

Kennedy Book Settlement May Be Near

NEW YORK — (AP) — The Kennedy book dispute could end quietly now following Mrs. John F. Kennedys' decision to temporarily withhold her suit to stop its publication.

"I'm not going to guarantee it," a Kennedy family spokesman said, "but much points to a resolution. There has been progress and I think things could well be resolved noiselessly and soon."

Attorneys for Mrs. Kennedy and Harper & Row, publishers of William Manchester's "The Death of a President," an account of the Kennedy assassination, agreed yesterday to put off hearings on her request for an injunction against the book until mid-January in expectation of a reasonably quick settlement.

The parties said the arrangement will give them sufficient time for more discussion on passages to be trimmed from the 300,000-word text.

Both sides characterized progress as "steady."

"That's great," said Manchester's wife, Julia.

Manchester, recovering in a hospital from pneumonia, was not available for comment.

Harper & Row called the situation "hopeful" and indicated an amicable settlement is possible soon.

The publisher also agreed not to bring out the book until April 1.

Mrs. Kennedy, vacationing with her children on the British West Indian island of Antigua, could not be reached for comment.

A vacation was recommended for Manchester, too.

Dr. F. Erwin Tracy said the writer is responding well to treatment at Middlesex Hospital in Middletown, Conn., and no longer is in critical condition.