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Kennedy Book

By George Esper

New York, Dec. 22 (AP)- The chief counsel for Harper and Row said today the book publishing firm "will be very glad" to settle the Kennedy book controversy with Mrs. John F. Kennedy along the lines of her out-of-court agreement with Look magazine.

Requested deletions and modifications that pertain to the personal life of Mrs. Kennedy and her children will allow Look to publish a four-part serialization of the book, "The Death of a President," as scheduled. The first part of the 80,000 word series will be in the Look issue that reaches newsstands Jan. 10.

When informed of the agreement reached last night, Edward S. Greenbaum, attorney for Harper & Row, said: "Harper & Row will be very glad to make a similar arrangement with Mrs. Kennedy."

Harper & Row officials requested a conference today with Simon F. Rifkind, the attorney for Mrs. Kennedy.

Told of Greenbaum's reaction to the Look, agreement, Rifkind said: "I'm glad to hear that. It shows he's interested in reaching an agreement."

Both Mrs. Kennedy and Gardner Cowles, ~~chairman~~ chairman of the board of Cowles Communications, Inc., the publishers of Look, issued statements shortly after the agreement was announced.

"I hope," said Dowles, "that the controversy between the Kennedy family and Harper & Row will be speedily resolved because Cass Canfield (chairman of the executive committee of Harper & Row) has been extremely helpful in the discussions concerning the serialization."

"The public should not be deprived of the opportunity to read" author William Manchester's manuscript, Cowles added.

Harper & Row plans to come out in book form next April with the 300,000 word story of the assassination of President Kennedy. The firm was not represented at yesterday's meeting which led to the Look agreement.

Mrs. Kennedy said in her statement that "Look magazine has agreed to remove or modify all those passages in the magazine version of 'The Death of a President' relating to the personal life of herself and her children.

"These paragraphs," Mrs. Kennedy's statement continued, "were the sole reasons for the initiation of her legal action. Since every passage of a personal nature under contention for several months was either deleted by Look or changed to her satisfaction, Mrs. Kennedy has withdrawn her suit."

The Cowles statement said that the changes involved "approximately 1,600 out of 80,000 authorized words, but that they "in no way affected the historical accuracy or completeness of Mr. Manchester's manuscript."

A Look spokesman said only one change would be required in the first installment and that change was in a section that had not yet been printed. Some sections of the magazine due out Jan. 10 have been printed.

Harper & Row has the book in type, but publication is not planned until April. Any required changes or deletions apparently can be made on the galley proofs.

Mrs. Kennedy, in what was interpreted by some as an apparent but indirect allusion to President Johnson, said in her statement:

"I have been told there are historical inaccuracies and unfair references in this book. That they have been written is unfortunate. However, it was clear before bringing this suit that historical judgments, even if inaccurate, could not properly be suppressed by a court of law. In time, history will deal fairly and justly with this period."

Several persons who have read the book reported that it shows a hostility ~~expressed~~ by the Kennedys towards Johnson and depicts the President in an unfavorable light. Some of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's advisors feel that it could further strain the political relationship between Johnson and Kennedy and possibly have an adverse effect on the Democratic Senator's political future.

A source close to the Kennedy family said earlier in the week that members of the family also were upset about the references to Johnson in the book, and that they felt Manchester had treated the President unfairly.

Robert Kennedy, vacationing in Sun Valley, Idaho, declined to comment on the Look agreement. He referred newsmen to the statement issued in New York by Mrs. Kennedy through her representatives.

Manchester could not immediately be reached for comment. A newsman who telephoned his home in Middletown, Conn., was told by his wife that he was not home. She said she did not know where he could be reached.

Mrs. Kennedy noted in her statement that "no material of historical significance has been altered nor has the historical record been impaired in the slightest by the modifications and deletions."

She said that neither she nor Robert Kennedy "has in any way approved or endorsed the material in the Look articles."

"The author, William Manchester, and the publisher of Look Magazine have assumed complete and sole responsibility," she said.

Cowles said the changes "concern only the passages to which Mrs. Kennedy objected on personal grounds."

"We are satisfied," he said, "with the outcome of the discussions. Mr. Manchester's book is a report of great value and meaning for all Americans. I am glad this dispute is behind us and that there has been no censorship of history.

"As the result of our discussions with Mrs. Kennedy and her representatives, Mr. Manchester's superb job of reporting remains intact. We wish to make it clear that neither Mrs. Kennedy nor Sen. Robert Kennedy nor any member of her family has in any way approved or endorsed material appearing in Look's serialization, for which the publishers of Look assume complete and sole responsibility."

Richard N. Goodwin, a former aide to President Kennedy who is acting as Mrs. Kennedy's adviser, made the final revisions in the serialization.

There were at least 12 principal passages in the book that Mrs. Kennedy wanted adjusted. These included:

-- Her reported reaction of "that 's absurd," when she was informed that Lee Harvey Oswald had been identified as her husband's assassin. "He (President Kennedy) didn't even have the satisfaction of being killed for civil rights," she was reported ~~ix~~ as having said. "It had to be some silly little communist."

-- Manchester's detailed account of how she used petroleum jelly to slip her wedding ring from her finger and place it on the dead president's hand. The ring was later removed.

-- An account in her own words of the last night she spent with the President before he was assassinated in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963.

-- Quotations from a love letter to her husband.

-- A passage relating that she was unable to make a decision on how to tell her daughter, Caroline, who was five at the time, that her father had been killed. The Kennedy family nurse, Maud Show, reportedly told Caroline of the death.

-- A vivid account of how she tried to cover the President's wounds after the shooting and how she refused to allow him to be taken into Parkland Hospital in Dallas until a Secret Service agent covered him with a coat.

-- Details of family bickering over where the body of the President should be buried. Mrs. Kennedy finally chose Arlington National Cemetery.

Mrs. Kennedy filed a suit in Manhattan Supreme Court last Friday naming Cowles, Harper & Row and Manchester as defendants. She charged breach of contract, invasion of privacy and infringement on her copyright by unauthorized use of her name in advertisements and promotion.

She said in her suit publication of "The Death~~ix~~ of a President" in either book or serial form would violate a memorandum of agreement that Manchester and Robert Kennedy signed on March 26, 1964.

The memorandum specified that the book would not be published before Nov. 22, 1968, five years after the assassination, and that in return for the right to approve the manuscript, Mrs. Kennedy gave Manchester 10 hours of taped interviews.

Mrs. Kennedy said she had never given her approval. Robert Kennedy backed her up in an affidavit submitted to the court.

Manchester had insisted that "in the summer of 1966, authorization was given by the family for publication of the book in early 1967, to be preceded by serialization in Look magazine."

The Kennedys denied this.

In the suit, Mrs. Kennedy said: "I am shocked that Mr. Manchester would exploit the emotional state in which I recounted my recollections to him early in 1964." She said publication of the manuscript at that time would "result in precisely the sensationalism and commercialization which we -- Robert F. Kennedy and I -- have sought so strenuously to avoid."

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New York -- first add Kennedy book (A42-52) x x x to avoid."

Legally, the suit against Harper & Row and Manchester still stands. They have been ordered into court next Tuesday for a hearing, but this conceivably could be postponed by the court in a delay is sought by the defendants while they try to work out an agreement.

Both Look and Harper & Row had been scheduled to file answers in court today to Mrs. Kennedy's charges preliminary to the hearing.

But on Wednesday, according to Rifkind, Look asked for a delay until tomorrow since secret negotiations were taking place. A settlement was in the making and the principals wanted to put off going into court which, it was felt, could lead to a hardening of positions.

The court granted the delay to Look, and the same privilege was extended to Harper & Row, which is now scheduled to file papers tomorrow.

Manchester received \$665,000 from Look for serialization rights. The magazine, in turn, sold the European serialization rights for about half that amount.

Harper & Row has been offered \$1 million by Dell Books for the paperback rights. The firm also has been paid \$250,000 by the Book of the Month Club for the right to distribute the book to its members.

Harper & Row said it would increase its first printing from the planned 100,000 copies to possible as many as 250,000 copies. The firm has given Manchester an advance of \$40,000. which was to be deducted from his share of the royalties. Manchester also would receive half of the ~~\$250,000~~ \$250,000 from the Book of the Month Club.

Much of the material Mrs. Kennedy objected to already has been reported in newspapers and magazines.

Earlier yesterday, publishing industry sources said that objectionable passages of an intimate persona nature that Manchester agreed to delete even before the suit was filed probably will appear in contraband versions of the book. The contraband versions ~~presumably~~ presumably also would include the charges (changes ?) made in the Look agreement.

A spokesman for Harper & Row indicated that duplicates of the 1,200-page typewritten text were made while 25 copies were circulating among prospective bidders ~~from~~ for magazine rights. He said he felt duplicates were "almost certainly" sold to outlaw publishers in Formosa.

"It's all terribly plausible," said Roger Smith, news editor of Publishers Weekly, a trade journal. "They've got (in Formosa) the second best printing layout in Asia -- some of it bought with Agency for International Development (AID) money -- and they're not a party to any international copyright agreement."

A Look magazine editor confirmed that "at least one" reproduction of the manuscript was made while editors there were considering purchasing serialization rights.

One informed publishing man said that virtually anything could be passed off as the "one true and original Manchester book." Accurate copy or part of a copy of the book that is now in New York is counterfeit.

A spokesman for Harper & Row, which had agreed to remove some of the passages that Mrs. Kennedy objected to prior to her suit, said that Manchester was now correcting galley proofs of his book. The spokesman ~~xxxx~~ added that a complete set of galley proofs had not yet been made.

The book, which will have a midnight blue jacket that suggests a night sky, has not yet been bound.

The situation that led to last night's agreement with Look was held in Rifkind's office. A few hours before the agreement was announced, the settlement was discussed over the telephone with Robert Kennedy.

Earlier in the day, Attwood and Goodwin met for a final editing.

It was understood that details also were settled on the advertising, promotion and foreign rights. It was reported that any material Mrs. Kennedy found objectionable could not be used in the advertising.

Under the settlement, Look is also said to be responsible for anything that appears in the foreign serialization.

Meanwhile author Theodore H. White, who reportedly was Mrs. Kennedy's first choice to write the book about the assassination of the President, sent a letter to the New York Times saying that "beyond legality there are larger questions of morality and obligation -- on her (Mrs. Kennedy's) part as well as Manchester's."

White, who reportedly turned down the offer because he thought the contract with the Kennedy's was too restrictive, was the author of "The Making of a President," the story of the 1960 presidential campaign.

His letter, printed today in the "Letters to the Editor of the Times" column, said in part:

"By signing an agreement with the Kennedys, Mr. Manchester undertook to write an authorized story. Those of us who write of public affairs would do almost anything rather than sign such a contract.

"Mrs. Kennedy admitted Mr. Manchester to the privacy of her memories with the explicit understanding, written and oral, that she would have control of those memories in final form before publication.

"The understanding has been broken. Mr. Manchester accepted special privilege but has repudiated the special obligation that comes with it. Such a commitment, once accepted, removes any writer from pleading freedom of the press or the imperatives of history.

"There is a further set of facts: Mrs. Kennedy, whether wisely or not, undertook to make available to Mr. Manchester memories and material from other people, in order to make sure the story of the tragedy would be fully told, while retaining for herself final control of the final manuscript.

"Many people supplied material at her request which they would never have dreamed of making public except for their trust in her final authority over their use.

"If private conciliation could not restore Mr. Manchester's obligation, there was no recourse left to her but to sue. Only thus could she be absolved of the responsibility for what she cannot fully control, or her control be re-established over an account of her private anguish and the confidences of those people she delivered to Mr. Manchester.

"With great courage she has accpeted the pain of this congfrontation rather than shirk her responsibility to herself, her children, her friends.

"The issue is whether Mr. Manchester be given an exemption from ~~xxx~~ pledged word, while Mrs. Kennedy is left to bear public responsibility for what she cannot control."

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