

Kennedy Book Row Ends

Sunday Bulletin 12-25-66 Editorial Page

IT WAS a suit nobody really wanted. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy said that he and his sister-in-law, Mrs. John F. Kennedy, were "pushed" into filing it.

The defendants, Look Magazine and the publishing firm of Harper & Row, sought a delay in its hearing in the hope that an out-of-court settlement could be reached.

Last week, that is just what happened in the literary cause celebre involving William Manchester's forthcoming book "The Death of a President," detailing the events that followed the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The Kennedys, in their suit, had sought to halt publication of the book by Harper & Row and its serialization in Look on the grounds that Manchester had agreed, in a written memorandum, not to release it before Nov. 22, 1968.

Mrs. Kennedy complained that the book contained too many personal references to her reaction to the tragedy, details so intimate that their disclosure at this time would react unfavorably on her as well as her young children.

In the out-of-court settlement announced Thursday, Look agreed to meet Mrs. Kennedy's objections by deleting 1,600 words from the 60,000-word, four-part serialization scheduled to start in the

The Nation

magazine on Jan. 10.

A statement issued in behalf of Mrs. Kennedy said in part:

"Since every passage of a personal nature under contention for several months was either deleted by Look, or changed to her satisfaction, Mrs. Kennedy has withdrawn her suit."

There still remained the suit against Harper & Row, which plans to publish the full 300,000-word book next April. The publishing firm announced through its chief counsel it would be "very glad" to settle its own controversy with the Kennedys along the same lines as the magazine agreement.

It did not appear, however, that an end of the lawsuits would necessarily assure Mrs. Kennedy the privacy she desires. A spokesman for Harper & Row said that at least 25 duplicate copies of Manchester's 1,200-page manuscript are in existence and that some at least were almost certainly sold to outlaw publishers in Formosa.

Formosa is not a party to any international copyright agreements, and publishers there have been known to "pirate" American books in the past. Moreover, the West German illustrated magazine, Stern, which paid \$72,500 for

the German serialization rights, announced it plans to publish the complete and unabridged version of the book.