



# The Dark Side of Lyndon Baines Johnson

*Joachim Joesten*

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## **The Dark Side of Lyndon Baines Johnson** Joachim Joesten

First published in 1968 in the UK (the subject matter was too controversial for US publishers to touch) this is Joachim Joesten's treatise on the 36th president of the United States, Lyndon Baines Johnson, and his lifelong addiction for power at any cost. Joesten pulls back the layers of lies and deception to reveal LBJ as one of America's most corrupt and duplicitous politicians ever. Joesten carefully documents the little-known facts behind Johnson's involvement in scandals stretching back to his first stolen election in 1948, thru the Bobby Baker, Billy Sol Estes and Walter Jenkins affairs, and culminates with the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Included are LBJ's connection to mobsters, big Texas oil, political graft and corruption, blackmailing of FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover, and a disturbing number of murders committed by his henchmen for LBJ's personal gain. FROM THE BOOK: The true nature of Lyndon B. Johnson has long been hidden from the public through the frenzied efforts of highly paid P.R. wizards and artificial image-builders. William Manchester came closer than most other people to seeing through the benign public relations mask of Lyndon Johnson, but one wouldn't know it from scanning the pages of 'The Death of a President'. If there are two persons in the world who have really come to know Johnson at close quarters, outside of his own family, they are Robert and Jacqueline Kennedy. Manchester interviewed both of them at length and they told him, without mincing their words, what they thought of That Man in the White House. But when Manchester, having faithfully recorded everything the Kennedys had told him, rushed into print with his story, years ahead of schedule, they both got panicky and practically forced him to 'revise' his story out of recognition. Edward J. Epstein, the author of Inquest, somehow managed to get hold of a copy of the original, unedited manuscript of the Manchester book, then entitled 'Death of a Lancer', and revealed in the July issue 1967 of Commentary, some of its contents. In his original draft, Manchester, it seems, made some very pungent remarks about Lyndon Johnson whom he described, among other things, as a 'chameleon who constantly changes loyalties'; 'a capon' and 'a crafty schemer who has a gaunt, hunted look about him'. He also pictured Johnson as 'a full-fledged hypomaniac' and 'the crafty seducer with six nimble hands who can persuade a woman to surrender her favors in the course of a long conversation confined to obscure words. No woman, even a lady, can discern his intentions until the critical moment'. By far the most interesting aspect of this matter, however, is Epstein's contention that Manchester's original theme, which gave unity to his book, was 'the notion that Johnson, the successor, was somehow responsible for the death-of his predecessor'. Several quotations from the original draft bear out this contention. At one point, the Lancer version states, 'The shattering fact of the assassination is that a Texas murder has made a Texan President'. At another, Kenneth O'Donnell, Kennedy's appointments secretary, is quoted as exclaiming 'They did it. I always knew they'd do it. You couldn't expect anything else from them. They finally made it'. Then Manchester comments: 'He didn't specify who "they" were. It was unnecessary. They were Texans, Johnsonians'. But what is one to think of an author who allows his most important work not only to be castrated, but to be turned completely upside down by a publisher more committed to the dictates of expediency than to the search for historical truth?

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