

Attorneys Hold Secret Talks on Kennedy Book

Session Aimed at Clearing Way for April Publishing of Controversial Manuscript

NEW YORK (AP)—Secret meetings were held Thursday to clear the controversial book "The Death of a President" for publication by Harper & Row in April. Lawyers were granted four additional days to work out an agreement.

The meetings follow a compromise Wednesday night between representatives of Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy and Cowles Communications, Inc., allowing the 80,000-word, four-part series to begin in the Jan. 10 issue of Look magazine.

Look agreed to make some changes and deletions in the book by William Manchester that concern the private life of Mrs. Kennedy and her two children. Sections of the book reportedly unfavorable to President Johnson will remain. The book deals with events surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy.

It was learned Thursday, meanwhile, that Mrs. Kennedy and her children, Caroline and John Jr., are booked on a flight to Antigua, British West Indies, on Monday. This is the day before a scheduled hearing in her damage suit against Cowles, Harper & Row and Manchester.

A source close to the dispute said Thursday's meetings "at this point are limited to the lawyers."

He said others — apparently representatives of Mrs. Kennedy and the publishers — may be brought into the meetings later.

The source noted, however, that an agree-

ment is unlikely to be reached immediately because the 300,000-word book is nearly four times longer than the serialization. "There is additional material which the Kennedys will want out," he said.

The lawyers in the case met for 15 minutes Thursday morning in the chambers of Supreme Court Judge Saul S. Streit.

The defense attorneys asked for and were granted permission to delay their answers to Mrs. Kennedy's charges in her damage suit until Tuesday.

The answers had been due today. The delay is an indication the negotiations may be extended over several days.

'Glad' to Settle

Edward S. Greenbaum, chief counsel for Harper & Row, said earlier the publishers "will be very glad" to settle the controversy with Mrs. Kennedy along the lines of her out-of-court agreement with Look.

There were at least 12 principal passages in the book that Mrs. Kennedy wanted adjusted:

1—Her reported reaction of "that's absurd," when she was informed that Lee Harvey Oswald had been identified as her husband's assassin. "He (President Kennedy) didn't even have the satisfaction of being killed for civil rights," she was reported as having said. "It had to be some silly, little Communist."

2 — Manchester's detailed account of how she used petroleum jelly to slip her wedding ring from

her finger and place it on the dead President's hand. The ring was later removed.

3—An account in her own words of the last night she spent with the President before he was assassinated in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

4—Quotation from a love letter to her husband.

5—A passage relating that she was unable to make a decision on how to tell her daughter, Caroline, who was 5 at the time, that her father had been killed. The Kennedy family nurse, Maud Shaw, told Caroline of the death.

6—A vivid account of how she tried to cover the President's wound after the shooting and how she refused to allow him to be taken into Parkland Hospital in Dallas until a Secret Service agent covered him with a coat.

7—Details of a family disagreement over whether

the body of the President should be buried. Mrs. Kennedy finally chose Arlington National Cemetery.

A Look spokesman said only one change would be required in the first installment and that change was in a section that had

not yet been printed. Some sections of the magazine have been printed. Harper & Row has the book in type, but with publication not planned.

until April, any required changes or deletions apparently can be made on the galley proofs. END