

SF Chronicle
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Manchester

Reported Improving

New York Times

Middletown, Conn.

William Manchester, author of the controversial book "The Death of a President," remained on the critical list in the hospital here yesterday, more as a precaution than out of fear for his life.

The 44-year-old Manchester was taken to Middlesex Memorial Hospital Sunday night with a temperature of 104.2 degrees after being stricken with a pneumonia infection in the lower lobe of his left lung.

At noon yesterday however, his temperature was a normal 98.6.

Dr. F. Irwin Tracy, Man-

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chester's physician, said the author would remain in the hospital for a week to ten days, barring any unforeseen developments.

The strain Manchester has been under during the past weeks while negotiations were under way concerning the publication of his book, could have contributed to his present condition, Dr. Tracy said.

The onset of pneumonia began Christmas Day.

Dr. Tracy also said that the author had been hospitalized for a month last year for "emotional stress."

As a result of Manchester's illness, his publishers, Harper & Row, cancelled a scheduled meeting with representatives of Jacqueline Kennedy. The meeting was called to discuss changes in the Manchester manuscript to meet Mrs. Kennedy's objections to "personal" material used by the author.

A source close to the Kennedy family said negotiations "definitely had made progress and the meetings... were friendly."

A hearing on Mrs. Kennedy's suit against Harper & Row is scheduled for New York Supreme Court today.

The essence of the dispute is Mrs. Kennedy's charge that Manchester and his publishers violated a written agreement that the book would not be published without her approval.

Manchester replied to that charge in a long letter published yesterday in the New York Times. The Manchester letter was inspired by an earlier letter in the Times from the author, Theodore White.

"Mr. White makes two key points," Manchester wrote to the newspaper. "The first, is that no writer should agree to submit his manuscript for approval. I may say that under ordinary circumstances I should never have agreed to do so. I merely ask that readers of the Times recall the Nation's emotional climate in the wake of the President's murder. It was difficult to think clearly. I vividly recall that after the telephone call from Washington asking me to undertake this project I turned to my secretary and said, 'How can I say no to Mrs. Kennedy?' She replied, 'You can't.' Nor could I. One did not, I felt, bargain over a national tragedy.

"Mr. White's second point is far graver, for he challenges my personal integrity. He charges that I broke faith with Mrs. Kennedy — that the issue is whether Mr. Manchester is to be given an exemption from pledged word... I consider this an assault upon my character and set forth the basic facts, which are as follows:"

Manchester then summarized his agreement with the Kennedy family which involved "no contract with Mrs. Kennedy" but rather an agreement with "another member of the family who represented her" (Senator Robert F. Kennedy).

When the manuscript was finished, he wrote, it was submitted for approval to "a team of men, each of whom had been close to President Kennedy" and who had been selected to represent the Kennedys in editing the book.

After four months of consultation and editing, this "team... assured the family that the manuscript was satisfactory. A member of the family then sent a special delivery letter to Mr. (Evan) Thomas (of Harper & Row) and a telegram to me stating that 'members of the family will place no obstacle in the way of publication' of the work..."

"Under these circumstances it seems inaccurate, unjust and cruel to accuse me of a breach of faith... in over 20 years as a professional writer I have never broken a confidence, never published a statement made off the record, never exploited a source."