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Secret Negotiations Seek Accord For Controversial Kennedy Book

NEW YORK (AP) — Secret meetings were under way Thursday to clear the controversial book "The Death of a President" for publication by Harper & Row in April. Lawyers were granted four additional days to work out an agreement.

The meetings follow a compromise Wednesday night between representatives of Mrs. John F. Kennedy and Cowles Communications, Inc., allowing the 80,000-word four-part series to begin in the Jan. 24 issue of Look magazine, out Jan. 17.

Look agreed to make some

changes and deletions in William Manchester's book concerning the private life of Mrs. Kennedy and her two children. Sections of the book reportedly unfavorable to President Johnson will remain. The book deals with events surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy.

It was learned that Mrs. Kennedy and her children, Caroline and John F. Jr., are booked on a flight to Antigua, British West Indies, on Dec. 26. This is the day before a scheduled hearing in her damage suit against Cowles, Harper & Row and Manchester.

A source close to the dispute said Thursday meetings "at this point are limited to the lawyers."

He said others—apparently representatives of Mrs. Kennedy and the publishers—may be brought into the meetings later.

The source noted, however, that an agreement was unlikely to be reached Thursday because the 300,000-word book is nearly four times longer than the serialization. "There is additional material which the Kennedys will want out," he said.

The lawyers in the case met for 15 minutes Thursday morning in the chambers of Supreme Court Justice Saul S. Streit.

The defense attorneys asked for and were granted permission to delay their answers to Mrs. Kennedy's charges in her damage suit until Tuesday, Dec. 27. The answers had been due Friday. The delay is an indication the negotiations may be extended over several days.

Edward S. Greenbaum, chief counsel for Harper & Row, said earlier the publishers "will be very glad" to settle the controversy with Mrs. Kennedy along the lines of her out-of-court agreement with Look.