

# Mrs. Kennedy Prepared For a 'Horrible' Trial

*542 12/15/66*  
Manchester Agreement Is Quoted  
As Giving Rights for Book Revisions

NEW YORK (AP)—Mrs. John F. Kennedy says she is prepared to relive her grief and shock after the assassination of her husband in order to legally block publication of parts of a book about the tragedy.

The outlook for her is "horrible," she said.

The book, which the Kennedy family had authorized, is "Death of a President," by William Manchester. It describes the assassination of President Kennedy in Dallas, Nov. 22, 1963, and the events in the days immediately afterward.

Mrs. Kennedy calls it "tasteless and distorted" and says: "As horrible as a trial will be, it now seems clear that my only redress is to ask the courts to enforce my rights . . ."

## Agreement Quoted

A source close to Mrs. Kennedy said a "memorandum of understanding" spelled out the terms under which Manchester, selected by the family, would write the book. It was signed by Sen. Robert F. Kennedy and William Manchester.

It is dated March 26, 1964, and contains 11 clauses. The Kennedys feel that two of these have immediate bearing on the case.

One reads, "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 John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy and the text shall not be published unless and until approved by them."

The other reads, "The book may not be published before Nov. 22, 1968, unless Mrs. Kennedy designates a prior date and shall be published at a date thereafter as shall be mutually agreeable to the contracting parties."

## Legal Maneuvers

Manchester reportedly feels that a telegram from Robert Kennedy releases him on the date and the family is known to feel that publication in 1967 would be preferable.

Mrs. Kennedy's attorneys said they are preparing papers seeking a temporary injunction to stop the book's publication and would file them in two or three days. Summonses already have been served on Harper & Row, book publishers, and on

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Cowles Communications, Inc., publishers of Look magazine.

The magazine, which reportedly paid Manchester \$650,000 for the serial rights to his book, scheduled publication of the first article for Jan. 10. Harper & Row plans to bring out the book next April.

It is known that the family objects only to small parts of the book and does not seek to bar publication permanently.

The impending lawsuit, and a mention of "inaccurate and unfair references to other individuals" in a statement issued yesterday by Mrs. Kennedy about Manchester's book, may throw some light on long-standing reports of friction between the Kennedys and President Johnson. It assertedly began on the plane that brought Kennedy's body from Dallas to Washington after the assassination.

## The Plane Episode

A friend of the Kennedy family said Manchester's book depicts Mrs. Kennedy as having been "upset because LBJ kept the plane on the ground too long in Dallas, waiting to be sworn in as President."

Another version of this incident is that Mrs. Kennedy and Kenneth O'Donnell, special assistant to the assassinated President, boarded the plane and ordered the pilot to take off at once. Johnson reportedly countermanded the order.

Sources close to the Kennedy family said Manchester's book contains "other things that involve LBJ, which are distorted and unfair."

To support Mrs. Kennedy's contention that Manchester's book violated the terms of the agreement under which it was

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**MRS. JOHN F. KENNEDY**  
Critic



**WILLIAM MANCHESTER**  
Author

-Associated Press

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written, this and other episodes may be aired.

Mrs. Kennedy's full statement said:

"Look magazine, Harper & Row, and Mr. William Manchester have repeatedly made clear that only legal action can alter their insistence upon publishing at this time—without regard to accepted standards of propriety and good faith, and in specific violation of my wishes, my contract with Mr. Manchester and the dignity and privacy which my children and I have striven with difficulty to retain—a premature account of the events of November 1963 that is in part both tasteless and distorted.

"Its inaccurate and unfair references to other individuals, in contrast with its generous references to all members of the Kennedy family, are perhaps beyond my prevention; but to expose to all the world at this time all the private grief, personal thoughts and painful reactions which my children and I endured in those terrible days does not seem to me to be essential to any current historical record.

"I am shocked that Mr. Manchester would exploit the emotional state in which I recounted my recollections to him early in 1964, and I am equally shocked that reputable publishers would take commercial advantage of his failure to keep his word. To the author and publishers, this book will be only another transient chapter in their work; but my children and I will have to live with it for the rest of our lives.

"As horrible as a trial will be, it now seems clear that my only redress is to ask the courts to enforce my rights and postpone publication until the minimum limits of my family's privacy can be protected."

#### Author's Position

Manchester said, "I have confidence in the book. I think it will stand on its own. I ask only that people give it a chance."

He said he was "not informed on what is happening" but was "puzzled by the disturbance."

William Attwood, editor-in-chief of Look, issued a statement last night saying cancella-

tion of the scheduled publication now would amount to "censorship of history." He said Look intends to go ahead. Attwood's statement said:

"To keep the record straight, the public should know that Mrs. Kennedy asked Gardner Cowles, editorial chairman of Cowles Communications, Inc., last August to postpone the start of the serialization in Look so that the serialization would not be occurring during the anniversary of the assassination.

"That is the time of year that she said was most difficult for her. Look agreed to a postponement in accordance with her wishes.

"Two weeks later, she requested that Look's serialization be reduced from the seven installments originally contemplated. Look agreed to this second request in deference to her feelings and rescheduled the serialization to four installments.

#### Further Changes

"In late September, Mrs. Kennedy asked Look to see her representative who wanted to suggest several changes in certain episodes in the manuscript which particularly distressed her. After several conferences, Look sent an editor to England to discuss these changes with Mr. Manchester who agreed to a number of changes in the areas which were particularly troubling Mrs. Kennedy.

"Then Mrs. Kennedy asked Cass Canfield, chairman of the executive committee of Harper & Row, to meet with Gardner Cowles to consider some further changes. These were considered with great care at two editing sessions lasting over many hours. A majority of them were finally agreed upon with Mr. Manchester.

"Other changes or deletions were made by Mr. Canfield and Mr. Cowles which they felt would also avoid distress for the Kennedy family without in any way impairing the accuracy of completeness of the author's important manuscript."

Harper & Row sources said they had made four sets of

"substantial" revisions to the book at the request of Mrs. Kennedy and other members of the family.

After the first series, the firm said in a statement, the Kennedys officially notified them "members of the family will place no obstacle in the way of publication."

The statement said "Harper & Row has done its utmost to comply with the wishes of the Kennedy family and deeply regrets their present attitude."

Mrs. Kennedy, the family source said, gave Manchester two long interviews in early 1964.

"She was in a state of grief, of course," the informant said. "She was not self-censoring but relying on his agreement not to publish anything that would be offensive to her.

"The material is offensive in that it delineates her feelings during that period. No woman would want these things disclosed to the world."

#### Four Read the Book

When Manchester's manuscript was finished, the source said, it was read by four persons: Richard Goodwin, special assistant to President Kennedy; Pamela Timmons, Mrs. Kennedy's secretary; John Siegenthaler, editor of the Nashville Tennessean, and Edward Guthman of the Los Angeles Times, who had been press secretary to then-Atty. General Kennedy.

Mrs. Kennedy and Sen. Kennedy have not read the book.

Goodwin said "I found it very painful to read."

Goodwin and Mrs. Timmons, the source continued, advised Mrs. Kennedy and Sen. Kennedy of the contents of certain passages. Revisions were suggested. Whether these were the same changes as those referred to by Atwood and the spokesman for Harper & Row was not clear.

Then, last summer, the informant said, Manchester apparently had doubts as to whether his book would "ever be published." The source said he did not know what induced this feeling.

"But in any case, assurances were requested and Sen. Kennedy sent a telegram in which he said that, subject to the terms of

the memorandum of understanding, the Kennedy family would not stand in the way of publication," the informant said.

The source said Mrs. Kennedy's request for an injunction to halt publication of the book essentially is based on two contentions:

1. That Mrs. Kennedy and Senator Kennedy have not given their approval.

2. "It is invasion of privacy, the breach of a solemn agreement that things about her would not be published without her approval."

# Manchester Foreword

NEW YORK (AP)—Following is the foreword by William Manchester to his book, "The Death of a President," which describes the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Nov. 22, 1963, and the events in the days immediately afterward. Copyright 1966 by William Manchester.

On Feb. 5, 1964, Mrs. John F. Kennedy suggested that I write an account of the tragic and historic events in Texas and Washington 10 weeks earlier.

Neither Mrs. Kennedy nor anyone else is in any way answerable for my subsequent research of this narrative. My relationships with all the principal figures were entirely professional. I received no financial assistance from the Kennedy family. I was on no government payroll. No one tried to lead me. I believe every reader, including those who were closest to the late President, will find here much which is new and some perhaps, which is disturbing. That is my responsibility.

Mrs. Kennedy asked but one question, before our first taping session. She said, "Are you just going to put down all the facts, who ate what for breakfast and all that, or are you going to put yourself in the book, too?"

I replied that I didn't see how I could very well keep myself out of it.

"Good," she said emphatically.

## Why It Was Written

The Kennedy family had not been eager to have any book written about the President's death. Understandably, they needed time to heal.

But shortly after the burial in Arlington it became apparent that volumes would appear in spite of their wishes. Under these circumstances, Jacqueline Kennedy resolved that there should be one complete, accurate account.

I had not been among those who approached her. At that time I had not even met her. However, her husband had told her about me, and she had read a book I published about him the year before his death. Other members of the family agreed with Mrs. Kennedy that it would be wise to have a book written by an author whom the President had known and in whom he had expressed confidence.

My first calls were upon Bill Moyers at the White House, and Chief Justice Earl Warren. It was essential that the new President know what I proposed to do.

It was equally imperative that the commission which the chief justice headed understand the exact nature of my inquiry. He was unfailingly polite and recognized that while the lines of the two investigations might occasionally intersect, they certainly did not run parallel. The commission was conducting a criminal probe. I was exploring the full sweep of events during what were, in some respects, the most extraordinary hours in the history of our country.

## Own Opinions

Because I have been at this task longer

than anyone, I have not only felt entitled to record my opinions, I have an inescapable obligation to do so. Withholding them would be shirking a grave duty, and among other judgments, you will find my assessment of the Warren Report.

I shall not publish my files. It would be a formidable undertaking. (Mrs. Kennedy's answers to the commission's questions occupy 2½ pages; my tapes with her run 10 hours.)

In my inquiry, I approached every person who might shed light upon this complex of events. I retraced President Kennedy's last journey from Andrews Air Force Base to San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, Love Field at Dallas, Dealey Plaza, Parkland Hospital, back to Love and back to Andrews, over the ambulance route to Bethesda Naval Hospital and then to the White House, the Great Rotunda, St. Matthews and Arlington.

I went over every motorcade route, search-

ing for men and women who had been spectators.

Every scene described was visited: The rooms in the Executive Mansion, the presidential hotel suites in Houston and Fort Worth, the Houston Coliseum, the Fort Worth parking lot and ballroom, Marguerite Oswald's house, Oswald's tiny room in Dallas, Parkland's major surgery and minor surgery areas, Bethesda's basement morgue, the pavements of Washington, the pews of St. Matthews.

## Oswald's Route

I was led back and forth through the presidential aircraft. I crawled over the roof of the Texas School Depository and sat in Oswald's sixth-floor perch. I rode his Dallas bus, watch in hand. Taxi driver Bill Whaley picked me up at the spot where he had picked up Oswald, drove me over the same route in the same taxi at the same speed, and dropped me off at the same curb.

I stood where officer J. D. Tippit died. I darted over the last lap of Oswald's flight to the Texas theater. In Dallas police headquarters, I sat where the assassin had sat, and took notes on the underground garage while standing where he was shot.

With a Secret Service agent and Dallas eyewitnesses, I went over the stretch of Elm Street where the President laid down his life.

I even had the damaged Dallas-to-Bethesda coffin uncrated for inspection, and I visited the hillside below Custis Lee Mansion in every season.

Research, of course, is no substitute for wisdom. Nevertheless, all these trips were necessary. I had to immerse myself in this subject until I knew more about it than anyone else and could reconstruct the past with

confidence.

### ***Not to Be Aloof***

We had not recovered from the catastrophe of November 1963. I cannot pretend to be aloof, though I have certainly tried to be objective.

Nor do I offer this study as a definitive work. In time, I myself shall merely become a source for future historians as yet unborn.

Yet it was imperative that this chronicle be laid before the generation of Americans who suffered through those days. I believe President Kennedy would have wanted them to know precisely what happened.

I should like to pay tribute to the host of people who relived the most dreadful hours of their lives with me. None of the interviews were easy.

I could not dilute my questions and still be faithful to my task, and over half the subjects experienced moments of emotional difficulty.

Often, I found that a principal figure had thrust his memories into a remote corner of his mind. Bringing them out was agonizing, almost unendurable.

President Johnson is an example. Twice, in May 1964, and April 1965, the President agreed to receive me and go through everything. Then he found he could not do it. We ultimately solved the dilemma by written questions and written answers.

### ***To Those Who Helped***

Thanking everyone who helped me during two years of investigation is impossible.

Nevertheless, I must acknowledge my great debt to several of those without whom I should never have come to the end of this long journey. They are Mrs. John F. Kennedy; Robert F. Kennedy; Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson; Eunice Shriver; Richard Cardinal Cushing; Theodore C. Sorensen; Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.; Richard N. Goodwin; McGeorge Bundy; Maj. Gen. Chester V. Clifton USA (Ret.); Edwin O. Guthman; John Seigenthaler; Evelyn Lincoln; and Evan Thomas, who edited *Profiles in Courage* and now this book.

—William Manchester.