

# Mrs. Kennedy Files Her Suit to Block Manchester Book

NEW YORK (AP)—Mrs. John F. Kennedy today asked a court to bar publication of "Death of a President" in book and magazine form.

Manhattan Supreme Court Justice Saul S. Streit signed a show-cause order calling upon the publishers and author to explain why they should not be enjoined from publishing the book.

The action will be heard Dec. 27.

## To Be Serialized

The defendants are William Manchester, the author; Harper & Row, Inc., book publishers, and Cowles Communications, Inc., which plans to begin serializing the book in Look magazine in January.

The suit also seeks to enjoin them from selling or "in any way physically disposing of" any portion of the manuscript.

It also asks that the defendants be enjoined from "announcing or advertising publications of the text."

Mrs. Kennedy said in court papers that in return for the "invaluable help" she furnished Manchester in preparing his manuscript, the author had "agreed not to publish that manuscript until he had obtained my express consent and approval as to the mode, time

and text of any publication."

## Affidavits Filed

She said that she had not given that consent.

She charged that both Harper & Row and Cowles communications had "refused to recognize my rights" under the agreement, "even though they were at all times well aware of them."

The court papers include a 10-page affidavit by Mrs. Kennedy and a 5-page affidavit by the late president's brother, Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, D-N.Y.

In giving the background of her agreement with the author, Mrs. Kennedy said:

"After the death of President Kennedy, our family became concerned about the spate of sensational and highly commercialized writings which we knew would appear concerning that event.

"In an attempt to make available to the public at least one work of accuracy and good

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## KENNEDY

# Leak on Talks May Have Led to Suit

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taste which would be presented in a dignified manner, the family decided to assist defendant Manchester, a recognized author, in the preparation of an account of the circumstances and events surrounding the death of President Kennedy."

She said Robert Kennedy then entered an agreement with Manchester to "assure the accuracy, good taste and dignity of the text Manchester was to prepare and its presentation to the public without sensationalism and excessive commercialism."

Mrs. Kennedy said that "without my intervention and that of other members and friends of the late president's family, Manchester would not have been able to gather so much pertinent and personal information. The very fact that the family of President Kennedy was cooperating with Manchester, was, of course, of immeasurable help to him in his amassing the facts."

She said the Kennedys gave Manchester this help because

they felt they were protected by the agreement, which forbade "improper use of the material he received."

Mrs. Kennedy said she understood the manuscript was approximately 300,000 words in length.

She said that since Manchester made an agreement with Harper & Row in April 1964, the publishers have been "repeatedly advised of her rights."

Mrs. Kennedy said she believed Harper & Row intended to publish the book in March or April of next year, asserting that the publication "is particularly distressing to me because defendant Harper & Row was designated as the publisher at my request and had been the publisher of several books authored by President Kennedy, including 'Profiles in Courage.'"

Neither the book firm nor Cowles Communication had any immediate comment on the court action.

A highly placed official in President Kennedy's administration described earlier today

a secret conference which—inadvertently—may have led up to Mrs. Kennedy's legal action.

"The question of a lawsuit was put down as a last resort," the former official said. "It was only mentioned."

He said he is sure that the publishers of the book learned of the sense of the meeting. And he said he believes they therefore concluded that they could resist further requests by Mrs. Kennedy for revisions or deletions.

When efforts to compromise failed, he said, Mrs. Kennedy brought the suit.

The former official gave this version of the conference:

It was held last October in Sen. Kennedy's New York City apartment. It lasted five hours.

Mrs. Kennedy did not attend. Sen. Kennedy was present "only a short time."

The meeting was called "because things had reached a difficult state with respect to certain parts of the book. The purpose was to work out compromises on them."

The group included Richard Goodwin, Theodore Sorensen, Pierre Salinger, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., Burke Marshall, James Greenfield, John Douglas and John Seigenthaler, editor of The Nashville Tennessean.

Those present had held important positions in Kennedy's administration. Salinger, former White House press secretary, and Greenfield, former assistant secretary of state, considered the meeting of such importance that they flew to New York from California to attend.

A few of those at the conference had read the whole book. Others had read the parts of it which had come into dispute. "Some of it was read in the meeting."

The ex-official described the book as "beautifully written" adding, "There's a headline in every page."

But, he continued, referring to Manchester's two interviews with Mrs. Kennedy, "It's clear that Manchester took stuff from the tape recorder when Mrs. Kennedy was not in control of her emotions."

"Also, the book's a rather unfortunate picture of President Johnson."

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Nonetheless, he said, the sense of the meeting was to try to work out compromises on the disputed passages and not to take the case to court.

"Until a couple of weeks ago," he said, "I had the impression that things were getting along pretty well on that. They must have run into a real snag."

Other sources report that negotiations fell apart a week ago today.