

William Manchester has no monopoly on being wrong. Nor has he a patent that makes him only right. What he has is a literary gold mine. What he was given by the Kennedy family in early 1964 when it commissioned him to write the complete and "accurate" account of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was a license to print money.

What he did in return was to create a national scandal of unimaginable magnitude. To at least a large degree, this has been mitigated by the Kennedy law suit against him, Look magazine, and book publisher Harper & Row.

Only the jet-set mentality conceives that the basic need for this suit relates to slurs against President Lyndon Johnson. Only the royal-family concept lay behind the Commissioning of one man to write history, the assumption that when the royal sword touched his shoulder his eye became all-seeing and his mind all-knowing, and his pen all-telling. Consistent with this is the bland assumption that with Manchester so touched, so ennobled and so superhumanly empowered, no one else should, need or, in fact, might undertake the task.

Total wisdom and complete ~~Wisdom and~~ understanding had been ordained by the family. How dare any other American address himself to either the assassination of his President or the dubious inquest with which he was consigned to history? What need was there? More, it was wrong and had to be - and by the family was - opposed. Manchester, ~~the all-knowing,~~ having been anointed all-seeing and all-knowing, alone was to tell the story.

Not even born nobility would have dared such an imposition on history, such an intrusion into national life (for assassinations, whether or not so intended, inevitably have immediate political consequences), or presumed the straight-from-God prerogative of dispensing divine truth and revelation. Only an uninhibited ego would accept such an assignment and role. Manchester had the ego equal to the requirement or the compensating lust for money. He took the assignment more famous writers declined.

Had anyone ever dreamed in those awful days immediately after the crime of the century that the government would tell us less than the total truth and that without restraint or the possibility of doubt or error, the dreadful ~~manchester~~ Manchester scandal Manchester manufactured would not have risen. The commission of inquiry was headed by eminent, respected men, selected to appeal to every political fraction in the country except those who held the beliefs of the murdered leader. Its members were all men of distinction and international reputation. Certainly the country, especially the Family, never suspected they would fail in their unhappy task.

Manchester was commissioned before the Commission held its first hearing. Had the thought occurred to the Family that the official account of the assassination would be anything less than entirely unquestionable, it seems safe to assume that it would never have jeopardized the reputations of its members, the national honor and the political fortunes of those in political life.

Because the Family could never have dreamed that the government would "whitewash" the investigation of the crime, it never conceived that it could be sponsoring the unofficial whitewash. With anything short of total agreement on what did happen that terrible day in Dallas, any accounting with the Family imprint constituted the unofficial whitewash.

This is the major, the unarticulated scandal that was probably laid to rest with the filing of the lawsuits against Manchester and the publishers in the name of Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy and after abundant and prominent publicity on _____ . The effect of the publicity was to disassociate the Family from Manchester's work. Once this was accomplished, the suits were settled privately with remarkably little deletion from the texts, certainly so little that few of the things bruited in headlines could have been eliminated.

All the Kennedy's lead active lives, whether of social or political orientation, and, with the confidence so obviously placed in Macnhester, whether or not it derived from ^{his} ~~the~~ flattering biography (_____) of the late President, it is understandable that all shunned reliving that tragedy, more poignant for them than for any other Americans, and left their writer alone.

Consistent with this is the public record of Senator Robert F. Kennedy as Attorney General of the United States: he disassociated himself from the official investigation of the assassination. Whether or not he had an idea of the information it was developing and how it was being conducted, he did not direct it. My extensive examination of the Commission's published 27 volumes and its extensive once-secret files reveals no evidence of his direction or control of the investigation. As Attorney General he should have vested confidence in his subordinates. The evidence is that he did.