

No Progress Report

Kennedy and Harper Talks Are Adjourned

By Andrew J. Glass
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NEW YORK, Dec. 22—Negotiations with the publishers of William Manchester's book "The Death of a President" adjourned tonight without any indication whether any progress had been made or when they might be resumed.

Lawyers for Manchester, Mrs. John F. Kennedy and Harper & Row, which intend to publish the book in April, conferred for several hours in an effort to reach a settlement of Mrs. Kennedy's remaining litigation against the controversial account of the assassination of the late President.

The meeting, which took place in the office of Mrs. Kennedy's attorney, Simon H. Rifkind, followed an accord last night with Look magazine that removed or modified a dozen passages relating to the personal life of the late President's widow and her two children. In return, Mrs. Kennedy withdrew her suit

against Cowles Communications, Inc., publishers of Look.

In the Harper & Row case, the meeting, which took place in the New York State Supreme Court Justice Saul S. Streit's chambers, granted defense attorneys an extension until next Tuesday to answer Mrs. Kennedy's allegations. Justice Streit was known to be ready to push the deadline back even farther in order to facilitate an out-of-court settlement.

There were some indications that the accord with Look, calling for the deletion of 1600 words from the 80,000-word four-part serialization by the magazine, was concluded without the full approval of Manchester and his lawyer, Carleton G. Eldridge Jr.

Eldridge was kept informed by telephone as the pact between the Kennedy family and Cowles was hammered out.

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section-by-section, last night. At least three proposed drafts of a joint announcement were prepared until finally William Attwood, Cowles' editor-in-chief, prepared his own statement for the press.

Afterwards, Attwood was quoted as saying: "Did you see that Rifkind push me out of my seat? Do you know what those people would have done to us if we let them get on first? This way Look makes the announcement. They'd have killed us if we'd have let them put us on second."

Rifkind later recalled to a friend how Attwood had rushed out of the room. He denied that he had pushed him aside to gain the spotlight before the emplaced microphones and television cameras.

Calls Structure Intact

On leaving Rifkind's law offices, Attwood was further quoted as saying: "We gave up some slush. A little gingerbread off the top. But the structure is intact."

Two excisions requested by Mrs. Kennedy, according to one present at the negotiations, were:

1. A reference by Mrs. Kennedy to the discovery of a wrinkle on her face.

2. A quotation from Mrs. Hugh Auchincloss, Mrs. Kennedy's mother, to her daughter as "strategy."

The editorial deal with Look was concluded during two days in conference. On one side were six of Look's top editors, including Attwood and Gardner (Mike) Cowles, the editorial chairman. On the other side was Richard N. Goodwin, a former special assistant to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. All excisions were cleared with Sen. Robert F. Kennedy (D-N.Y.), now on a skiing vacation in Sun Valley.

Goodwin kept Mrs. Kennedy periodically informed as to which changes had been agreed to. The widow read parts of the Manchester text for the first time last Saturday at a session with Attwood and Cowles' lawyer, David W. Peck.

Attwood yesterday quoted her as saying at that time: "Bill, I had better leave you some cigarettes because you and Dick Goodwin have a lot of work to do." She was later reported, to Attwood's great surprise, as having left the session on the verge of tears.

Attwood and Goodwin first became acquainted when they shared a room as campaign

workers during John F. Kennedy's presidential drive in 1960. Attwood later served two years as Mr. Kennedy's Ambassador to Guinea and Kenya. He has written a book about his experiences, entitled "The Reds and the Blacks," due to be published by Harper & Row next spring.

None on Relationship

None of the episodes and anecdotes excised from the Look text dealt with the Kennedy-Johnson relationship. Mrs. Kennedy, however, has obliquely referred to Manchester's analysis of the transfer of power as unfair to Mr. Johnson and as an inaccurate recital of history.

In the initial draft, Manchester's opening passage was an anecdote that reflected unfavorably upon Mr. Johnson. At the suggestion of two Kennedy friends and Evan Thomas, the book's editor at Harper's, the passage was shifted to another portion of the 300,000-word book.

The two Kennedy readers who decided with Thomas to change the opening were John Seigenthaler, editor of the Nashville Tennessean, and Edwin O. Guthman, national editor of the Los Angeles Times.

The shifted passage, while unflattering to Mr. Johnson, was described by informants as not objectionable and unrelated to the assassination.

Wants More Deletions

Although Harper's said it was willing to make all the changes accepted by Look, Mrs. Kennedy is known to be pressing for further deletions from personal material that was not earmarked for serialization.

[Meanwhile, the West German illustrated magazine Stern announced in Hamburg that it would publish a complete and unabridged serialization of the book. The editor in chief, Henri Nannen, said Stern was not bound by any agreement between Look and Mrs. Kennedy.

[A source close to the family said: "We do not know anything about the Stern statement except Look represented to us that they had made no agreement which permitted Stern or any other publication to which Look had sold rights to publish any text other than that which appears in Look magazine."

[A Look spokesman said later "it is our responsibility. We will take every appropriate action." He did not elaborate.

[Sources in the publishing field said it was almost cer-

tain that bootleg copies of the manuscript were sold to outlaw publishers in Taiwan. But Government sources said in Taipei that the Chinese National Government probably would block any attempt to issue an unauthorized edition of the book.]