

## Mrs. Kennedy Requests Cancellation Of Manchester's Assassination Book

As BOOKS/October went to press, it was exclusively learned that Mrs. John F. Kennedy had requested Harper & Row to CANCEL publication of William Manchester's official and candid account of her husband's assassination, "The Death of a President." Mrs. Kennedy has been quoted as having said, "If I decide the book should never be published — then Mr. Manchester will be reimbursed for his time." Reimbursement talks have begun.

Top-level meetings have been held at Harper's to determine its response to Mrs. Kennedy's request. Should Harper's elect to ignore Mrs. Kennedy's request — the moral issue of censorship, \$3,000,000 in international book and magazine sales, and future relations with the Kennedy family are at stake — it may permit a foreign company to publish the book first, softening news coverage of the intimate contents.

~~Obviously cancellation was last effort. Equally obvious this failed and suit was already in plans, made in secret meeting of Kennedy's in October, as cited in other articles. Suit started Dec. 17. Hearing set for Dec. 27th. Meantime, book made concessions. Harper-Row - still adamant.~~

As far as I can figure out, the damage is done and a trial could provide even more damaging evidence.

~~Have later reports, if you want them.~~

"More shocking" than "Whitewash," an analysis of the Warren Commission Report, is "Whitewash II," says their author, Harold Weisberg. "Whitewash II" reveals who whitewashed the evidence . . .

happen and everything does. Visitors to La Paz are apt to feel that they are at the end of the world—in an eyrie Shangri-La unbelievably remote.”

The New York Times on January 30 confirmed BOOKS/October's front-page scoop that the Kennedys had requested cancellation of William Manchester's "The Death of a President." On August 10 Robert Kennedy had advised Harper & Row, Manchester's publisher, that "it just seems to me that rather than struggling with this any longer [conflicts with Manchester] we should take our chances with Jim Bishop," who was then planning a book on President Kennedy's death . . . BOOKS/November also revealed that the Kennedys would publicly disavow the Manchester book, which they now have, and that Mr. Manchester had withdrawn the book from Harper's editorial board chairman—he believed that Harper's was catering to the Kennedys—and given it for final editing to a free-lance book editor, who has often been credited in publishing circles with having rewritten "Peyton Place" for Grace Metalious. When the free lance read Look's editing of his editing, he ripped off letters to Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy, Harper's, Look, the printer, to almost everybody—but didn't mail them. He felt that, stylistically, there was no comparison between what Mr. Manchester had written and what Look had published; the subtleties, the nuances, the rhythm were gone. Mr. Manchester may comment on Look's editing when the fourth and last chapter is published at the end of this month . . . "There's not a single accurate statement about the assassination of JFK in the first two chapters in Look's serialization of 'Death,'" says the author of two analyses of the Warren Report and the "FBI-Secret Service Cover-up," Harold ("Whitewash") Weisberg. Weisberg has an idea for a folk song, "The Ballad of Bullet 399." . . . Charles Roberts, the Newsweek reporter who made the return flight from Dallas with LBJ, is writing his book on the assassination.

Harper's had only one major cor-

rection of John Corry's full-page review of the Kennedy-Manchester battle in The Times: Harper's always considered the Manchester manuscript had been released for publication when Robert Kennedy, on July 28, sent a telegram to Mr. Manchester, which read, in part: "... members of the Kennedy family will place no obstacle in the way of publication of his work." . . . Harper's editorial chairman, Evan Thomas, took exception to the following paragraph from a New York Post article on the Kennedy-Manchester battle: "Manchester, distraught after a stormy and bitter meeting with Bobby Kennedy in Washington, cried all the way back to New York in a chartered plane and was chided by his editor, 'Stop acting like an old woman,' the Post was told." Mr. Thomas denied having said that to his author.

Here's a book you can't put-down: "Webster's Unafraid Dictionary, a collection by Leonard Louis Levinson of 5,000 definitive put-downs, e.g., "Gertrude Stein is the mamma of Dada." . . . Excitement is mounting at Random House for Ira Levin's April novel, "Rosemary's Baby," about the evil legends and undefined terror that beset a fantastic old New York apartment house and a newly arrived young couple . . . John Barth, you have been quoted in a Literary Guild Newsletter as having said that you have crossed your peak and are sinking. Would you care to comment? "Really: I'm getting better every day in every way. What I suspect is that the Literary Guild Newsletter may have been quoting from or paraphrasing one of the mock 'editorial letters' prefatory to 'Giles Goat-Boy.' But who knows?" . . . Leopold Bloom in "Ulysses" was a free-lance ad salesman: "What were habitually his final meditations? Of some one sole unique advertisement to cause passers to stop in wonder, a poster novelty, with all extraneous accretions excluded, reduced to its simplest and most efficient terms not exceeding the span of casual vision and congruous with the velocity of modern life." . . . Esquire ducked out

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