

HOOVER ASSAILED ON JENKINS CASE

Admirers' Criticism Centers
on Bouquet From F.B.I.

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 27—
The political repercussions of the Walter W. Jenkins case have taken an ironic and unexpected turn.

The object of the irony is a bouquet of flowers. The object of the critical repercussions is J. Edgar Hoover, who sent it to Mr. Jenkins. Mr. Hoover is director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The element of irony was injected because the criticisms of the F.B.I. and of Mr. Hoover have come largely from right-of-center spokesmen who have

been among Mr. Hoover's admirers in the past.

Their reaction has been one of shock, disbelief, and even outrage at the F.B.I. director.

A week before election day and nearly two weeks after public disclosure that Mr. Jenkins had resigned his White House post following two arrests on morals charges, public criticism directed at "the morals scandal in Washington" has largely shifted from the White House and President Johnson to the F.B.I. and Mr. Hoover.

Ultraconservative Issue

Democratic officials here who have kept themselves attuned to the possible impact of the Jenkins case on the Presidential and other election campaigns said "direct campaign exploitation of the Jenkins tragedy" had become "the exclusive property of conservative and ultra-conservative candidates." Republican moderates, they noted, "have not used the Jenkins case to any degree."

Political pulse-takers believe the Jenkins case will cost the

Democrats very few votes on Election Day.

Critics allege that the F.B.I. report on the Jenkins case, ordered by the President, was a "whitewash" that can be explained only as a "cover-up" forced on Mr. Hoover by the President.

But they find it even harder to believe that Mr. Hoover could have sent flowers to Mr. Jenkins. The F.B.I. has confirmed that he sent a bouquet bearing a card inscribed "J. Edgar Hoover and Associates" to Mr. Jenkins at George Washington University Hospital, where Mr. Jenkins has been a patient since Oct. 14.

A Friend of Hoover

F.B.I. spokesmen have said Mr. Hoover sent the flowers to Mr. Jenkins, whom they described as "a good friend" before the President ordered the agency to investigate the "security risk" and other implications of Mr. Jenkins' arrest. They have had "no comment" on the criticisms of the director's gesture.

The morals charges against

Mr. Jenkins, including one dating to 1959, were unknown to the President, the F.B.I. report said.

Mr. Hoover's critics include former Representative Walter H. Judd of Minnesota, a Republican; William Loeb, publisher of The Manchester (N. H.) Union-Leader, a proclaimed ultra-conservative, and James J. Kilpatrick, editor and columnist of The Richmond News-Leader.

Mr. Loeb and Mr. Kilpatrick are the chairman and vice chairman respectively of the Coordinating Committee for Fundamental American Freedoms, Inc., an anti-civil rights lobbying group in Washington. In editorials in their newspapers, they have expressed stunned incredulity that Mr. Hoover could have sent a bouquet to Mr. Jenkins.

In Minneapolis yesterday, Mr. Judd demanded to know if the F.B.I. or its director "is involved in such a way that it fears being hurt by some revelation Jenkins could make." He declared that the F.B.I. had been "compromised" by the bouquet.

See also this file 14, 15 Jan 66.

see also AP - The World in 1964, p. 182, 185. (ATTACHED)

There could be little doubt, as the President sat in brooding concern in the Waldorf's grand ballroom October 14, that it was progressing handsomely. Why, then, was he behaving as though he had just lost his best friend?

In a sense, he had, and he had been one of the last to find out. Early the previous day telephone tipsters suggested to several Washington newsmen that they check the records of the metropolitan police morals division. Most of the tips were anonymous; one caller candidly identified himself as a member of the Republican congressional campaign committee, but the chairman of the committee said the tipster had acted on his own. Reporters checked, discovered that Walter W. Jenkins, one of the President's closest personal friends and most trusted aides, had been arrested October 7 in the washroom of the Washington M. C. A. and booked under the cryptic notation: "disorderly (indecent) gestures." Search of the records disclosed further that Jenkins had been arrested in 1959, in the same place, for "disorderly conduct (pervert)."

When inquiries to the White House alerted Jenkins that the news was about to break, he notified his attorney, who persuaded both Washington evening newspapers to withhold the story for "humanitarian" reasons. When the story didn't appear, GOP National Chairman Dean Burch, at 6:15 p.m., issued a statement: "There is a report sweeping Washington that the White House is desperately trying to suppress a major news story affecting the national security." The President, campaigning in New York, heard the news an hour later. An hour after that, it was known from coast to coast.

"I was as shocked as if someone had told me that my wife had murdered her daughter," Johnson said later in announcing that he had asked for, and received, Jenkins's resignation. But apart from the lamentable personal aspects of the Jenkins case, as it came to be known, how would it affect the campaign?

Up until that point, the race, in the view of most commentators, had been inordinately dull. The oratory hadn't been particularly stirring; the slogans—"In your heart you know he's right" and "L.B.J. for the U.S.A."—weren't what one would call inspiring. Goldwater hadn't been able to find an issue that quite caught fire with the voters; Johnson hadn't done much more than denounce "extremism" in general terms and suggest that Goldwater was insipid. The campaign simply lacked anything resembling a fiery debate between the candidates on issues of national moment in the tradition of the 1960 presidential confrontations of the previous presidential campaign. Ugly as it was, would the Jenkins case ignite the needed spark?

It seemed to fit right in with Goldwater's main theme: morality—or, rather, what he considered the lack of it—in high places. Mere mention of the names of Bobby Baker and Billie Sol Estes seemed to generate more whooping among Goldwater's crowds than any of the other topics he carried to the hustings: the steady growth of the federal government and the diminished role of the states, the increased power of the President and the Supreme Court, violence on city streets, the unending war in Viet Nam.

Most were typically conservative stances, off the well-beaten middle of the road. It had been axiomatic for years in American politics that a good Republican candidate had to have the same quality as a good shortstop, the ability to move to his left. It was a fact of political life that, as the minority party in voter registration, the GOP had to attract not only independents but Democratic voters as well to win the White House. But Goldwater was determined to offer a clear choice, not, as he said, an echo. He remained throughout the campaign



After three weeks on his lofty presidential perch, he caught the scent of political combat in his nostrils, and went tearing off, like Him and Her on the trail of a cottontail.

What's more, so did Lady Bird. Early in October, Mrs. Johnson set out from Washington with a coterie of secretaries, speech writers, daughters, reporters and friends for a four-day train trip through the South. Whistle-stopping in Alexandria, Va., Lady Bird quoted "a great Southerner, Robert E. Lee." The Confederate general said it best, Lady Bird remarked, when he advised his fellow Southerners: "Abandon all these local animosities and make your sons Americans." It was no oblique reference; she made sure the crowd knew precisely what she meant. Civil rights was the big issue in the South, and Lady Bird dared meet it head on. Would Lyndon?

Thirsting for action, the President decided to join his wife in New Orleans October 9, with stops in Louisville and Nashville on the way. In many respects it was a typical campaign day for Johnson. He joyously pressed outstretched hands at every airport fence, waved his hat, called out "C'mon down to the meetin', and vote Democrat on November 3." The crowds were good, the weather was just what he needed, and matched those of his opponent in every respect but one.

At each stop the President plugged away at his favorite themes. "Others would have you believe that prosperity is false," he said, "but you know it is real." As for foreign affairs, he said, the question boiled down to responsibility versus irresponsibility. "This is no time," he declared, "to be rattling your rockets or clicking your heels like a storm trooper."

The Democratic squeals of low blows in the campaign over the Jenkins affair were matched by Republican cries of foul over making their man out to be a missile-happy war monger with innuendoes of fascism.

And, what about civil rights?

In New Orleans, where an estimated 250,000 lined the streets to welcome him, Johnson looked at the crowd and departed from his prepared text, he looked soberly at the audience and said: "Whatever your views are, we have a Constitution, and we have a Bill of Rights, and we have the law of the land. And two-thirds of the Democrats in the Senate voted for the civil rights bill and three-fourths of the Republicans. I signed it, and I'm going to enforce it, and I'm going to observe it. And I think any man that is worthy of the high office of President is going to do the same thing."

But apart from such instances of candor and directness, which were rare, the campaign just seemed to plod along. At one point a tumult arose over how much money each candidate was worth. The quibble was in and out of the headlines for weeks until each man had dutifully declared his net worth: Johnson \$3.5 million, Goldwater \$1.7 million, Humphrey \$171,396, Miller \$260,730. And so it went.

Dwelling more and more on the morality theme as the campaign progressed, the Goldwater forces concentrated on trying to picture Johnson as a political manipulator not averse to using political power for personal ends. The GOP candidate talked repeatedly of that "curious crew" in the White House.

And that was the situation when the Walter Jenkins scandal came to light. Goldwater said he did not intend to inject the Jenkins case into the campaign except as it affected national security; so did his running mate, William Miller; but every subsequent reference to either morality or national security by both candidates inescapably called the scandal to mind. Placards brandished in nearly every Goldwater crowd served the same purpose.



"...Gusts up to 200..."

From the standpoint of Republican strategists, the nature and timing of the Jenkins disclosure couldn't have been improved upon had it been the invention of a playwright. But with equally incredible timing, two things happened in the world to dull the impact of the Jenkins story. The day after the Jenkins case came to light, news wires crackled with bulletins telling of Red China's explosion of a nuclear bomb, and of Soviet Premier Khrushchev's ouster from power. While the Republican campaign chairman was demanding that Johnson "explain why he covered up (for Jenkins) for five and a half years," Johnson was on television addressing the nation somberly about the two grave international crises. (An F.B.I. investigation, ordered by Johnson, indicated he had no knowledge of either of Jenkins' arrests.) Just as the Jenkins scandal seemed to dovetail Goldwater's morality theme, the international events seemed tailor-made to follow Johnson's charge that this was no time to swap horses or risk electing an "impetuous" commander in chief.

How any of this would affect the outcome couldn't be known as October ended, and Election Day drew inexorably near. By that time thousands of voters were beyond discussing it, either bored or disappointed by what had turned out to be a rather tawdry campaign. Expecting a confrontation of opposing philosophies, they had to settle for a shouting match in which such words as "liar" and "demagogue" and "socialist" and "fascist" and "reckless" were substituted for the language of debate. A word-weary nation was ready to vote. ■■