

Salinger
Blames It All
On Himself

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By ANTHONY COWDY
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LONDON, April 4 — "My judgment wasn't very good," said Pierre Salinger, press secretary for John F. Kennedy, explaining that he —not Jacqueline Kennedy— picked William Manchester to write "The Death of a President."

"That was a time when you went home and you got drunk and you cried.

"I chose a man who has precipitated a world-wide battle of the book." He is in

Turn to Page 12

than anyone else to the Kennedy family. In retrospect, it was pure idiocy," Salinger said.

Salinger now has more reason than his loyalty to the Kennedy family for being vociferously angry about Manchester's part in "the battle of the book." He is in London to promote his own chatty book "With Kennedy."

HURT HIS REPUTATION

The former White House spokesman insists that Manchester has done "irreparable damage" to Salinger's reputation as a writer. Any suggestion that "With Kennedy" was censored by the Kennedy family or their representatives is, he says, "wholly and categorically untrue."

There has, he says, been only one deletion from his book: Three words removed at the suggestion both of Prof. J. Kenneth Galbraith and Salinger's publishers. They were a more or less unprintable expletive uttered to Salinger by the late president.

The manuscript had been forwarded to Prof. Galbraith by Sen. Robert Kennedy, to whom Salinger had sent a copy "as a courtesy." Salinger insists he never discussed the book with Sen. Kennedy before its publication.

THREE CHOICES

In the months after the assassination, Salinger said, he considered, with Robert and Jacqueline Kennedy, at least three leading candidates for the post of "official chronicler" of John Kennedy's death. First choice was Theodore H. White, author of the two election books on "The Making of the President."

White said he could not bring himself to do it.

Then Salinger, after considering Walter Lord ("A Night to Remember" on the Titanic disaster, and "Day of Infamy") finally selected Manchester, with whom he had collaborated on an earlier adulatory book on JFK, "Portrait of a President."

The reason for Salinger's fury against his former collaborator is now, ~~as~~ ~~was~~ the book itself. This he considers "a great book, and as far as I know, a fair historical picture." But he alleges that Manchester broke a contract because he was given privileged information on the understanding it would be checked with its source.

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