

THE INSIDE STORY

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Manchester vs.

The Kennedys

By WILLIAM H. RUDY

ARTICLE I

Based on reports by Michael Berlin, Arthur Berman (in Los Angeles), Barry Cunningham (in Washington), Rene English (in London), John Garabedian, Arthur Greenspan (in Middletown, Conn.), William Greaves, Kenneth Gross, Pete Hamill, Joseph Kahn, Edward Katcher, Leonard Katz, Murray Kempton, Anthony Prisor and Marvin Smilon.

The full, inside story of William Manchester's relations with Jacqueline and Robert Kennedy during the writing of "The Death of a President" and the bitter fight to alter the book—or even kill it altogether—can now be disclosed.

There is a secret agreement in writing under which the principals in the dispute pledge themselves not to discuss events connected with the book which occurred before April 15, 1966.

However, most of those intimately connected with the agonizing birth of the account of President John F. Kennedy's assassination have talked freely to New York Post reporters.

Robert Kennedy, Manchester and a score of others have told at length their parts in the historic literary battle. So have some of the persons Mrs. Kennedy delegated to go over the manuscript for her.

There emerges a fantastic story of misunderstandings, misrepresentations, of broken friendships, changing personal evaluations and loyalties, of intrigue—and of money.

The account discloses that in the beginning, nearly three years ago, "the thought never entered anyone's head that it was going to be an anti-Johnson book," but that as it emerged, the author's antipathy toward the man who succeeded John Kennedy appeared markedly pronounced even to Manchester's editors.

There was Manchester, an extremely sensitive man, a worshiper of John Kennedy, coming under increasing tensions as the months of interviewing passed, identifying himself closely with the leading figures in the drama he calls "the nightmare of our generation."

But the day came when, in an electric showdown meeting with Bobby Kennedy, he blurted out bitterly: "This is not the brother of the man I knew."

The Post learned that Bobby Kennedy, in one of the most crucial and controversial moves of the whole dispute, gave in to the pressure of friends and for that



ROBERT KENNEDY

reason wired Manchester that "the Kennedy family will place no obstacle in the way of publication"—a message sent because he had been told the writer "might jump out of a building or something."

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.

But a source revealed, the author also showed his mettle during a discussion of profits and the amount to go

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