

Bitter New Row on Book

By RALPH BLUMENFELD and ARTHUR GREENSPAN

A bitter new quarrel today shattered the apparent truce between the Kennedy family and William Manchester, author of "The Death of a President."

Manchester accused Sen. Robert Kennedy of having tried to "shred and emasculate" his book for purely political reasons. The Kennedys retorted that the book's first chapter had to be scrapped at their insistence because it pictured President Johnson as "a man of violence."

After Manchester likened Jacqueline Kennedy to Marie Antoinette and to Mao Tse-tung, former White House aide Richard N. Goodwin rose to her defense, charging that Manchester's statements were "as fictional as some of the most objectionable passages in his original manuscript."

Manchester, in interviews with the New York Post columnist Murray Kempton and with the New York Times and Newsweek magazine, described Sen. Kennedy as a man "surrounded by people who have hitched their wagon to his star. They all think in terms of another Kennedy Administration."

Discounting Jacqueline Kennedy's avowed wish to protect her children by deleting parts of the book, Manchester charged that she was "completely isolated from the world around her by her courtier advisers."

Jackie was fully aware of her place on America's pedestal, however, Manchester told Kempton. He quoted her as having said to him:

"Unless I run off with Eddie Fisher, the people will think that anyone who is in a fight with me is a rat."

Sen. Kennedy, at his Virginia home issued a terse statement: "It all finally comes down to the fact that Mr. Manchester gave his word and then broke it. No statement, or interview, or description of events, however dramatic, can alter that plain fact."

A source close to the Kennedy family then made a lengthier comment about Manchester's original first chapter, about a deer-hunting episode involving President Kennedy at Johnson's Texas ranch in 1960—"right after the election."

"It showed Johnson as a man of violence who loved to shoot deer and would force others to do the same," the source said. "It pictured President Kennedy as a man reluctant to do this... a much more gentle figure."

The date of the deer-hunt was Nov. 17, 1960—three years before the assassination which supposedly was Manchester's subject, the Kennedy spokesman said. But the incident, told at the book's outset, "seemed to set symbolic overtones," he said.

Unjust, Disastrous

"It seemed to attempt to make this the symbolic framework for the whole book which was unjust and disastrous."

Manchester, now vacationing at an unidentified Caribbean hideaway, held a series of interviews before he departed Friday. The Times published its interview today. Newsweek's version is in its Jan. 30 issue, on the newsstands this week.

Talking freely about the hopes of Kennedy adherents that Sen. Kennedy might one day be President, Manchester told Kempton that in the midst of the uproar over the book, "I began to understand what this was all about."

"One of these [Kennedy] people said to me that I had better be sensible. I was endangering my future relations with the Kennedys," said Manchester. He said the same person had told him earlier that he was destroying any chance he might have to become a special assistant to the [future] President.

"Somewhere," said Manchester, "there was a basic mis-



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understanding. Arthur Schlesinger's relationship with the Kennedys is very important to his life. And Red Fay certainly suffered when he was shut out of the compound after his book.

"But I'm a writer. Nothing that's happened in the last few months compared with the strain of writing that book. And after it was over, and I'd gotten some sort of catharsis, the Kennedys were part of my past, not my future."

His reference to "Red Fay" was to Paul B. Fay Jr., author of "The Pleasure of His Company," an anecdotal book of his 21-year relationship with President Kennedy, first as Navy buddies during World War II, Fay became Undersecretary of the Navy in Kennedy's cabinet. Mrs. Kennedy objected strenuously to the light-hearted and intimate tone of his book and refused a Fay donation from its proceeds to the Kennedy Library.

Jackie's role in the court fight over deletions, said Manchester, was "baffling"—long before her lawsuit for cuts in the book's current serialization by Look magazine and in Harper & Row's forthcoming full-length hardcover edition.

Made a Deep Impact

She made a deep emotional impact on him, the author said, during the two long tape-record-



JACQUELINE KENNEDY

ed interviews which included much of the personal, intimate detail she wanted deleted from the book.

"She must be seen to be believed," Manchester told the Times. "When she turns on the charm, it's incredible."

On the other hand, he said, Jackie and the rest of the Kennedys often made him feel like a "paid historian," even though they were not financing the writing of his book.

"Mao Tse-tung and Jackie are the two most inscrutable people I know," said Manchester.

One of the problems, Manchester told Kempton, was that Jackie had made Richard N. Goodwin "answerable" for what appeared in the book. The former aide to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson served as her representative in the legal negotiations.

"This meant that, if she read it after publication, and objected to one line, she'd blame it on him," said Manchester. "Now could I agree to let him take out anything he wanted under these circumstances?"

While he was in Europe in November, Manchester told Kempton, he was visited by his agent, Don Gongdon, and Cass Canfield and Evan Thomas of Harper & Row.

Six Pages on LBJ

"They had a letter to me from Jackie and all the galleys. There was a mass of paper clips in the galleys, and the letter said that these were the things to which she personally objected, because they involved the feelings of her children."

"I sat down to go through the galleys, and the first six pages with paper clips in them were about Lyndon Johnson's political career. That involved the feelings of her children?"

Manchester told Newsweek that his quarrel with the Kennedys arose when Congdon said

the magazine rights to Look for \$665,000.

This came after Robert Kennedy allegedly told the author: "I don't want anyone to make a killing out of my brother's death."

The Look offer "staggered everybody," Manchester said. "The next day Bobby told Jackie, and a mushroom cloud appeared over Hyannis Port."

Jackie was "concerned over the sum of money and what she felt was commercialization," Manchester said.

Jackie Didn't Know

"Apparently Jackie didn't know the details of the memorandum of understanding between Bobby and me. She didn't hire me."

Manchester also told the magazine that everything he did had been approved "directly or tacitly" by Sen. Kennedy—until an August meeting in which "Bobby was so irrational. He was concerned with the money now."

Mrs. Kennedy first read Look's condensation in December, and she did so "with growing interest and surprise," Manchester told Newsweek. "She left the meeting smiling. But when she saw the reporters outside, her eyes filled with tears—and that's how the stories that the book made her cry got started."

Manchester also said that



WILLIAM MANCHESTER

Bobby was very happy about the deal with Look and the record price involved, and had said: 'I'm glad it's Look because they have been so nice to the family and Luco has been such a—' He was referring to Henry Luco, who runs Look's chief competitor, Life magazine.

Goodwin, in San Francisco, replied sharply last night to the Newsweek article, saying Manchester's account "bears no relationship" to what really happened. "Reading it, one is struck by the enormous difficulty of



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answering statements made in complete disregard of the truth," he said.

Goodwin said that Manchester's publishers called his manuscript "in part tasteless and gratuitously insulting to President Johnson and, for that matter, to the memory of the late President Kennedy," and that Manchester had turned "the tragedy into a magic fairy tale."

The publishers and the Kennedy family, said Goodwin, had recommended changes to "make the book both accurate and fair, to remove the sometimes horrifying and unjust implications about several individuals."

One Third Modified

Goodwin said "almost one third of the book" was then modified—in sharp contrast to Manchester's claim to Newsweek. The author said 1,600 words were cut from the Look version, 2,000 from the hardcover book—3,600 words out of 360,000—one per cent... a word here, a phrase there... but not a single incident is omitted."

Manchester, in his interview with Kempton, spoke with particular bitterness about Goodwin, who lives less than one minute's drive from the author in Middletown, Conn., and has a fellowship to Wesleyan University there.

"Goodwin saw the book first because he asked to see it. All he said was that it was great," said Manchester. "A lot of people in Middletown remembered him saying that."

"Doug Cater [of the White House staff] would hardly back this up, but last spring he was up at Wesleyan and we all met at a cocktail party. Goodwin said to Doug: 'Manchester has written a great book. Your boss and my former [President Johnson] wouldn't like it, but it's a great book.'

"I told Doug that Dick might be a little early about saying that Johnson wouldn't like it—let alone that it was great—because it was far from edited yet."

He concedes that even so, "Harper & Row's editors did a very good job." Then, "early in June, I got an eight-page letter from Arthur Schlesinger. It was really a memo to Evan Thomas. I've got it and I can make it public..."

Disturbed by Some Cuts

In the letter, Manchester told Kempton, Schlesinger said he thought the book was "extraor-

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What They Said

JACKIE to MANCHESTER (as quoted by Manchester): "Unless I run off with Eddie Fisher, the people will think that anyone who is in a fight with me is a rat."

ROBERT KENNEDY (speaking of the huge literary profits reaped by "assassination authors"): "I don't want anyone making a killing out of my brother's death."

WILLIAM MANCHESTER: "The Senator is surrounded by people who have hitched their wagon to his star. They all think in terms of another Kennedy Administration."

Bitter New Row Over Manchester Book

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dinarily good and potentially great," but said he was disturbed by some cuts agreed upon by Thomas and John Siegenthaler, one of those who read the book for Sen. Kennedy.

Schlesinger's reservations, said Manchester, were because they felt the decision not to use this material was an attack "on the integrity of contemporary history."

Manchester insists "that was the first I'd known about the cuts, since I'd seen the edited manuscript . . . so the first time I got to see them was in June. As I've said, they seemed to me better than they had to Arthur."

All this while, he said, nothing was said "about anything personal being objectionable." Following what he claimed was Sen. Kennedy's "written approval" came other word from Kennedy.

The Senator was still reserving his right to object. "Then I began hearing rumors of discontent," Manchester said, and on Aug. 1, 1966, "Arthur went to Hyannisport saying he would try to get it all cleared up.

He called back and said "They're tranquil; they're composed" and I assumed everything was all right."

But it was not all right. "Then there started the business of Jackie being against serialization. You know, 'The book is all right, but the sensationalism of a magazine is what's wrong.

"Then they suggested that I give the magazine fee to the Library and just take a straight royalty on the book. That seemed to me the strangest thing of all. I'd have been richer that way than any other. I'd be getting \$1.50 royalty on a \$10 book."

In the Newsweek interview, Manchester continued to express his regard for Mrs. Kennedy. "Regardless of what hap-

pened," he said, "for four crucial days . . . this woman behaved superbly."

Manchester was more bitter about Sen. Kennedy and President Johnson. It was the relationship between the two political figures which has caused the greatest furor. Even the author was apparently aware that he had been painting political caricatures, and, the Times reports, he wrote a letter to Mrs. Kennedy admitting this. He is said to have written:

"Though I tried desperately to suppress my bias against a certain eminent statesman who always reminded me of someone in a grade D movie of The Late Show, the prejudice showed through. This was cheap of me, but I suppose there is a little meanness in all of us."

Goodwin also charged that Manchester "refused to make changes in the interests of accuracy. He continually promised to make the personal changes requested by Mrs. Kennedy. In fact, at one point, the publisher said he would not publish the book unless these changes were made.

"It was failure to make these personal changes, and for that reason only," Goodwin insists, "that legal action was finally brought."

Two others who read the manuscript for the Kennedy family joined in decrying Manchester's actions. Ed Guthman, now National Editor of the Los Angeles Times, told the New York Post:

"I was deeply distressed that the personal changes Mrs. Kennedy requested were not made until after she was forced to go to court. As I look back now, over all that has happened, I feel that she and Sen. Kennedy, and all of us, were terribly misled."

Siegenthaler said, "I have nothing to add to Goodwin's rather well." But he said that the Newsweek article "as read statement. I think he tells it to me has very many inaccur-

acies, so far as my knowledge is concerned."

He would not specify these inaccuracies, but Manchester did in the Times and Newsweek interviews, give varying accounts of Sen. Kennedy. In the Times, he talks about a meeting at Kennedy's Washington office:

"Bobby lost his temper. At one point, he accused me of shouting at him when I hadn't raised my voice. This is an old courtroom lawyer's trick. Then he demanded that I 'shred and emasculate' the manuscript. He even asked if I would join in a suit against Look."

And in Newsweek, Manchester describes how he went to Kennedy's Hickory Hill home in Virginia last fall. "It was my last meeting with Bobby," he reports. "It was chilly, but Bobby being Bobby, he had to put on bathing trunks and go swimming. He would ask me a question, then duck underwater and I would wait for him to surface in the pool before answering.

"His head was underwater most of the time." (In the Times, Manchester recalls they were swimming together: "Bobby would say something, and then he'd duck under water. I'd turn to answer him and he'd be gone. I'd start to say something, and he'd pop up behind me, his hair streaming over his face, and he'd ask another question.")

Advised to File Suit

The important part of this meeting, said Manchester was that "Bobby told me Ted Sorensen had advised him to file suit because of his own political future.

"But putting Jackie on the stand would be intolerable and he himself could only lose politically. So would I consider the personal changes which Dick Goodwin was then making in Look and I said I would. This was a very friendly meeting. I had supper with Ethel, Bobby and the children and we watched the children."

Manchester was distressed, when he talked with the Times, about the way he said he had been treated. He talks about the tapes of his 10-hours of interviews with Mrs. Kennedy, and says they are now in a safe deposit box. He has one key to the box, he says, and the other is held by Mrs. Kennedy's attorney, former Federal Judge Rifkind.

"This is humiliating," Manchester is quoted as saying. "Am I pervert? Have I belonged to any disloyal organization? The Kennedys entrusted me with all kinds of confidences, and I never violated them, but now I'm suspect."