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NYT

Manchester Defends Book And Denies Breaking Faith

Calls It 'Cruel and Unjust' to Suggest He Would Dishonor Kennedy **Account of Assassination Is Reported to Charge Neglect by Guards**

Text of Manchester statement will be found on Page 31.

By DOUGLAS ROBINSON

William Manchester, the author of the disputed book on the assassination of President Kennedy, said yesterday that the former President as a historian "would have wanted his countrymen to know the truth of those terrible days."

"John Kennedy was my President," Mr. Manchester said in a statement. "To suggest that I would dishonor his memory or my association with him is both cruel and unjust."

It was the first statement issued by the author since it became known that Mrs. Kennedy opposed publication of the book, "The Death of a President." Last Friday, she filed suit in State Supreme Court to block its publication. A hearing is scheduled Dec. 27.

It was learned last night that talks between representatives of the Kennedy family and Look magazine, which plans to serialize the book, had gone on during the day with an eye toward separating deeply personal material from what is considered history. The meetings will go on today between Look officials and Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., publishers of the book.

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By MURRAY SCHUMACH

Many examples of alleged incompetence or neglect among those who guarded President Kennedy the day he was killed are said to be contained in detail in William Manchester's book, "The Death of a President."

A man who now has the 1,300-page manuscript said yesterday that the book gives names of allegedly derelict Dallas policemen, agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Secret Service men in appraising the assassination in Dallas, Nov. 22, 1963.

Also in the book, he said, are stories about factionalism in the Secret Service after the assassination, friction between President Johnson and Robert F. Kennedy about when the President should deliver his first message to a joint session of Congress and heated bickering about whether President Kennedy should be buried in Massachusetts or at Arlington National Cemetery.

The man who has the manuscript is in the publishing business, but is not involved in the suit brought by Mrs. John F. Kennedy to block the publication of the book by Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., in March or April, and a four-part serial by Look magazine scheduled to begin Jan. 10. "This book," said

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ALLEGED NEGLIGENCE OF GUARDS CITED

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the man who asked to remain unidentified, "is full of the ineptitude of those who were supposed to protect the President."

"It shows that the F.B.I. men were too busy looking for places in the parade," he said. "He names everybody and has the quotes to back it up."

The source describes the book's account of the split in the Secret Service as follows:

It broke out shortly after the assassination. Some of the men were convinced their obligation was to the murdered President. Others were equally certain their first duty was to his successor.

It was one of these Secret Service groups that ordered Mr. Johnson aboard Air Force One, where he was sworn in as President and flown, along with the widow, the body of her husband and Presidential aides, to Washington.

The friction between Robert Kennedy and President Johnson in the days after the assassination was said to have arisen from the inability to establish direct communication. The two men were constantly using intermediaries to make arrangements that ranged from the routine to the crucial.

Two examples assertedly cited in the book were the desire of the new President to use space in the secretarial offices of his predecessor and his wish to set a date to deliver a message before Congress.

The source continued his report of the book as follows:

President Johnson had held back from moving into the White House, remaining in the Vice-Presidential offices at the Executive Office Building. His attempt to get space for some of his aides in the offices that had been used by President

Kennedy's workers was seized upon by the Kennedy contingent as an illustration of Mr. Johnson's boorishness.

Then when President Johnson conveyed to Robert Kennedy that he was planning to address a joint session of Congress on Tuesday, four days after the assassination, because he was eager to show that there was no disruption of Government operations, another disagreement arose.

President Kennedy's brother, then the Attorney General, considered this date as too precipitate and just another example of Mr. Johnson's desire to seize every vestige of power and trappings that went with the title of President, without concern for good taste.

Mr. Kennedy raised strong objections and suggested Wednesday instead. Mr. Johnson agreed and on Wednesday he paid tribute to President Kennedy at a joint session in which he made his famous plea for the "earliest possible passage" of a civil rights program to remove "every trace of discrimination and oppression."

Mr. Manchester is known to have said that in his account of the behavior of Mr. Johnson, he had tried to be fair, but that those who disliked Mr. Johnson and those who liked him would find material to support their points of view.

Burial Disputed

Where to bury President Kennedy became a matter of heated bickering, according to this account of the book.

Most of the Kennedy faction thought he should be buried in Massachusetts. Almost alone, however, in his insistence that the President be interred in Arlington was Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara.

Mrs. Kennedy then decided that her husband would have wanted Arlington, and others bowed to her decision.

This strength on the part of Mrs. Kennedy, after the day of the assassination is one of the important themes of the book, the man said.

"The book shows Mrs. Kennedy as making 90 per cent of the decisions about the funeral and behaving with incredible courage," the source said.

BREACH OF FAITH DENIED BY AUTHOR

He Recalls That Interviews With Mrs. Kennedy Had Met With Her Consent

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In her suit, Mrs. Kennedy said that Mr. Manchester had exploited the emotional state she was in after the death of her husband by his use of personal recollections obtained in 10 hours of tape-recorded conversations.

The sale of domestic and foreign book and magazine rights is not the only issue at stake. The book is reported to contain passages allegedly offensive to President Johnson and others that possibly could influence Senator Robert F. Kennedy's political future. It is also believed that the book could affect Mrs. Kennedy's role in history.

Mr. Manchester's statement was issued through Look magazine, which bought serialization rights to the book for \$665,000. A spokesman for the magazine said there had been "absolutely no change" in plans to begin the four-part 80,000-word abridgment of the 300,000-word book on Jan. 10.

Mr. Manchester denied that he had "broken faith" with Mrs. Kennedy by taking advantage of her confidence or by recording "too faithfully" her words and emotions.

"Mrs. Kennedy asked me to write this book," the author said. "I did not seek the opportunity.

"I did not, indeed could not, have conducted these interviews without her voluntary contribution. Mrs. Kennedy herself did not ask to see the manuscript and still hasn't. If she had, I would, of course, have given it to her."

In Washington, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, charged that Mr. Manchester "now intends to go ahead in violation of the word of his agreement, the spirit of his arrangements and despite the pain he knows it will give Mrs. Kennedy."

Mrs. Kennedy has contended in her lawsuit that Mr. Manchester violated her rights with his plans to have published the unapproved manuscript of his

book. A memorandum signed by Mr. Manchester and Senator Robert F. Kennedy on March 26, 1964, says that Mrs. Kennedy and the Senator must approve the text of the book.

Another clause says that the book may not be published before Nov. 22, 1968, exactly five years after the assassination. A third clause says Mr. Manchester may not dispose of subsidiary rights without the approval of the Kennedys.

Telegram Quoted

Harper & Row, which plans to publish the book in March or April, says that Senator Kennedy told Mr. Manchester in a telegram last July that "members of the Kennedy family will place no obstacle in the way of publication of his book."

In a five-page affidavit in support of Mrs. Kennedy's suit, the Senator said that the "telegram makes no statement approving either text, or time, or mode of publication."

The telegram from Senator Kennedy read:

"Should any inquiries arise re the manuscript of your book I would like to state the following:

"While I have not read William Manchester's account of the death of President Kennedy, I know of the President's respect for Mr. Manchester as an historian and a reporter. I understand others have plans to publish books regarding the events of Nov. 22, 1963. As this is going to be the subject matter of a book and since Mr. Manchester in his research had access to more information and sources than any other writer, members of the Kennedy family will place no obstacle in the way of publication of his work.

"However, if Mr. Manchester's account is published in segments or excerpts, I would expect that incidents would not be taken out of context or summarized in any way which might distort facts of or the events relating to President Kennedy's death."

In his statement yesterday, Mr. Manchester said that on July 29, 1966, "I was informed by a member of the Kennedy family that because of President Kennedy's 'respect' for me as 'a historian and a reporter . . . members of the Kennedy family will place no obstacle in the way of publication' of my work."

'The Same Historian'

"I believe that I am now—in December of 1966—the same historian and reporter that I was in July and the same historian and reporter that I was in 1962 when President Kennedy expressed his confidence in me," the Manchester statement continued.

"I had hoped my book would be allowed to speak for itself, and I would not have to speak

for it. This is no longer possible. The integrity of my book and my own honesty as a writer and a person have been attacked."

Mr. Manchester said that "in life John Kennedy belonged to all Americans." He said that it was his belief that "some of the present bitterness comes from the dark nightmare of his death and the impotence in the face of death which we felt then and feel now."

He continued:

"I believe John Kennedy, who

was himself a historian, would have wanted his countrymen to know the truth of those terrible days, and I have dedicated myself for nearly three years to reliving and reconstructing them so that the truth could be faithfully and accurately recorded."

Mr. Manchester also denied that his work was being published prematurely and that magazine serialization had not been contemplated by the Kennedys. He said that the family had authorized publication of the book in early 1967, to be preceded by the serialization in Look.

The author pointed out that a number of friends and advisers of the Kennedy family had read the book at their request and that "appropriate changes" had been made in consultation with these friends.

'This Is My Book'

The author maintained, however, that "in the final analysis, this is my book."

He said:

"Neither Mrs. Kennedy nor any member of the Kennedy family nor anyone else is in any way responsible for my research or the content of my work. It is my responsibility and I am confident that my book can withstand any objective test, particularly the test of time. I only ask that it be given the chance."

In addition to the \$665,000 paid by Look for serialization rights, Harper & Row contracted with Mr. Manchester to pay some \$675,000 for the hard-cover book. Of this sum, the author has already received \$365,000.

Last week, Dell Books offered \$1-million for the book's paperback rights, a price said to be the largest ever tendered for such rights.

Former Federal Judge Simon H. Rifkind, who is representing Mrs. Kennedy in the suit, said about the author's statement:

"I don't know how Mr. Manchester escapes from the fact that he made a promise and now has not lived up to his part

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despite the pain he knows it will give Mrs. Kennedy.

"What is at stake is not his integrity as a writer nor the accuracy of history, but rather the integrity of the commitment and the promise he willingly and voluntarily made."

Regarding the parts of the book that might possibly put President Johnson in a bad light, Bill D. Moyers, the President's press secretary, told The Associated Press in Washington that he had "not read the book and I have not read anything to the President," adding that Mr. Johnson had seen no part of the manuscript.

Mr. Moyers made the comment in response to a query about a statement by James Reston on the editorial page of The New York Times yesterday. Mr. Reston wrote that Mr. Moyers had read the "offending passages" and had no doubt informed the President.

Asked whether he was denying that he had read excerpts of the book, Mr. Moyers replied:

"No, I'm not denying that and I'm not confirming it either. This is a tragic enough case already without the White House getting involved in it."

From Austin, Tex., it was reported that some associates of President Johnson know what is in the book and believe that it gives a biased and inaccurate account of his attitudes and activities in the assassination period.

They are reported to possess evidence that rebuts or refutes some of the material in the Manchester book but do not intend to engage in a public dispute about it. They are not believed to have participated in the dispute about whether the book should be published.

In another development, the Rev. Dr. Donald S. Harrington, the pastor of the Community Church in New York, recommended that the public refuse to purchase the Manchester material if the book was published against Mrs. Kennedy's wishes.

Dr. Harrington, who made the request in a sermon, said that Mrs. Kennedy "has a right to her privacy" and asked: "Hasn't the Kennedy family given enough to this country that we don't invade their privacy and their private emotions as well?"

The minister was the unsuccessful candidate for Lieutenant Governor on the Liberty party ticket last November. Asked if he had ever urged that published material not be purchased, he said that several years ago he had recommended that pornographic books not be bought.

"I don't think this is a form of censorship," he said. "I think this is simply a defense of right of privacy."

of the bargain."

"I don't know about literary integrity, nor the matter of history," he continued. "They don't concern me at the moment. But I believe strongly in a man keeping his word, particularly when it is in a written memorandum of understanding. There has been no approval from Mrs. Kennedy."

Earlier, Mr. Rifkind said he knew of no attempt to arrange an out-of-court settlement although he added that "conceivably any case can be settled out of court."

"But my present plans are to be in court on Dec. 27," he said.

In his statement in Washington, Senator Edward Kennedy recalled that Mr. Manchester had voluntarily signed an agreement promising "to use the material given him by Mrs. Kennedy only with her consent."

"Relying on the protection of his word," he continued, "she unburdened herself of her personal memories concerning herself and her children, in order to give him some background for his historical researches."

"I know she never dreamed that that material which related strictly to her private thoughts and acts—none of it part of the historical record—would ever be made public."

"Mr. Manchester now intends to go ahead in violation of the word of his agreement, the spirit of his arrangements, and