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BOOK BJT (420)

NEW YORK, MARCH 1 (AP)--THE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE KENNEDY FAMILY AND HARPER & ROW PUBLISHERS OVER THE BOOK, "THE DEATH OF A PRESIDENT," APPARENTLY PROMPTED SEN. ROBERT F. KENNEDY TO HALT PUBLICATION OF A BOOK CONTAINING THE SENATOR'S MAJOR SPEECHES, IT WAS LEARNED TODAY.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLICATION OF THE SENATOR'S BOOK, "NEW PROBLEMS, NEW PROPOSALS," APPEARED IN HARPER & ROW'S WINTER CATALOGUE WHICH CAME OUT LAST NOVEMBER.

BUT YESTERDAY, EVAN THOMAS, VICE PRESIDENT OF HARPER & ROW, SAID THE 150-YEAR-OLD PUBLISHING HOUSE DECIDED TO DROP THE BOOK FROM THE WINTER SCHEDULE.

"THE FIRST INDICATION THAT THERE WOULD BE A DELAY CAME LAST DECEMBER WHEN THE SENATOR FAILED TO SEND US THE INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK," SAID THOMAS. "WE SENT SOME INQUIRIES TO WASHINGTON, BUT RECEIVED NO REPLY."

"HE GOT A REPLY TO EVERYTHING HE SENT," A KENNEDY AIDE SAID. "IF HE DIDN'T IT WAS SIMPLY BECAUSE THE SENATOR DIDN'T HAVE TIME. SOME MATERIAL WAS NOT FURNISHED. IT WAS NOT COMPLETELY BUTTON-HOLED."

CASS CANFIELD, CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF HARPER & ROW, SAID THAT A FEW MONTHS AGO, AFTER PART OF THE BOOK ALREADY HAD BEEN SET IN TYPE, KENNEDY SUGGESTED HOLDING UP PUBLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL MATERIAL.

"WE BOTH AGREED TO PUT IN SOME MORE SPEECHES," SAID CANFIELD.

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THE KENNEDY AIDE SAID THAT TO THE BEST OF HIS RECOLLECTION THE DECISION TO POSTPONE PUBLICATION OF THE BOOK WAS MADE SOMETIME IN LATE OCTOBER OR EARLY NOVEMBER, 1966.

"THERE HASN'T BEEN ANY DISCUSSION SINCE THE POSTPONEMENT," THE AIDE SAID.

ANOTHER SOURCE SAID THE REASON FOR THE POSTPONEMENT WAS THE ANTICIPATED CONTROVERSY STIRRED UP BY AUTHOR WILLIAM MANCHESTER'S BOOK,

"THE DEATH OF A PRESIDENT," WHICH HARPER & ROW IS PUBLISHING IN APRIL AFTER REACHING AN OUT-OF-COURT SETTLEMENT WITH MRS. JOHN F. KENNEDY.

MRS. KENNEDY SUED MANCHESTER AND HARPER & ROW LAST DECEMBER TO BLOCK PUBLICATION OF THE BOOK ON GROUNDS SOME PASSAGES WERE TOO PERSONAL AND WERE AN INVASION OF PRIVACY. AN AGREEMENT WAS REACHED, AND MRS. KENNEDY DROPPED THE SUIT. THE BOOK DEALS WITH THE EVENTS SHORTLY BEFORE AND AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY IN DALLAS.

WHILE THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE SENATOR'S BOOK WAS DECIDED ON EITHER IN LATE OCTOBER OR EARLY NOVEMBER, SEVERAL WEEKS BEFORE MRS. KENNEDY BROUGHT HER SUIT IN DECEMBER, THE SOURCE EXPLAINED THAT A CONTROVERSY WAS SHAPING UP AT THE TIME OF THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE ROBERT KENNEDY BOOK.

THE SOURCE SAID IT WAS FELT BY BOTH THE KENNEDYS AND HARPER & ROW THAT IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO PROCEED WITH THE SENATOR'S BOOK WHILE THE MANCHESTER BOOK CONTROVERSY WAS STILL UP IN THE AIR.

"IT WASN'T CLEAR HOW IT (THE MANCHESTER BOOK CONTROVERSY) WAS GOING TO END," THE SOURCE SAID.

WHILE MRS. KENNEDY'S SUIT WAS SETTLED OUT OF COURT, THE INCIDENT WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE HAD AN IMPACT ON THE LONG FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE KENNEDY FAMILY AND CANFIELD AND THOMAS.

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NEW YORK -- BOOK BJT A49-50 ADD: THOMAS.

THOMAS SAID NO CONTRACT HAD BEEN DRAWN WITH SENATOR KENNEDY ON HIS BOOK.

"WE SHALL ALWAYS BE READY TO PUBLISH THE NEW BOOK IF MR. KENNEDY WANTS US TO," SAID THOMAS.

"THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR PUBLICATION AT PRESENT," THE KENNEDY AIDE SAID.

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