

# Harper Says Kennedy Book Has Right to Live

## Former First Lady Replies by Citing Her Own Right to Live in Privacy and Dignity

Exclusive to The Times from the Washington Post

NEW YORK—Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy clashed Monday night with one of her oldest friends in the publishing world over a controversial book about her husband's assassination.

In a statement issued by her spokesman here, the President's widow maintained that the dispute centers on her right and that of her children to live in "privacy and dignity free of the publication of intimate details of their lives at a time of great sor-

"No amount of rhetoric or the public's 'right to know' can alter the nature of this controversy," the Kennedy statement continued.

### Reply to Publisher

Mrs. Kennedy thus replied to an earlier assertion by the book's publisher, Harper & Row, that it still intends to bring out William Manchester's "Death of a President" in the interest of "historical accuracy and of the people's right to know."

The Harper statement was issued by Cass Canfield, the father-in-law of Mrs. Kennedy's younger sister, Princess Lee Radziwill, during her first marriage to his son, Michael.

Canfield said his experience with the book, initially commissioned by the Kennedy family and due to be serialized by Look magazine within a month, was "the most trying and distressing one" within the scope of his 40-year publishing career.

### Book Defended

While joining Manchester "in defending the book's right to live," Canfield, chairman of Harper's executive committee, stressed "how badly I feel that Mrs. Kennedy is upset."

But from Mrs. Kennedy's side the issue was stated as "whether Mr. Manchester and the pub-

lishers broke the written agreement from which breach enormous profits will apparently flow."

The statement added that the details that Mrs. Kennedy is seeking to suppress through court action

"bear no conceivable relation to history."

For his part Canfield noted that members of the Kennedy family were "understandably" unwilling to read the Manchester draft. "Had they read it themselves," he added, "the present situation might have been avoided."

### Kennedy Assertion

The Kennedy statement, however, asserted that both Manchester, the 44-year-old author, and the publisher knew that Mrs. Kennedy was well aware of the personal passages to which she objected.

The statement further recalled that the widow had spoken directly to Manchester during an emotion-tinged meeting at her summer home in Hyannis Port last August to outline her objections to those parts of the manuscript that she felt "unnecessarily invaded her privacy and that of her children."

The exchange of statements reflected the lawyers' inability to settle the dispute. A hearing in New York State Supreme Court on Mrs. Kennedy's plea for an injunction against the publishers is scheduled for Dec. 27.

A source close to Mrs. Kennedy expressed pessimism over prospects for an accord before further

court action. While the contacts among the attorneys involved continued, the source said that these exchanges could not be termed "negotiations."

Mrs. Kennedy, according to the informant, is

with the author, concluded while Kennedy was serving as attorney general, gave both him and the President's widow the right to approve the text before publication.

The agreement was

still pressing for the deletion of some 5,000 words from the 80,000-word condensation of Manchester's text scheduled to be published by Look on Jan. 10. These outright cuts were held to be Mrs. Kennedy's "minimum terms."

In the meantime, Sen. Robert F. Kennedy (D-N.Y.) told a reporter that "the parts that are being objected to would really affect only about four pages" of Manchester's 300,000-word book.

### Intimate Details

The senator, who spent part of the day skiing at Sun Valley, Ida., said in the telephone interview that his sister-in-law's objections to the manuscript "were the kind of intimate personal details that she otherwise would have obviously kept to herself."

"It was one thing (for the material) to be on tape for the historians," Kennedy went on. "It was something else to have it written down for you to see. It's not a matter of rewriting history; the material will be available in the Kennedy (Memorial) Library for the historians of the future who want to find out about our time."

Kennedy also cited the accord he had signed with Manchester in March, 1964, that led to the two-year, family-authorized project. The agreement

made," Kennedy noted "If Manchester felt he could not abide by it, he should have said so then, not now—not two-and-a-half years later."