

JACKIE WILL

By **LARRY VAN GELDER**

World Journal Tribune Staff

"The completed manuscript shall be reviewed by Mrs. John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy and the text shall not be published unless and until approved by them."

—From a memorandum signed by Sen. Robert F. Kennedy and author William Manchester

Miscalculation of the steely will underlying the frail beauty of Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy led two of the nation's mightiest publishers to defy her wishes despite a written agreement giving her the right to approve the book about her husband's death, sources close to the Kennedy family said today.

They divulged that an 11-point memorandum of agreement dated March 24, 1964, and signed by Robert F. Kennedy

FIGHT TO FINISH

William Manchester — the author and man in the middle—See Page 14.

and author William Manchester, empowered Mrs. Kennedy and the New York senator to bar publication until they had approved the final text.

Despite the agreement, the sources said, the two firms planned to proceed with publication over Mrs. Kennedy's objections. The publishers believed she would abandon her

rights rather than brave the storm of publicity and comment generated by a decision to challenge them by resort to a trial in a court of law.

There, the sources said, the publishers miscalculated.

Mrs. Kennedy was determined not to be bullied.

The decision announced yesterday to sue Manchester, the publishers of Look magazine and Harper & Row to bar magazine and hard-cover publication of "The Death of a

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"Harper & Row and Manchester were officially advised in July 1966 that 'members of the Kennedy family will place no obstacle in the way of publication.'"

—From a statement by Harper & Row, publishers of "The Death of a President" by William Manchester

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President" was made by Mrs. Kennedy alone.

So determined is she to maintain her rights and those of her children to privacy, her friends stressed, she is prepared, if subpoenaed, to take the witness stand. She will fight the case to its conclusion.

The Kennedy intimates emphasized that Mrs. Kennedy would not have sued had her objections been confined to passages dealing with President Johnson or other public figures that she might have construed as untrue, distorted or out of context.

Her decision to sue was based on her objections to passages dealing with her private emotions and confidences made under stress.

She was interviewed by Manchester during a two-day period in February, 1964, some three months after President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas.

To indicate the Kennedys' clear intention of exercising final approval of the text, the sources cited a portion of the agreement passing the right of approval to Sen. Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts in the event Mrs. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy were unable to review the completed manuscript.

Neither Mrs. Kennedy nor Robert has read the book. Their opinions are based on reports from three trusted advisers who have.

The sources said, however, that no Kennedy intimates had been permitted access to the

manuscript by the publishers in recent months.

Look intends to serialize the book beginning in the Jan. 10 issue, and hard-cover publication by Harper & Row is scheduled for April 7.

Look, according to those close to the Kennedy family, has a signed warranty from Manchester in which it is agreed that the magazine will be indemnified for any expenses connected with legal ac-

tions against publication of the Manchester was chosen by Mrs. Kennedy in 1964 to write the book. Her choice was approved by Robert, then Attorney General.

In announcing the choice of Manchester, a press release issued at the Justice Department said:

"The Kennedy family has authorized William Manchester to write an extensive account describing the events of and surrounding the death of President Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963.

"Because versions of what occurred Nov. 20-25 already have appeared and because it is understood other articles and books are in the course of being prepared for later publication, these arrangements were made with Mr. Manchester in the interest of historical accuracy and to prevent distortion and sensationalism."

The agreement with Manchester called for no publication before Nov. 22nd, 1968, but Manchester subsequently was given permission to publish when he finished his writing.

At one point, it was said, the author became so discouraged with the work when he heard reports of obstacles he might face in reaching publication that Robert Kennedy, seeking to lift his spirits, sent him a telegram assuring him that no member of the Kennedy family would block publication.

Kennedy's message is expected to be cited by the publishers in any attempt to invalidate the original memorandum of agreement.

Say Kennedys Agreed Not to Hinder Book

Harper & Row, publishers of William Manchester's "Death of a President," an account of President Kennedy's assassination, claims that members of the Kennedy family had assured the company that they would not hinder the publication of the book.

In a statement yesterday, Harper said that representatives of the Kennedy family had held "detailed conversations and discussions" with the publishers and author early in 1966 after the book's manuscript had been submitted to them.

"After these discussions," the publishers said, "Harper & Row and Manchester were officially advised in July of 1966 that 'members of the Kennedy family will place no obstacle in the way of publication of his (Manchester's) book.'"

Because of the family statement, the publishers said, "Harper & Row proceeded to

the final editing of the book. . . ."

Yesterday, Mrs. John F. Kennedy, the president's widow, called the book "a premature account of the events of November, 1963, that is in part both tasteless and distorted" and said that she would go to court to block publication.

Both Harper and Look magazine, which will serialize the book, insist that they will go ahead with publication. The serialization is scheduled for the Jan. 10 issue and Harper plans to release the book in April.

Harper said that it "has done its utmost to comply with the wishes of the Kennedy family, and deeply regrets its present attitude."

And Gardner Cowles, editorial chairman of Cowles Communications, which publishes Look, said that to withhold the book "would amount to censorship of history."