

Jackie's Lawyers

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Due in Court

By RALPH BLUMENFELD and WILLIAM GREAVES

Jacqueline Kennedy was expected to go to court today to try to stop publication of the book "Death of a President."

Reliable sources said Mrs. Kennedy's lawyer, former Federal Judge Simon Rifkind, would file suit before State Supreme Court Justice Tilzer for a court order to be served on author William Manchester, publishers Harper & Row and Look magazine.

Rifkind said that if the papers could not be prepared in time for filing today he would try to go before a judge tomorrow.

If granted, the order would require the three defendants to show cause why a temporary injunction should not be issued barring the book's four-part serialization by Look starting Jan. 10 and the hard-cover edition Harper plans to release in April.

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It was understood that Rifkind, who will be assisted by former Manhattan Democratic chief Edward Costikyan, will seek a hearing on the suit for early next week.

Meanwhile, feelers for an informal settlement reportedly were being extended.

"There is a lot of maneuvering going on," said one source in the publishing industry.

"You might say there is a lot

of talking back and forth," said another.

Mrs. Kennedy's side discounted this talk, implying that the issue would have to be drawn in the courts, even to the point of an open fight which the slain President's widow has conceded would be "horrible."

Jackie's Charges

Sen. Robert Kennedy, who hasn't commented publicly on Jackie's planned suit, is said by some acquaintances to have given her his support. Other sources say he considers the court action impractical and not worth the effort.

A source close to the negotiations said yesterday that Manchester had prepared "a com-

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plete statement telling absolutely everything in complete detail" but that the author's lawyers had advised him to "hold it in reserve."

"They're getting strong indications that Sen. Kennedy wants to get out and doesn't think [the suit] was a good idea to begin with," the source said.

Mrs. Kennedy's suit will charge Manchester with breach of faith; she objects to his extensive use in the book of emotional remarks she made during 10 hours of taped interviews with the author, after he allegedly promised in a "memorandum of understanding" not to use any material which might offend her. A final say in the book's contents was granted to Robert Kennedy by the author but then withdrawn, she charges.

Manchester's defense is that Mrs. Kennedy personally chose him to write the definitive historical version of her husband's assassination in Dallas and that Sen. Kennedy assured him a few months ago that the family would do nothing to block publication. The Kennedys say that assurance was subject to terms of the memorandum.

A Point Denied

Bennett Cerf, board chairman of Random House, added yesterday to speculation that the Kennedys fear an irreparable break with President Johnson over anti-Johnson passages in the book.

Cerf told Yale Daily News reporter Stephen Bedrick that the book depicts President Kennedy's aides and his widow as "shocked and infuriated" over Johnson's switch to the Presidential jet at Dallas' Love Field after the assassination.

Kenneth O'Donnell, then White House appointments secretary and President Kennedy's close friend, denied yesterday that there had been any "controversy" with Johnson on

the Dallas-Washington flight. O'Donnell told the Warren Commission: "I sat with Mrs. Kennedy almost all the way . . . the President called me up on one or two occasions and asked me to stay up in the cabin, wanted to talk to me, but I felt I had to stay with Mrs. Kennedy. So I sat with her on the whole trip."

Kennedy press aide Malcolm Kilduff, who has previously said some 1960 convention wounds were reopened on the plane, said yesterday that he would not disclose the "embarrassing" incidents that took place. He said he had turned down a magazine's five-figure offer for his story.