

O'Donnell Puts That Picture Into Focus

"Well, it's the old thing about a picture being worth 10,000 words."

And the picture in this case, according to former White House secretary Kenneth O'Donnell, is all the evidence required to refute what he called a "glaring error" in William Manchester's "The Death of a President."

Manchester's version of the swearing-in of President Johnson following the assassination of President Kennedy had O'Donnell pacing up and down the corridor of "Air Force One" in Dallas, "his hands clapped against his ears as though to block the oath."

But a picture of the ceremony in the Presidential plane,

produced yesterday by the Boston Globe, clearly shows O'Donnell standing at Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy's left as Johnson took the oath.

Reached at his Boston law office, O'Donnell told the New York Post:

"If a guy says you're walking up and down the aisle with your hands over your ears and the picture shows you standing there, well, it's the old thing about a picture being worth 10,000 words.

"I've only spoken to Manchester for 30 minutes in my life. I noticed this glaring error. Whether there are any others I won't know until I've read the book."

O'Donnell said that all he

knows about the Manchester book is what he has seen in the excerpts published by Look magazine.

"But I don't recall any of the animosities Manchester seems to have found aboard the plane," the former Kennedy aide said. "The fact of the matter is there never was any animosity."

O'Donnell, who told the Warren Commission that he had been present for Johnson's swearing-in, conceded that he had advised Mrs. Kennedy not to attend the ceremony.

When everything was ready for the oath-taking, O'Donnell said, Johnson asked "Where Jackie?"

"I objected to her being there for the swearing-in," O'Donnell recalled. "I said she had been

through enough. The President said, 'She's willing to do it.'

"I went to the bedroom and told her that in my judgment she shouldn't. I told her it would be too much for her. Jackie said 'I think I ought to.'

"We then left and I took her up to where the swearing-in was to take place. That's how I was there. I was standing next to Jackie through the whole ceremony . . . and I stayed with her the whole time."

Referring again to Manchester, O'Donnell said:

"As I've said, I don't recall any of the animosities he seems to have found. But if the man is kind enough to send me the book when it comes out, I'll be glad to read it. And then I may have something to say."