

- Kennedy did not expect Johnson to accept the post of Vice-President.

## HOW JOHNSON WAS NOMINATED VICE-PRESIDENT

When John F. Kennedy offered the 1960 vice presidential nomination to Lyndon B. Johnson, he was all but convinced that Johnson would not accept, according to historian Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.

Schlesinger's version of the apparently confused events leading to Johnson's vice presidential nomination are presented in the historian's book, "A Thousand Days," to be published in November.

According to Schlesinger, a renowned professor of history at Harvard before he took a leave of absence to serve Kennedy as special assistant to the President, Kennedy decided to offer Johnson, then the Senate majority leader, the vice presidential nomination a few hours after his own nomination at the head of the Democratic ticket.

"He decided to do this," Schlesinger writes, "because he thought it imperative to restore relations with the Senate leader. News of this offer, Kennedy hoped, would reunite the Democrats, please the older generation of professionals, improve the ticket's chances in the south and lay the basis for future collaboration with Johnson. He was certain that there was practically no chance that Johnson would accept."

According to Schlesinger, Kennedy, who referred to Johnson as "the riverboat gambler" in the days preceding the 1960 Democratic convention, then made the offer to Johnson whose quick acceptance was greeted by Kennedy with "astonishment" and "considerable bafflement."

"You just won't believe it," Schlesinger quotes Kennedy as saying to associates. "He wants it!"

Schlesinger added: "I didn't offer the vice presidency to him," Kennedy told a friend later. 'I just held it out like this' — here he simulated taking an object out of his pocket and holding it close to his body — 'and he grabbed it'".

Other high points of the Schlesinger book:

— On Richard Nixon, Kennedy's 1960 opponent: "Kennedy considered there was no one he resembled less than Nixon. He scorned the way Nixon opened his speeches with the 'Pat and I greeting.

'He has no taste,' Kennedy said with contempt."

— On former President Dwight D. Eisenhower: "I could understand it if he played golf all the time with old army friends, but no man is less loyal to his old friends than Eisenhower. He is a terribly cold man. All his golfing pals are rich men he has met since 1945," Kennedy is quoted as saying.

— On Vice President Hubert Humphrey in the days when they were battling for the Democratic presidential nomination: "Hubert is too intense for the present mood

of the people. What they want today is a more boring, monotonous personality — like me."

— Kennedy telling a friend of his plan to name his brother as attorney general: "Well, I think I'll open the front door of the Georgetown house some morning about 2 a.m., look up and down the street and if there's no one there, I'll whisper, 'It's Bobby.'"

The late President's brother, now US senator from New York, also is cited for trying to block Johnson's nomination to the second place on the ticket — a similar account of which appears in Theodore H. White's book, "The Making of the President — 1964."

In Schlesinger's account, Robert Kennedy went to Johnson's hotel suite shortly after his brother had offered him the vice presidential nomination and said that his brother "would fully understand" if Johnson wanted to avoid a floor fight against his selection. If that were the case, (John) Kennedy would wish to make Johnson

chairman of the Democratic national committee.

Schlesinger writes: "Johnson said with great and mournful emotion, 'I want to be vice president and, if the candidate will have me, I'll join with him in making a fight for it.'"

Later, when it became clear that Johnson was to be vice presidential nominee, Schlesinger writes: "Bobby leaned his head against the wall and said . . . 'My God, this wouldn't have happened except that we were all too tired last night.'" — *Based on Saturday Review and Newsweek.*

## ROOMER

The bachelor roomer called on his girl every night. Finally, the landlady asked him why he didn't marry. He'd evidently given it a lot of thought, because he replied instantly:

"Why, if I married her, where would I go every night? I'd be stuck at home!" — *Successful Farming.*