

# A Torrent Of Leaks on JFK Book

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NEW YORK — The carefully guarded manuscript stacked in piles on the desk is the vivid, absorbing story of tragedy past.

But the pen-scratchings in the margin are fateful hints of the drama to come.

"The margins are replete with notations from Kennedy-appointed readers, saying 'delete' this, or 'delete' that. Beneath many of them are counter-notations from W. M. (the author, William Manchester) saying 'stet,' or 'let it stand.'"

The speaker is one of those privileged few who read the manuscript of "The Death of a President" before it erupted into a furor.

## EVERYONE CALLS

His recollections are in great demand.

"I haven't been able to work all day today," says another privileged reader. "I've been besieged by calls from old friends wanting to know what I remember."

A literary agent with some

knowledge of the case is similarly engaged. Even his secretary's relatives are calling to find out what he knows.

In a torrent of leaks, mixed with some errors of memory and some imagination, the Manchester book is coming to light snippet by snippet.

The irony is the tragedy of a book about a tragedy, as learned here from talks with officials on both sides, and with impartial readers of the manuscript.

## LOVE LETTER

"It's bad to have a leak saying Mrs. Kennedy objects to publication of a letter to her husband from Greece," says a source close to the Kennedys.

"The option without the lawsuit, though, seems to be publication of the letter itself to millions of people around the world.

"That was a love letter, and it was terribly intimate. How would you like somebody to print the love letters you've written to your wife?"

According to those who have read it, the Manchester book does not contain some of the incidents that have been attributed to it.

And sources on both sides seem to agree President Johnson is not portrayed so darkly as many reports suggest.

"He doesn't come off very well," says one reader, "but its not worse than much that is written about LBJ every day. There are no living villains in this book. Nobody is going to be defeated because of it."

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