

## Hearing Set On Plea to Bar JFK Book

NEW YORK (UPI) — An historic legal battle, another unwanted legacy of President Kennedy's assassination, took shape Saturday between his widow and the publishers of "Death of a President."

A hearing was set for Dec. 27 on Mrs. John F. Kennedy's petition for an injunction to block publication of the manuscript as written by William Manchester, the Kennedy family-appointed author.

The Christmas week confrontation involves not only the most powerful men in American politics — including Robert F. Kennedy and Lydon B. Johnson — but two giants of the publishing industry — Harper and Row, and Cowles Communications.

### PETITION FILED

Mrs. Kennedy's petition, accompanied by an affidavit from her brother-in-law, Robert Kennedy, was filed in Manhattan's State Supreme Court Friday only 25 days before a serialized version of the assassination account is scheduled to hit the streets in Look magazine, a Cowles publication. The book is scheduled to be published in April by Harper and Row.

Justice Saul S. Streit said he would "decide the matter shortly" after the Dec. 27 hearing.

Justice Streit's order directed the defendants — Cowles, Harper and Row, and Manchester — to submit written briefs showing cause why a temporary injunction should not be issued as requested.

### CONTRACT TERMS

The petition and affidavits of the Kennedys drew the battle lines for the confrontation. It will be waged on a narrow issue — that of alleged breach of contract by Manchester.

But behind this contractual question will clash the broad issue of the right of a widowed First Lady and her two children

to privacy, and the right of an historian to publish without fear of court intervention.

And, submerged in the lawsuit, there lies dormant what is perhaps the most significant factor as far as the future is concerned. It is reported that Manchester's narration, echoing the private thoughts of several members of the Kennedy family, portrays President Johnson as boorish and brusque in assuming power.

### DEEP REACTIONS

This, it is contended, would strain to the breaking point the uneasy relations between the Johnsons and the Kennedys, and do perhaps irreparable damage to any White House ambitions of Robert Kennedy.

Mrs. Kennedy's petition and the senator's affidavit supported the contention that Manchester had agreed to publish nothing without approval of either the widow or Robert Kennedy and that nothing would be published before Nov. 22, 1968.

The senator denied that he ever gave approval or consent to the manuscript, to its publication or ever said anything to Manchester "from which he could reasonably believe that I did."

### SENSATIONALISM

Mrs. Kennedy said publication of the assassination account would result "in precisely the sensationalism and commercialism which we — Robert F. Kennedy and I — sought so strenuously to avoid."

She asked that publication in its present form be forbidden and that the defendants be restrained from using her name in connection with advertisements for the book. Further relief, in the form of compensatory or punitive damages, was left to the discretion of the court.