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WASHINGTON BEAT

# Kennedy Protests Cut Book

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Almost half the original text of William Manchester's highly controversial book, "Death of a President," has reportedly been scrapped because of Kennedy family objections. Revisions are still being made, and they have greatly disrupted publishing plans.

The Book-of-the-Month Club has already jerked the book as the April selection and has temporarily made it the May choice. The volume, said to be getting thinner and thinner, may even wind up as the June pick, depending on when it reaches final form.

Harper and Row had planned for the book to be on sale in early March but now will be lucky to have it out by early April.

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LOOK FOR 1967 to be the worst year in labor-management relations in a long time. A new record in the number of strikes could be easily set.

The principal causes: (1) approximately 3.1 million workers in major industries have contracts expiring in 1967, a total roughly twice that of 1966; and (2) President Johnson's wage-price guidelines have been ruptured and

labor wants big pay hikes. The AFL-CIO claims, for instance, that corporate profits have vaulted 80 percent in five years while average earnings of factory workers are up only 18 percent.

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Hottest political item around Capitol Hill is the possibility that Sen. Thomas Kuchel, the California Republican maverick who didn't support Barry Goldwater, Sen. George Murphy or Gov.-elect Ronald Reagan, will "pull a Wayne Morse."

Kuchel is considering leaving the GOP and identifying himself politically as an "Independent." Oregon's Sen. Wayne Morse did that some time ago, later joining the Democrats.

Kuchel's situation is more sticky, because he, as minority whip, ranks second in the Senate GOP leadership.

Kuchel, who faces re-election in 1968, evidently figures he could do better in a third party column on the California ballot than suffer a bruising GOP primary. In it, he would certainly have an opponent with the full backing of the governor's office.

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BRIEFLY: Add Rex Whittom, federal highway adminis-

trator for almost six years, to the list of those hoping to quit before long. His agency, with its money severely slashed in the latest LBJ budget cutting, is being moved into the new Department of Transportation

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., wants to take over sponsorship of the truth-in-lending bill, requiring full and understandable disclosure of interest charges on time payments, loans, etc. Sen. Paul Douglas, D-Ill., long the legislation's champion, was defeated and won't be back

Most people see truth in the line, "Anything that's shorter is better," but not Internal Revenue Service Commissioner Sheldon Cohen. He thinks the new 17-page-long Form 1040Q, to be tried out by selected 1966 taxpayers, will be easier to complete than the familiar 2-page-Form 1040.

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