

Why Jackie is Angry Over the Book

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WASHINGTON— Author William Manchester describes with an agonizing vividness the thoughts and actions of Mrs. John F. Kennedy as she cradled the bullet-smashed head of her dying husband in the presidential limousine.

Another passage of his disputed manuscript portrays the sights, sounds and emotions that afflicted the anguished widow at the open casket of the dead President in the Parkland Hospital in Dallas.

He also relates how and what the children of the slain President were told of their father's death; how Mrs. Kennedy placed a final letter, intensely personal and emotional, in her husband's coffin; and what she wrote in an earlier letter sent from Greece to her husband while he was in the White House.

These are among the revelations Mrs. Kennedy seeks to bar from publication in her suit against Manchester and his publishers, according to friends and associates.

Nearly two weeks ago, Mrs. Kennedy's advisers listed 10 passages in the book, titled "Death of a President," which they believed ought to be deleted and submitted a memorandum on them to the publishers, Harper & Row, and Look magazine.

According to friends, Har-

per executives flew to London to discuss the proposed changes with Manchester, who was in England negotiating British publication of the book.

The Kennedy family apparently was not satisfied with the outcome of the talks with Manchester, and Mrs. Kennedy, feeling betrayed by the author and beset by the publishers, decided to take the case to court.

Friends knew that by going to court, she was risking the picture of nobility and courage that won the admiration of the world during her husband's funeral.

The Manchester manuscript reveals emotions and

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thoughts calculated to show her, in the words of one who read it, "not as a national shrine, but as a warm, real, emotional human being."

Whatever the outcome of her suit, Mrs. Kennedy may find she already has lost the battle to keep private her intimate recollections of her husband's murder and its aftermath.

AN EPIDEMIC

For so many have now read the manuscript, or parts of it, that tales are circulating through publishing circles with the virulence of an epidemic, sprinkled with hearsay and rumor.

Moreover, so many changes already have been made in the original Manchester manuscript that none can be sure whether he is talking about something now deleted or not.

For example, the author had a long passage about Lyndon B. Johnson and the late President at the LBJ Ranch just after the 1960

election, reflecting harshly upon Johnson.

This has been removed.

Those who read the manuscript as friends of the Kennedys advised Manchester to cut other anti-Johnson judgments, mainly subjective, lest in their bitterness they destroy the validity of his book.

These changes notwithstanding, enough remains of the tensions between the Kennedy group and the Johnson group aboard the presidential plane flying back to Washington from Dallas to add to the suppressed hostility now existing.

The White House has seen excerpts of the book, and reportedly has been quite as concerned as the Kennedys about some of the implications of the decision to hold the plane in Dallas until Johnson was sworn in as President, and of some of the grief-stricken contacts and exchanges during the flight.

Many of these stories are thrice-told, and have been recounted in many salons and saloons here and in New York.

So have some of the stories about Mrs. Kennedy's reactions, particularly the alleged remark that she was going to wear her blood-splattered clothes that tragic day so the world could see what they had done to her husband.

In what must have amounted to a cathartic unburdening of her private thoughts and emotions, Mrs. Kennedy apparently told Manchester things she now feels would be embarrassing, tasteless and an intrusion upon her privacy if they appeared in cold type.

It is this concern that has driven her to risk the very outcome she abhors by tak-

ing the whole matter to court and feeding the gossip mills and stimulating those who read the original, unedited manuscript to reveal what they remember of it.

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