

Mrs. Kennedy Will Seek an Injunction To Block Book About the Assassination

Suit to Be Filed Against Harper & Row, Author and Look Magazine

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of book are on Page 36.

By JOHN CORRY

Mrs. John F. Kennedy will seek an injunction shortly to block the publication of "Death of a President," William Manchester's account of the assassination of her husband, on the ground of breach of contract.

Simon Rifkind, a former Federal judge who will represent Mrs. Kennedy, said he would file suit in State Supreme Court in two or three days against Mr. Manchester, Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., and Look magazine, which plans to begin a serialization of portions of the book on Jan. 10.

Mr. Rifkind said he would seek "a variety of relief" against the defendants, including a temporary injunction to restrain publication of the magazine articles and book.

Harper & Row had scheduled the publication of "Death of a President" for March and then announced that it would be delayed because of editorial revisions by the author. Look, which plans to increase its newsstand price from 35 to 50 cents when it begins the serialization and keep the new price thereafter, has said that it is going ahead with plans for publication.

Mrs. Kennedy said that, "as horrible as a trial will be," she

had no other alternative to prevent the publication.

In one of her infrequent statements, she said that Look magazine, Harper & Row and Mr. Manchester "have repeatedly made clear that only legal action can alter their insistence



Mrs. John F. Kennedy

William Manchester

upon publishing at this time—without regard to accepted standards of propriety and good faith, and in specific violation of my wishes, my contract with Mr. Manchester and the dignity and privacy which my children and I have striven with difficulty to retain."

In a statement, Harper & Row said that "it has done its utmost to comply with the wishes of the Kennedy family, and deeply regrets their present attitude."

Gardner Cowles, editorial chairman of Cowles Communications, Inc., which publishes Look, said:

"We feel strongly that it would be improper to withhold this significant document from the American people; to do so would amount to censorship of history."

Mrs. Kennedy said the book had "inaccurate and unfair references to other individuals," whom she did not identify, although it contained "generous references to all members of the Kennedy family."

These unfair references "are perhaps beyond my prevention," she said, "but to expose to all the world at this time all the

private grief, personal thoughts and painful reactions which my children and I endured in those terrible days does not seem to me to be essential to any current historical record."

She was shocked, she said, that Mr. Manchester would "exploit the emotional state" she had found herself in after the assassination, and she said she was "equally shocked that reputable publishers" would cooperate with him.

The suit will be based on an agreement signed by Mr. Manchester and Senator Robert F. Kennedy on March 26, 1964. The agreement contains 11 clauses. The most significant ones say:

"The complete manuscript shall be reviewed by Mrs. John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy and the final text shall be approved by them."

"The book may not be published before Nov. 22, 1968, and shall be published at such date thereafter as shall be mutually acceptable to the contracting parties."

A spokesman for Mrs. Kennedy said that neither she nor Senator Kennedy had read "Death of a President." To have done so, he said, would be "far too painful for either of them."

He said that neither the Senator nor Mrs. Kennedy had wanted a book written about the

assassination, but that they had to accept one." He insisted that "no one in the Kennedy family had guided Manchester in the writing or had approached him while he was working."

Mrs. Kennedy's statement was issued by her office at 400 Park Avenue, on the corner of 54th Street. Later, at an informal briefing there, associates of the Kennedy family amplified her views.

They said that Mrs. Kennedy "had been personally assured by Manchester and Harper & Row that the book would contain nothing that would be personally offensive to her."

"The suit," they said, "does not involve truth or accuracy but a breach of faith. Manchester has refused to take some material out and has refused to talk about other changes."

They said, however, that no one close to the Kennedy's had any clear idea of what, precisely, was now in the book.

Representatives Are Refused

They said that Look had refused to show any representative of the Kennedys material it would use. Negotiations, they said, between representatives of the Kennedy family, Look, Harper & Row and Mr. Manchester had collapsed last Friday.

Mr. Manchester arrived here Tuesday morning on the Queen Mary. He had traveled from Europe alone and in the cabin class. He declined to answer questions about the dispute and said that he had been "puzzled by the disturbance." He said that he had found it "distracting."

Mr. Manchester, wrapped in a trench coat, dozed in a lounge as the ship was brought into port. He had been one of the first passengers to be cleared by the immigration and health officers after they had come aboard and he said he was eager to get ashore.

Difficulties Noted

In an attempt, perhaps, to relieve some of the bitterness that is certain to arise from the suit, a spokesman for Mrs. Kennedy noted the difficulties Mr. Manchester had faced in writing the book and called him "a sensitive human being who was really doing the work the Warren Commission had done, but was trying to do it alone."

Mr. Manchester was chosen to write "Death of a President" by Mrs. Kennedy in March, 1964. He had previously written about her husband two years before in "Portrait of a President," which a reviewer for The New York Times had said, "could only be described as adoring."

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Mrs. Kennedy, a friend said, did not read all of Mr. Manchester's book, although she had seen part of its serialization in Holiday. When it was announced that the Kennedy family had authorized Mr. Manchester to write the book, a news release from Senator Kennedy, then the Attorney General, said that the account would not be expected before three to five years.

Mr. Manchester interviewed Mrs. Kennedy on two successive days in early April and tape-recorded her remarks. A spokesman for Mrs. Kennedy said that "Jackie made no attempt at self-censorship during the interview, not that there was anything improper said, but she did reveal her deepest thoughts."

The spokesman said he was not certain if Mrs. Kennedy could use the suit to seek possession of the tapes.

Finished Last Year

Mr. Manchester, he said, finished the manuscript late last year. Early this year John Siegenthaler, editor of The Nashville Tennessean, and Edwin O. Guthman, national news editor of The Los Angeles Times, read the manuscript at the request of Senator Kennedy.

Later, Richard Goodwin and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., who had been assistants to President Kennedy, received copies of the manuscript from Mr. Manchester. **END**