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## Kennedy Book Suit Postponed

New York

A temporary truce was reached yesterday between representatives of the Kennedy family and Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., in the legal battle over the contents of William Manchester's book "The Death of a President."

In a joint statement by the publisher and Jacqueline Kennedy, both sides agreed to postpone a court hearing on the matter until mid-January — should such a hearing still prove necessary.

The statement said negotiations "have been making steady progress toward an amicable settlement," despite the absence of Manchester, who is ill with pneumonia in a Connecticut hospital.

### SUIT

Mrs. Kennedy had filed suit in State Supreme Court seeking to block publication of the book about the assassination of her husband.

At a hearing yesterday, counsel for Harper & Row and Manchester both asked for a delay. Manchester's attorney asked that the hearing be put back to January 16.

See Page 10, Col. 3

which was granted. But counsel for the publisher, in a surprise move, asked that the hearing be delayed only until tomorrow.

This request was superseded later in the day by the joint statement on the decision to put off legal action until mid-January.

### STATEMENT

The statement said: "Both parties have agreed to continue consultations with Mr. Manchester and his representatives, as well as negotiations among themselves for the adjustment of outstanding differences.

"Despite the author's illness, sufficient progress has been made so that Mrs. Kennedy has decided not to press her motion for a temporary injunction; and, although Harper & Row intends to publish the book, it has voluntarily agreed not to do so before April 1, even though there is no court order forbidding prior publication.

### AGREEMENT

"Both parties have agreed to request a trial date for mid-January in the event that no agreement is reached."

The publisher's move for a hearing tomorrow had startled former Federal Judge Simon H. Rifkind, who is Mrs. Kennedy's legal representative in the case because Manchester's attorney had received an adjournment until January 16.

Asked what the Harper & Row move meant, Rifkind snapped:

"It's beyond my comprehension."

The publisher's move set off speculation that Harper & Row was attempting to force

a speed-up in the negotiations by asking for the early hearing. It was also assumed that the publisher was trying to force Mrs. Kennedy's hand in the belief that she wanted to avoid a court battle.

Mrs. Kennedy's specific objections were to several sections of the book that she considered too personal as to the lives of herself and her children.