



Bob Considine

If Joe Kennedy Were in Charge

It boggles my brain when I try to figure out what turns the tantrums over the Manchester book would be taking today if Joseph P. Kennedy Sr., was not incapacitated.

Behind the curtain that has fallen between himself and communication with the outside world must seethe frustration and anger fierce enough to create spontaneous combustion. But it is the fate of this once volcanic man to suffer in helpless silence the playing out of a seamy drama that has brought no credit to any of the principals.

The old saw about every action inducing a reaction does not apply to "The Death of a President." This book has succeeded in tarnishing the images of everyone it has touched, chiefly that of the woman who just a short time ago was voted the most admired person of her sex in all the world.

Jacqueline Kennedy did not step down from her pedestal daintily. She threw herself down.

★ ★ ★

IF MANCHESTER and the assorted publishers bucked old Joe in his prime he would have fought them to the hilt with all his power of sulphuric invective, his skills and the vast fortune he always tapped generously when he felt a cause or crusade warranted the tapping.

A veteran N.Y. Journal-American photographer who was taking candid shots of him in 1960 asked him to straighten his necktie. Old Joe obliged. The instant he touched the knot the photographer flashed a bulb.

One of the nation's richest men vaulted out of his office chair like a shell and, red of face, cursed the photographer until the plaster shook. The poor man instinctively threw up a guard as if waiting to be whipped.

"Don't you ever do that again, you ———," old Joe shouted when he cooled out a bit. "If you want a picture of me adjusting my tie you say to me 'I want a picture of you adjusting your tie.' But if you every try to trick me again, I swear to God I'll . . ."

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I WOULD HAZARD the guess that if old Joe were operating on all eight cylinders, his daughter-in-law would never have been quoted in public as saying that anyone who combated her opposition to the Manchester book would be regarded as a "rat" by the general public unless she in turn suddenly eloped with Eddie Fisher.

Whether by coincidence or design Fisher immediately announced his engagement to Connie Stevens.

Hear Bob Considine on KGO Radio (810) Monday through Friday at 5:50 p.m.