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President's Widow Fights for 'Privacy'

'My Only Redress...'

NEW YORK — (UPI) — Mrs. John F. Kennedy notified her handpicked historian, William Manchester, and his publishers today that she will wage a battle in the courts — "as horrible as a trial will be" — to block publication of "The Death of the President."

Mrs. Kennedy, angered because Manchester did not wait for her approval of the book about her husband's assassination, issued a rare public statement accusing him of breaking his contract with her and of exploiting her grief.

Her statement was issued because Harper and Row plans to publish the book in April and Look Magazine plans to serialize excerpts from it beginning with its Jan. 21 issue.

"Look Magazine, Harper and Row and Mr. William Manchester have repeatedly made clear that only legal action can alter their insistence on publishing at this time... a premature account of the events of November 1963 that is in part both tasteless and distorted," Mrs. Kennedy said.

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

Mrs. Kennedy accused the author and publishers of disregarding "accepted standards of propriety and good faith" and of violating her wishes and "the dignity and privacy which my children and I have striven with difficulty to retain."



MRS. KENNEDY
"Tasteless... distorted"



WILLIAM MANCHESTER
Book problem

She said Manchester exploited "the emotional state in which I recounted my recollections to him early in 1964."

"Its (the book's) 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," she said.

ACCUSATION

She also accused Cowles and Harper and Row of taking "commercial advantage of his (Manchester's) failure to keep his word."

"To to the author and publishers this book will be just another transient chapter in their work, but my children and I will have to live with it for the rest of our lives," she concluded.

Sources close to her said she was particularly upset because Manchester pictured some of the Kennedy family as regarding President Johnson with disdain.

The sources said she felt this might have a backlash effect on the political career of her brother-in-law, Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. The Senator, however, has said he will do nothing to prevent the book's publication.

Mrs. Kennedy had a summons served on Cowles Communications, Inc., Look's publishers, and Harper and Row yesterday notifying them of imminent court action to block publication of the book.

CAN'T STOP IT

But Cowles vice president William Atwood, himself a former Kennedy aide, said the summons was "just a piece of paper" and the Look article would be on the newsstands Jan. 10.

"The presses are already rolling. I don't see any way it can be stopped," he said, adding: "I'm very puzzled by Mrs. Kennedy's actions."

Mrs. Kennedy apparently

wants Manchester and the firms not to publish the book before she has a chance to decide on deletions.

Originally the book was not to have been published until 1968, giving the Kennedy family plenty of time to mull over it.

Manchester said he did not think Mrs. Kennedy had read the book.

He noted that "without the approval of Robert Kennedy, speaking as a member of the family" it would not have been possible for him to have written the book.

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

Look Magazine was reported to have paid more than \$650,000 for the serialization rights and to have sold the European rights for nearly \$300,000.

The Sunday Times of London paid more than \$100,000 for the rights in Britain and Ireland.