Richard Cardinal Cushing of Boston, a family friend.)

Lyndon Johnson has two gaits. One, when he wants to

talk, is slow, with his head cocked toward the listener. The other stride is swift and reserved for when he is doing the listening. He emerged

from the helipad on the South Lawn of the White House at the head of a small group of people, moving fast.

The new President had de-

cid on his own:

1. He was the only person who could not afford a display of maudlin grief. In tragedy, the people look for

strength, not weakness.

2. He must persuade the Kennedy team to continue with him until he acquired full control and understanding of the reins of government.

3. He would need all the bipartisan congressional support he could get.

4. It would be necessary to be briefed at once on all executive matters to which a Vice President normally is not privy.

Bundy was close to trotting. "There are two things I am assuming, Mr. President," he said. "One is that everything in locked files before 2 p.m. today belongs to the President's family, and the other is that Mrs. Kennedy will handle the funeral arrangements." Johnson didn't break stride. "That's correct," he said.

Passes by Office

The door to Evelyn Lincoln's office as personal secretary to Mr. Kennedy, with its direct entry into the President's Room, was held open for him, and he went

through. Someone said Johnson should use the office of the President, and Johnson replied, "No. That would be presumptuous now."

He passed it, going instead down the walkway to East Executive Avenue and across into the dismal former State Department, now called the Executive Office Building.

Upstairs at the suite he had as Vice President, he greeted his private secretary, Mrs. Juanita Roberts, and went to sit at the accustomed desk. Moving all the papers there to clear the blotter, he looked up at men who had followed him, to stand at attention for orders.

He told Ted Reardon that he wanted a Cabinet meeting at 10 a.m. tomorrow. Reardon left to begin phoning the Cabinet members—some of whom were on a plane coming from across the Pacific.

He wanted a lot of service tonight, and to prod any hesitant ones he put on his son-of-a-bitch face. Macolm Kilduff was dressed down for

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not having the casket leave by the front ramp. The President didn't care for any excuses; it would have been proper for him to leave the plane with Mrs. Kennedy and the body of John F. Kennedy. Who the hell's idea was it to get that forklift at the back of the plane?

Wanted No Gap

All evening long men who had highly responsible positions would come to this office to reassess the new Chief Executive and to be reassessed by him. To all, he enunciated the same order:

"There must be no gap in government. We must go forward in unity."

He had had no solid food since breakfast. He sent for soup between telephone calls and giving memorandums to Juanita Roberts.

At one point he lapsed into reverie. His eyes stared at the far wall. Then, referring to Agent Rufus Youngblood, he said, "Rufe did a heroic thing today. He threw me down in that car and threw himself on top of me."

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The ambulance and the entourage of cars from Andrews Air Force Base sped along avenues of light to the Naval Medical Center, which Mrs. Kennedy had chosen for the autopsy.

Robert Kennedy, sitting opposite his sister-in-law, turned at one point to ask Secret Service Agent Kellerman if any of them knew that a suspect had been arrested in Dallas. Kellerman said no. "They think he's a communist," the Attorney General said.

The widow was shocked. To be killed by a Red seemed, to her, to rob her husband's demise of significance. She thought he had been killed by a white supremacist; she had been sure he had given his life for civil rights. The martyr Abraham Lincoln, to whom she had chosen to liken her husband, had been cut down by a Southern sympathizer; the Negroes, free and slave had wept.

Tells Happening

She told the one man to whom she could bare her feelings now of the sharp cracks of the shots; the dreamy expression on Jack's face as he slowly leaned toward her; the spasm of the

body as the back of his head flew off; the interminable whipping speed of that car ride to Parkland Hospital; the bloody roses in her lap; the cold faces of doctors and nurses as they sought for something already lost; that execrable man who wanted to confiscate Jack's body; the flight of cars to the airport.

The agony of it all, and then to find that the President had hardly died before the Johnsons were there in Air Force One—no privacy, no respect—waiting for a judge to swear him in and then actually asking her to step forward to be photographed with him.

A kindred mind across the curving lid of the casket absorbed her words, her shock, her rancor. Robert Kennedy, tense, taut, could sympathize wholly. He could husband a hate for a long time.

6 P.M. Lady Bird Johnson, the First Lady, crouched in the back seat of a limousine beside her secretary, Elizabeth Carpenter. Mrs. Johnson felt cold. Two Secret Service agents had turned on the heater—but spasms of shivers continued to run through her arms and legs, and her teeth chattered.

It is possible that, with the exception of Mrs. John F. Kennedy, no mind raced along as many despairing trails that night as that of Mrs. Johnson. She meant it when she said, over and over: "Dear God, not this!" Her husband had become the President of the United States. What good could come of his being at the head of the nation in an era of chronic tension? What if he had another heart attack?

When the limousine turned into the Johnson home in Washington, at 4040 Fifty-second Street Northwest, a crowd was outside. Trucks with lights and cameras were there. Mrs. Johnson thought: "I love this house. I love it. Now we'll never live in it again."

Luci's Reaction

The slender figure of her daughter Luci appeared under the dome light at the entrance, with Secret Service agents watchful in the shadows.

"Oh, mother!" Luci said. Mrs. Johnson pressed the younger daughter in her arms for a moment, realizing that this was the way it was

going to be: Crowds and Secret Service men everywhere.

Mrs. Johnson went upstairs with Liz Carpenter. "I'm freezing," she said as she reached for a robe and slippers—in which to lie down.

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The Bethesda elevator brought the Kennedy party to a suite of rooms on the 17th floor. Mrs. Kennedy examined each room. There was plenty of time now to peel the bloody clothes from the body and to soak in a warm tub. She kept them on, including the gloves.

She telephoned her mother. "He didn't even have the satisfaction of being killed for civil rights," she said. "It had to be some silly little communist."

Mrs. Hugh Auchincloss mentioned that the children were safe at the Auchincloss home. Her daughter was puzzled. She had sent no message to have the children taken there.

Mrs. Kennedy said, "My God, those poor children! Their lives shouldn't be disrupted, now of all times. Tell Maude Shaw to bring them back and put them to bed."

"Grandmere" would not dispute her daughter. If Jacqueline wanted the babies

in the hurly-burly of the White House, then so be it.

Mrs. Kennedy asked someone else to phone a message to Sargent Shriver at the White House. In the family sitting room on the second floor, there was a large book on Lincoln. It held a lot of daguerreotypes and line drawings of the Lincoln funeral. "Tell them," she said, "to study the lying-in-state then."

On the Medical Center ground floor, the body was wheeled into a bright room for the autopsy. The senior officer present was Admiral C. B. Holloway, commandant of the hospital.

Major General Philip Wehle asked when the body would be returned to the White House. He had no desire to remain. If someone could give him an approximate time . . . No one could. No one knew precisely what the injuries were, nor how much time the work would take.

Dr. J. T. Boswell signaled to enlisted personnel to open the casket. They lifted the rigid form and placed it head up on the autopsy table.

The doctors began to speak their observations and notes were taken. There was a ragged-edged wound in the

neck, obviously a tracheotomy. The left eye was black and blue. The right posterior of the skull had a massive hole from which some brain tissue was still emerging.

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Tomorrow: Jim Bishop details how the tragic news was first broken to Caroline,

and Mrs. Kennedy's preoccupation with making a pageant of the funeral.