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Robert Kennedy's Book

Narrative Shows Rusk's Minor Role In 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis

By Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

NEW YORK—A manuscript by Sen. Robert F. Kennedy on the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, its very existence kept secret from the public until last week, threw the world of publishing into an uproar and may soon have a similar impact on Washington.

Confidential negotiations for posthumous publication of the manuscript (only 90 pages long) finally concluded on Thursday with an amazing \$1 million agreed to by McCall's magazine to be paid for magazine and book rights. When published, Kennedy's last book will disclose how much the missile crisis was handled personally by the Kennedy brothers and how little Dean Rusk, as Secretary of State, had to do with it.

The manuscript's origin was a request last year from the New York Times Magazine for Kennedy to write an account of the missile crisis to commemorate its fifth anniversary. Kennedy agreed, but his manuscript soon exceeded magazine length. At the time of his death, Kennedy had completed the narrative in 90 pages but was still polishing the prose.

After the assassination, the Kennedy family turned the manuscript over to Theodore Sorensen, who edited it and proceeded to offer publication rights at prices that have astounded the publishing world.

THE BOOK will include a preface by former British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan (whose publishing firm has bought British book rights) and an introduction

by former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara.

With seven major New York publishing houses in on the bidding, Sorensen had wanted an eye-popping \$350,000 for the book alone.

Those who have seen the manuscript say it is surely Robert Kennedy's own work, with few editorial intrusions by Sorensen. Moreover, it reveals as never before the intimate role played in the missile crisis by Attorney General Kennedy, including details of his conferences with Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin.

MANAGEMENT of the crisis is shown in the hands of the Kennedy brothers with Rusk relegated to a minor role. There is one poignant scene where John and Robert Kennedy, at the peak of the crisis, reminisce over how they had stood together previously in times of personal stress, particularly when their older brother, Joe Jr., died.

A footnote: Publishers were irked that Sorensen's written proposal for publication specified that a "legal" fee to him of \$10,000 plus expenses would be shared by the book and magazine publishers. Normally, such fees are taken out of the purchase price of the manuscript, but Sorensen did not want to shortchange the Kennedy family.

Rocky in Pentagon?

WHEN THEY met here recently, Richard M. Nixon murmured to Gov. Nelson Rockefeller in parting: "I'll be seeing you on Jan. 21." That would be the day after the Inauguration, a sign that Nixon has plans for his old

intraparty rival in his Administration.

Contrary to some published reports that Nixon would fear Rockefeller in Washington as an independent power, Rockefeller is now the top prospect for Secretary of Defense. For Secretary of State (the job Rockefeller would much prefer), however, Nixon wants a lesser known, more submissive figure.

Friends of Sen. Edward Brooke of Massachusetts are pushing him to be Nixon's Attorney General. The appointment of a Negro to this critical position would produce screams of outrage from Nixon's Southern supporters.

Tight Money

WELL-HEELLED New Yorkers who contributed so generously to Sen. Eugene McCarthy's presidential campaign have tended to close their wallets for local anti-war candidates. That's what Democratic Gov. Harold Hughes of Iowa found in a recent unpublicized fund-raising expedition to New York.

Hughes, who has an excellent shot at winning a seat in the U.S. Senate now held by a Republican, met with liberal fatcats at Manhattan's St. Regis Hotel in hopes of raising at least \$30,000. As it turned out, he was lucky to end up with pledges of \$19,000.

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