

If the Winds of Campaign Fortune Blow—

Could White House Hold the Kennedy Clan?

By NOLL GROVE

WASHINGTON — (NEA) — Thomas Jefferson proclaimed it large enough to hold "two emperors, one Pope and the grand lama."

Abigail Adams had so much space that she hung clothes out to dry in the East Room.

But Calvin Coolidge found it necessary to add a floor for guest rooms and family storage. And Mrs. John F. Kennedy fretted over where to put an expected third child.

Would the White House hold a family of 13 that makes exuberant activity almost a fetish and collects animals like some people collect buttons or stamps?

If the winds of campaign fortune blow in Robert F. Kennedy's direction, will the first family have a housing problem?

Not likely. There are rooms in the little-discussed third floor added in Coolidge's administration that are seldom used as living quarters. Blair House across the street now serves as the President's official guest house.

Where sleeping room is concerned, the White House could easily hold a family as large as the Kennedys. It simply has never been put to the test.

Presidential families have traditionally quartered on the second floor, which means about as much space as a four- or five-bedroom home.

First floor is mostly ceremonial rooms used on state occasions, and hardly suitable for family living anyway, since several hundred tourists troop through daily. Below that level is the ground floor, with the diplomatic entrance and reception area, offices and work rooms.

Third floor, however, set back from the front and hidden from street view by the railing around the top, includes six bedrooms and three others that could easily be converted into bedrooms.

Also on the third floor is the solarium that has served in a variety of roles. For Eisenhower, it was a painting studio. It served as a school room for Caroline Kennedy and a teen-

age rec room for Luci Baines Johnson.

Housing problems, it would appear are the least of the concerns of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy at this point.

"If the White House isn't big enough," he said at a recent news conference, "we'll move people out of the State Department."

Son Michael, 10, was quoted as saying recently: "We have been told that if daddy is elected president we can still go right on living here."

"Here" is Hickory Hill, the current Kennedy home in near-by McLean, Va., where life, by all accounts, is a showcase of 20-karat vitality. The touch football games in which everyone participates are already history.

There are also tennis courts, a swimming pool, stables, horse jumps and general free-lance adventuring, in which everyone takes part.

A neighbor, the story goes, once told of trying to catch Kennedy kids in the act of swinging from one of their tree branches onto his garage roof. Waiting inside the garage, he finally heard one small bump on the roof, then another — and then a large THUMP!

Rushing outside, he found himself looking up at two small Kennedys and an attorney general.

As for active youngsters, the White House has seen them before. Theodore Roosevelt's sons, Quentin and Archie, and their chums performed exploits that read like a Li'l Rascals movie script.

They used Andrew Jackson's portrait for spitball target practice.

They held bicycle races on the ground-floor corridor, had water-gun fights in the East Room.

They turned on a south lawn fountain while workmen were repairing it; shot at an alley cat with homemade bows and arrows.

That with two youngsters and their friends, as compared with soon-to-be 11 little Kennedys.

School Groups From Riverside Picnic at Park

RIVERSIDE — Students of St. Mary's Elementary school, the Sisters, the cooks, Mrs. John Kron and Mrs. John Gase and mothers of the pupils enjoyed an all day picnic at the Iowa City Park.

Mothers attending were Mrs. Merritt Yeggy, Mrs. Tim Colbert, Mrs. Elmer Schneider, Mrs. Cecil Strabala, Mrs. Ralph Schnoebelen and Mrs. Paul Armbruster. Father Boeckmann joined the group during the afternoon.

The Dessert Bridge club met recently with Mrs. Roger Schloss for an evening of bridge. The May 31 meeting will be with Mrs. Fred Kron.

Then there is the animal thing with the Kennedys. A recent census at Hickory Hill showed

an animal population that included two horses, three ponies, a donkey, 10 ducks, five chickens, five rabbits, four pigeons, several sparrows, a parakeet, a cockatoo, goldfish, some snakes and four dogs.

At last word, snake and goose quarters were hard to come by in the presidential manse. Even so, the White House has a long history of boarding pets.

Woodrow Wilson grazed sheep on the White House lawn during World War I, to free young

workmen for duty on the fighting front. Mrs. Calvin Coolidge had two pet raccoons.

The Marquis de Lafayette, French hero of the American Revolution, boarded a gift alligator on the White House first floor during a return visit to the young nation several years later.

As for outdoor life, there are 18 acres of the White House grounds. More spacious than Hickory Hill but, as for privacy, about as comparable as Coney Island is to the African veldt.

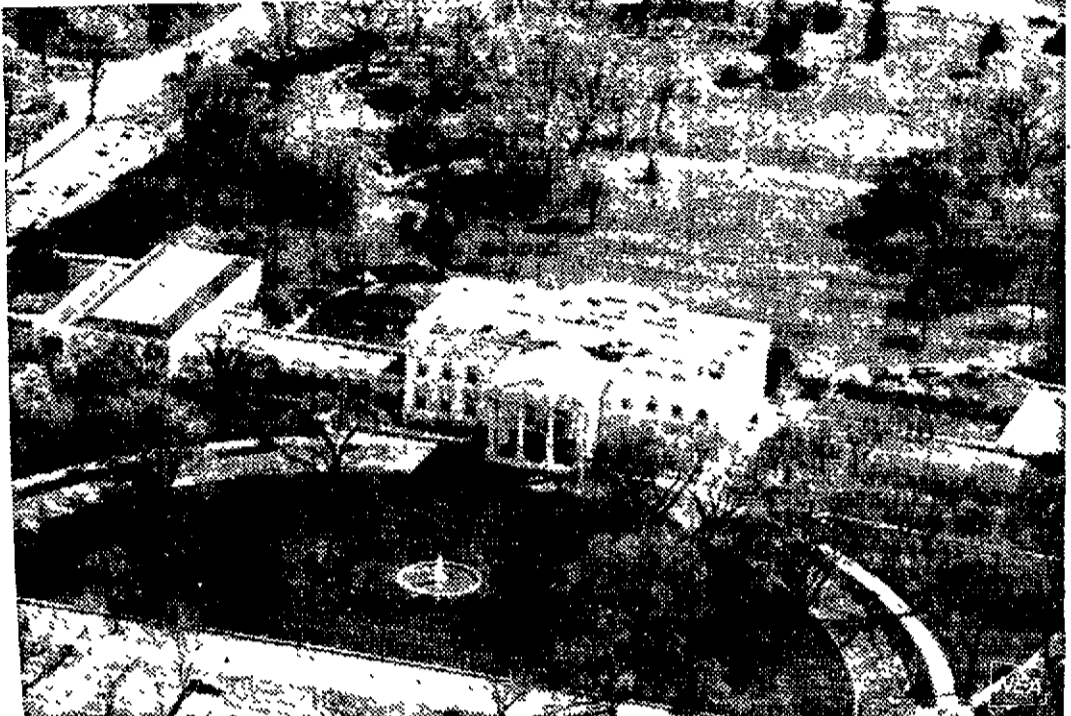
Kennedy children romping on the south lawn would guarantee crowds of the curious gazing

through the barred fence like Sunday afternoon at National Zoo.

"The senator is very protective about his children in that respect," said an RFK staff member. "He prefers to keep them out of the public eye."

Since keeping Kennedy children inside is unthinkable, it may be that an RFK administration would mean at least concurrent maintenance of nearby Hickory Hill, with horse-riding, football, fresh air and playtime out of the reach of public scrutiny.

And garage roofs to jump on.



WILL THE FIRST FAMILY HAVE A HOUSING PROBLEM? — No problem as far as space goes—18 acres of lawn for romping and a potential 10 additional bedrooms on the little-used third floor of the mansion.



ONE MORE EXPECTED—Sen. and Mrs. Robert F. Kennedy line up for an Easter picture this year with eight of their present 10 children. An addition is expected in January—along about inaugural day.

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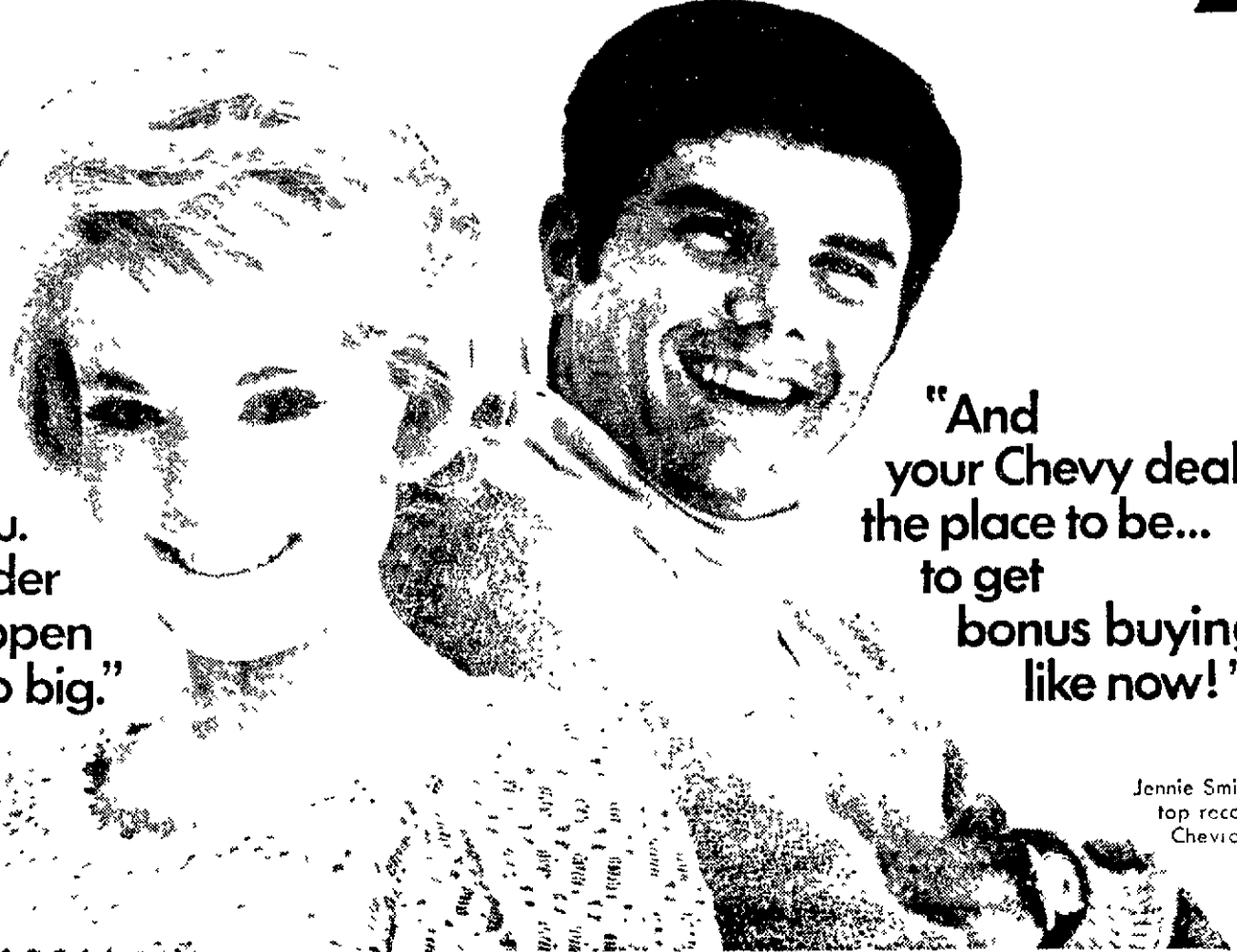
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Patrolman Is Guest Speaker at Rotary Meeting

WEST LIBERTY — Billy Scharff, a member of the Iowa Highway Patrol, was the guest speaker at last week's Rotary Club meeting held at the Crystal Cafe. He spoke on "Highway Safety," stressing the importance of defensive driving, highway courtesy, and the use of seat belts. He gave statistics on the highway death toll, locally as well as on the national level.

Mr. Scharff also spoke of the reconstruction and clean-up work being done in Oelwein after the tornado of several days ago. He was assigned to this area after the disaster.



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