

Mrs. Kennedy Will Seek an Injunction To Block Book About the Assassination

Suit to Be Filed Against Harper & Row, Author and Look Magazine

Statements and foreword of book are on Page 36.

By JOHN CORRY

Mrs. John F. Kennedy will seek an injunction shortly to block the publication of "Death of a President," William Manchester's account of the assassination of her husband, on the ground of breach of contract.

Simon Rifkind, a former Federal judge who will represent Mrs. Kennedy, said he would file suit in State Supreme Court in two or three days against Mr. Manchester, Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., and Look magazine, which plans to begin a serialization of portions of the book on Jan. 10.

Mr. Rifkind said he would seek "a variety of relief" against the defendants, including a temporary injunction to restrain publication of the magazine articles and book.

Harper & Row had scheduled the publication of "Death of a President" for March and then announced that it would be delayed because of editorial revisions by the author. Look, which plans to increase its newsstand price from 35 to 50 cents when it begins the serialization and keep the new price thereafter, has said that it is going ahead with plans for publication.

Mrs. Kennedy said that, "as horrible as a trial will be," she had no other alternative to prevent the publication.

In one of her infrequent statements, she said that Look magazine, Harper & Row and Mr. Manchester "have repeatedly made clear that only legal action can alter their insistence upon publishing at this time—without regard to accepted standards of propriety and good faith, and in specific violation of my wishes, my contract with Mr. Manchester and the dignity and privacy which my children and I have striven with difficulty to retain."

In a statement, Harper & Row said that "it has done its utmost to comply with the wishes of the Kennedy family, and deeply regrets their present attitude."



Mrs. John F. Kennedy



William Manchester

Associated Press

Gardner Cowles, editorial chairman of Cowles Communications, Inc., which publishes Look, said:

"We feel strongly that it would be improper to withhold this significant document from the American people; to do so would amount to censorship of history."

Mrs. Kennedy said the book had "inaccurate and unfair references to other individuals," whom she did not identify, although it contained "generous references to all members of the Kennedy family."

These unfair references "are perhaps beyond my prevention," she said, "but to expose to all the world at this time all the

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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 was shocked, she said, that Mr. Manchester would "exploit the emotional state" she had found herself in after the assassination, and she said she was "equally shocked that reputable publishers" would cooperate with him.

The suit will be based on an agreement signed by Mr. Manchester and Senator Robert F. Kennedy on March 26, 1964. The agreement contains 11 clauses. The most significant ones say:

"The complete manuscript shall be reviewed by Mrs. John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Ken-

nedey and the final text shall be approved by them.

"The book may not be published before Nov. 22, 1968, and shall be published at such date thereafter as shall be mutually acceptable to the contracting parties."

A spokesman for Mrs. Kennedy said that neither she nor Senator Kennedy had read "Death of a President." To have done so, he said, would be "far too painful for either of them."

He said that neither the Senator nor Mrs. Kennedy had wanted a book written about the assassination, but that they "felt they had to accept one." He insisted that "no one in the Kennedy family had guided Manchester in the writing or had approached him while he was working."

Mrs. Kennedy's statement was issued by her office at 400 Park Avenue, on the corner of 54th Street. Later, at an informal briefing there, associates of the Kennedy family amplified her views.

They said that Mrs. Kennedy "had been personally assured by Manchester and Harper & Row that the book would contain nothing that would be personally offensive to her."

"The suit," they said, "does not involve truth or accuracy but a breach of faith. Manchester has refused to take some material out and has refused to talk about other changes."

They said, however, that no one close to the Kennedy's had any clear idea of what, precisely, was now in the book.

Representatives Are Refused

They said that Look had refused to show any representative of the Kennedys material it would use. Negotiations, they said, between representatives of the Kennedy family, Look, Har-

per & Row and Mr. Manchester had collapsed last Friday.

Mr. Manchester arrived here Tuesday morning on the Queen Mary. He had traveled from Europe alone and in the cabin class. He declined to answer questions about the dispute and said that he had been "puzzled by the disturbance." He said that he had found it "distracting."

Mr. Manchester, wrapped in a trench coat, dozed in a lounge as the ship was brought into port. He had been one of the first passengers to be cleared by the immigration and health officers after they had come aboard and he said he was eager to get ashore.

Difficulties Noted

In an attempt, perhaps, to relieve some of the bitterness that is certain to arise from the suit, a spokesman for Mrs. Kennedy noted the difficulties Mr. Manchester had faced in writing the book and called him "a sensitive human being who was really doing the work the Warren Commission had done, but was trying to do it alone."

Mr. Manchester was chosen to write "Death of a President" by Mrs. Kennedy in March, 1964. He had previously written about her husband two years before in "Portrait of a President," which a reviewer for The New York Times had said, "could only be described as adoring."

Mrs. Kennedy, a friend said, did not read all of Mr. Manchester's book, although she had seen part of its serialization in Holiday. When it was announced that the Kennedy family had authorized Mr. Manchester to write the book, a news release from Senator Kennedy, then the Attorney General, said that the account would not be expected before three to five years.

Mr. Manchester interviewed Mrs. Kennedy on two successive days in early April and tape-recorded her remarks. A spokesman for Mrs. Kennedy said that "Jackie made no attempt at self-censorship during the interview, not that there was anything improper said, but she did reveal her deepest thoughts."

The spokesman said he was not certain if Mrs. Kennedy could use the suit to seek possession of the tapes.

Finished Last Year

Mr. Manchester, he said, finished the manuscript late last year. Early this year John Siegenthaler, editor of The Nashville Tennessean, and Edwin O. Guthman, national news editor of The Los Angeles Times, read the manuscript at the request of Senator Kennedy.

Later, Richard Goodwin and Arthur Schlesinger Jr., who had been assistants to President Kennedy, received copies of the manuscript from Mr. Manchester.

Text of Look's Statement

Following is the text of a statement by William Attwood, editor in chief of all publications of Cowles Communications, Inc., concerning the planned serialization by Look magazine of parts of the book "Death of a President":

Last July, Look was invited to bid for the serialization rights to the William Manchester manuscript, "Death of a President." Look purchased the rights with the full knowledge and approval of the Kennedy family.

To keep the record straight, the public should know that Mrs. Kennedy asked Gardner Cowles, editorial chairman of Cowles Communications, Inc., last August, to postpone the start of the serialization in Look, so that the serialization would not be occurring during the anniversary of the assassination.

That is the time of year which, she said, was most difficult for her. Look agreed to a postponement in accordance with her wishes.

Two weeks later she requested that Look's serialization be reduced from the seven installments originally contemplated. Look agreed to this second request in deference to her feelings and rescheduled the serialization to four installments.

On Sept. 1, Look announced in The New York Times that the four installments would begin in January.

In late September, Mrs. Kennedy asked Look to see her representative, who wanted to suggest several changes in certain episodes in the manuscript that particularly distressed her. After several conferences, Look sent an editor to England to discuss these changes with Mr. Manchester, who agreed to a number of changes in the areas that were particularly troubling Mrs. Kennedy.

Then Mrs. Kennedy asked Cass Canfield, chairman of the executive committee of



William Attwood, editor-in-chief of the Cowles publications, made statement.

Harper & Row, to meet with Gardner Cowles to consider some further changes. These were considered with great care at two editing sessions lasting over many hours. A majority of them were finally agreed upon with Mr. Manchester.

Other changes or deletions were made by Mr. Canfield and Mr. Cowles which they felt would also avoid distress for the Kennedy family without in any way impairing the accuracy or completeness of the author's important manuscript.

"Mr. Manchester has written a very moving story of great historical significance," Mr. Cowles said Wednesday. "The public should have the opportunity to read it. We feel strongly that it would be improper to withhold this significant document from the American people; to do so would amount to censorship of history. Look, therefore, is proceeding with its plans to publish generous portions of the book in four installments starting with the issue of Look on sale Jan. 10."

Mrs. Kennedy's Statement

Following is the text of the statement by Mrs. John F. Kennedy on her suit to stop the publication of "Death of a President":

Look Magazine, Harper & Row and Mr. William Manchester have repeatedly made clear that only legal action can alter their insistence upon publishing at this time — without regard to accepted standards of propriety and good faith, and in specific violation of my wishes, my contract with Mr. Manchester and the dignity and privacy my children and I have striven with difficulty to retain — a premature account of the events of November, 1963, that is in part both tasteless and distorted.

Its 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 reac-

tions my children and I endured in those terrible days does not seem to me to be essential to any current historical record.

I am shocked that Mr. Manchester would exploit the emotional state in which I recounted my recollections to him early in 1964, and I'm equally shocked that reputable publishers would take commercial advantage of his failure to keep his word. To the author and publishers this book will only be another transient chapter in their works, but my children and I will have to live with it for the rest of our lives.

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

Harper & Row's Statement

Following is the text of a statement issued yesterday by Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., regarding William Manchester's book "Death of a President":

Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy requested William Manchester to write a book describing the events surrounding the death of President Kennedy. The Kennedy family also requested that the book be published by Harper & Row, and Harper & Row agreed to do so. It was also agreed that all profits on the book beyond a small return on Harper's investment would go to the Kennedy Library.

The manuscript was submitted to representatives designated by the Kennedy family early in 1966, and detailed conversations and discussions took place between those representatives, the author and Harper & Row.

After these discussions, Harper & Row and Mr. Manchester were officially advised in July of 1966 that "members of the Kennedy family will place no obstacle in the way of publication of his [Mr. Manchester's] book."

In reliance on this statement, Mr. Manchester and Harper & Row proceeded to the final editing of the book, which is entitled "The Death of a President." During this period, also, Harper's consented to further discussions

between representatives of the Kennedy family and Mr. Manchester and Harper & Row, and further changes were made at their request.

The revised manuscript was once more submitted, this time to Mr. Richard Goodwin, who had been designated by the Kennedy family for that purpose. He suggested certain further revisions.

Mr. Cass Canfield, chairman of the executive committee of Harper & Row, and Mr. Evan Thomas, chairman of the Harper editorial board, made a special trip to London to consult with Mr. Manchester and gave him a letter Mrs. Kennedy had written to him objecting to certain passages in the book.

Upon their return, at Mrs. Kennedy's request, they conferred with Mr. Gardner Cowles, editorial chairman of Cowles Communications, Inc., publishers of Look, and his associates, with reference to these suggestions.

Thereafter, with the approval of Mr. Manchester, substantial further revisions were made in the manuscript in response to the suggestions made by Mr. Goodwin, Senator Robert Kennedy and others on behalf of the Kennedy family.

Harper & Row has done its utmost to comply with the wishes of the Kennedy family, and deeply regrets their present attitude.

Manchester's Foreword to 'The Death of a President'

Following is the forward by William Manchester to his book, "The Death of a President," scheduled to be published in 1967 by Harper & Row:

On February 5, 1964, Mrs. John F. Kennedy suggested that I write an account of the tragic and historic events in Texas and Washington ten weeks earlier. Neither Mrs. Kennedy nor anyone else is in any way answerable for my subsequent research of this narrative. My relationships with all the principal figures were entirely professional. I received no financial assistance from the Kennedy family. I was on no Government payroll. No one tried to lead me. I believe every reader, including those who were closest to the late President, will find here much which is new and some perhaps, which is disturbing. That is my responsibility.

Mrs. Kennedy asked but one question, before our first taping session. She said, "Are you just going to put down all the facts, who ate what for breakfast and all that, or are you going to put yourself in the book, too?" I replied that I didn't see how I could very well keep myself out of it. "Good," she said emphatically.

The Kennedy family had not been eager to have any book written about the President's death. Understandably, they needed time to heal. But shortly after the burial in Arlington it became apparent that volumes would appear in spite of their wishes. Under these circumstances, Jacqueline Kennedy resolved that there should be one complete, accurate account.

I had not been among those who approached her. At that time I had not even met her. However, her husband had told her about me, and she had read a book I published about him the year before his death. Other members of the family agreed with Mrs. Kennedy that it would be wise to have a book written by an author whom the President had known and in whom he had expressed confidence.

My first calls were upon Bill Moyers at the White House, and Chief Justice Earl Warren. It was essential that the new President know what I proposed to do. It was equally imperative that the commission which the Chief Justice headed understand the exact nature of my inquiry. He was unfailingly polite and recognized that while the lines of the two investigations might occasionally intersect, they certainly did not run parallel. The commission was conducting a criminal probe. I was exploring the full sweep of events during what were, in some respects, the most

extraordinary hours in the history of our country.

Because I have been at this task longer than anyone, I have not only felt entitled to record my opinions, I have an inescapable obligation to do so. Withholding them would be shirking a grave duty, and among other judgments, you will find my assessment of the Warren Report. I shall not publish my files. It would be a formidable undertaking. (Mrs. Kennedy's answers to the commission's questions occupy two and a half pages; my tapes with her run ten hours.)

In my inquiry, I approached every person who might shed light upon his complex of events. I retraced President Kennedy's last journey from Andrews Air Force Base to San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth, Love Field at Dallas, Dealey Plaza, Parkland Hospital, back to Love and back to Andrews, over the ambulance route to Bethesda Naval Hospital and then to the White House, the great rotunda, St. Matthews and Arlington. I went over every motorcade route, searching for men and women who had been spectators. Every scene described was visited: the rooms in the Executive Mansion, the Presidential hotel suites in Houston and Fort Worth, the Houston Coliseum, the Fort Worth parking lot and ballroom, Marguerite Oswald's house, Oswald's tiny room in Dallas, Parkland's major surgery and minor surgery areas, Bethesda's basement morgue, the pavements

of Washington, the pews of St. Matthews.

I was led back and forth through the Presidential aircraft. I crawled over the roof of the Texas School Book Depository and sat in Oswald's sixth-floor perch. I rode his Dallas bus, watch in hand. Taxi driver Bill Whaley picked me up at the spot where he had picked up Oswald, drove me over the same route in the same taxi at the same speed, and dropped me off at the same curb.

I stood where Officer J. D. Tippit died. I darted over the last lap of Oswald's flight to the Texas Theater. In Dallas police headquarters, I sat where the assassin had sat, and took notes on the underground garage while standing where he was shot.

With a Secret Service agent and Dallas eyewitness, I went over the stretch of Elm Street where the President laid down his life. I even had the damaged Dallas-to-Bethesda coffin uncased for inspection, and I have visited the hillside below Custis Lee mansion in every season.

Research, of course, is no substitute for wisdom. Nevertheless, all these trips were necessary. I had to immerse myself in this subject until I knew more about it than anyone else and could reconstruct the past with confidence.

We had not recovered from the catastrophe of November, 1963. I cannot pretend to be aloof, though I have certainly tried to be objective. Nor do I offer this study as a definitive work. In time, I myself shall merely become a source for future historians as yet unborn. Yet it was imperative that this chronicle be laid before the generation of Americans who suffered

through those days. I believe President Kennedy would have wanted them to know precisely what happened.

I should like to pay tribute to the host of people who relived the most dreadful hours of their lives with me. None of the interviews were easy. I could not dilute my questions and still be faithful to my task, and over half the subjects experienced moments of emotional difficulty. Often, I found that a principal figure had thrust his memories into a remote corner of his mind. Bringing them out was agonizing, almost unendurable. President Johnson is an example. Twice, in May, 1964, and April, 1965, the President agreed to receive me and go through everything. Then he found he could not do it. We ultimately solved the dilemma by written questions and written answers.

Thanking everyone who helped me during two years of investigation is impossible. Nevertheless, I must acknowledge my great debt to several of those without whom I should never have come to the end of this long journey. They are Mrs. John F. Kennedy; Robert F. Kennedy; Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson; Eunice Shriver; Richard Cardinal Cushing; Theodore C. Sorensen; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.; Richard N. Goodwin; McGeorge Bundy; Maj. Gen. Chester V. Clifton USA (ret.); Edwin O. Guthman; John Seigenthaler; Evelyn Lincoln; and Evan Thomas, who edited Profiles in Courage and now this book.

—William Manchester
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