

# 'The Death of a President': New Row in the Making?

By RALPH BLUMENFELD

A new book authorized by the Kennedy family may add to the mounting criticism of the Warren Commission report on President Kennedy's assassination, its author hinted today.

"I may say that I felt an obligation to pass judgment on the Warren report," said William Manchester, author of "The Death of a President," to be published in January.

"I do pass judgment on it. I conducted my own investigation," Manchester said.

Because Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy specifically asked Manchester to write a definitive version of the events in Dallas, and Sen. Robert Kennedy has approved the book sight unseen, interest in it has heightened weeks before the late-January publication date set by Harper & Row. Look Magazine will serialize it first in four instalments.

Manchester told WINS Radio interviewer Paul Parker last night that he wouldn't try to sum up the 1,000-page book or say whether his conclusions differ with the Warren report. But he said the book does delve into the controversy over whether Kennedy was struck by two bullets or more.

The Warren Commission ruled there were two bullets, both fired by Lee Harvey Oswald—one causing a fatal head wound, the other passing through Kennedy's neck and then wounding Texas Gov. Connally in three places.

Some critics say Kennedy's "neck wound" was actually a back wound and that there were at least three bullets, indicating two or more assassins and possible conspiracy. The skeptics grew increasingly vocal this month when X-rays and photos of the Kennedy autopsy were consigned to the National Archives, with researchers barred.

Jacqueline and Robert Kennedy are said to be upset over

the magazine serialization in digest form. They reportedly think an out-of-context account of an argument between President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson, just before the fateful Texas trip, would reflect badly on Johnson now.

Kennedy strongly opposed the trip, the story goes, arguing that the running feud among Texas Democrats was Johnson's responsibility. But Johnson insisted, saying only the President could heal the split which could mean losing Texas in 1964.

"The author is so involved emotionally with Kennedy that he went overboard, a human thing, in depicting President Johnson," said an editor who read Manchester's manuscript. "In my reading, President Johnson came over very badly."

Other authors complained bitterly that the Kennedys gave a "personal copyright" to Manchester, who had written a 1962 book portraying President Kennedy in glowing terms. But Mrs. Kennedy, in a terse letter to one hopeful biographer, said she had "hired" Manchester "to protect President Kennedy and the truth."

Manchester, 43, said all royalties after the book's first printing will go to the Kennedy Library in Boston. Who will get Look's \$650,000 payment for magazine rights has not been announced.

Manchester repeated his denial that they had exercised any censorship of the book's contents, but that five men close to the family had read it and suggested some changes, some of which were made. Neither Jacqueline nor Robert Kennedy read the manuscript, said Manchester. "It would be too much to ask of them."



Post Photo by Pomerantz  
John F. Kennedy monument,  
unveiled at Grand Army Plaza  
in Brooklyn yesterday.