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## M'NAMARA FEARED PLOT--MANCHESTER

# All U.S. Bases Put on Alert After Slaying--JFK Book

By RELMAN MORIN

NEW YORK (AP)—Fears of an international plot to overthrow the United States government prompted Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara to alert every American military base around the world the minute he heard that President John F. Kennedy had been shot in Dallas, William Manchester says.

"By every readable signal the situation was very red," Manchester writes in his book, "The Death of a President."

The much-disputed book contains 350,000 words of text, plus diagrams, appendices and a list of sources.

M'NAMARA "Kept his head and made all the right moves" even before he learned that Kennedy was dead, Manchester says. The worldwide warning told American military commanders, "This is the time to be especially alert."

President Lyndon B. Johnson is quoted in the book as saying "there might be war" if Americans became aroused by suspicions that Soviet Premier Khrushchev and Fidel Castro had conspired to kill Kennedy.

It was the "wild rumors" about a conspiracy that brought the Warren Commission into existence, Manchester says. The commission, after a long investigation, concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald—and Oswald alone—assassinated the President.

JOHNSON HAD difficulty persuading Chief Justice Earl Warren to head the inquiry, Manchester says, because Warren opposed "extra-curricular activity" by Supreme Court justices.

Manchester quotes Warren as saying: "The President told me how serious the situation was. He said there had been wild rumors and there

was the international situation to think of. He said he had just talked to Dean Rusk, who was concerned. . . . He said that if the public became aroused against Castro and Khrushchev there might be war."

Manchester agrees with the commission's finding. But he says its "real work" was done by the general counsel, J. Lee Rankin, and the 14 assistant counsels. As for the members of the commission, Manchester writes, ". . . the lustrous names of the seven appointees were for public consumption."

Manchester also is critical of actions of Secret Service agents before the assassination and immediately after the first shot struck Kennedy. He makes these points:

1. On the night before the tragedy, "nine agents of the White House detail . . . were out on the town. They started with beer and mixed drinks at the Fort Worth Press Club. . . ."

2. "At various times, they were joined by three agents of the 12-to-8 shift—who were officially on duty, assigned to guard the President's bedroom door. . . ."

3. A jet airplane pilot is grounded if he fails tests that measure his reflexes. "However, presidential bodyguards were not required to take" these tests.

4. When the first shot was

fired, "most of the hunters in the motorcade identified the sound immediately as rifle fire, but the White House detail was confused."

5. Two agents were in the front seat of the presidential car. "They were in a position to take evasive action after the first shot, but for five terrible seconds, they were immobilized."

Manchester summarizes his indictment in the words, "the central fact was that the Secret Service had failed."

A publishers' note on the title page says, "Harper & Row wishes to make it clear that neither Mrs. John F. Kennedy nor Sen. Robert F. Kennedy has in any way approved or endorsed the material appearing in this book."

This reflects a bitter controversy which ranged for months between Manchester and the Kennedys. Last December, Mrs. Kennedy called the manuscript "tasteless and distorted" and brought suit to block publication. She demanded revisions and deletions. Three former aides to the senator said, after reading the manuscript, "We were talking about 144 changes."

MANCHESTER REPLIED that the reasons for demanding changes were "political" and constituted "an attempt to suppress vital facts."

Their acrimonious exchanges, erupting over a period of several months, received front page reporting in newspapers from coast to coast. This, coupled with Look Magazine's four-part serialization of the book, gave Manchester's story an unprecedented degree of advance publicity.

Perhaps as a result, book-sellers report a large volume of advance orders.

Harper & Row said the first printing runs to 600,000 copies. There are indications that a second printing will appear almost immediately.

Six per cent of the net receipts on the first 100,000 sales will be retained by the publishers, they said.

AN UNDISCLOSED part of the earnings accruing to both Manchester and the publisher

has been earmarked for the Kennedy Library.

Literary agents estimate the book may earn around \$3 million.

Manchester believes — but states as fact — that Oswald went insane on Nov. 21, 1963, the night before Kennedy was assassinated. The author says Oswald's reason crumbled as the result of a quarrel with his Russian wife, Marina, from whom he was semiestranged.

She had been living in Irving, a suburb of Dallas, in the home of Mrs. Ruth Paine, a friend. Oswald lived in a Dallas rooming house. He visited his wife and children on weekends.

MANCHESTER wrote that on the night of Nov. 21, Oswald appeared to be watching television in Mrs. Paine's home. "In fact," the author says, "he was going mad."

Oswald appeared sane, however, to the police and other investigative officers who interviewed him after the assassination. The transcript of these interviews, published in the Warren Report, shows that Oswald told the same story to each of them. He answered certain questions but said he would not answer others until he could have an attorney with him. And he specified the attorney, "a New York lawyer whom he did not know" but who had defended some persons accused "of a conspiracy against the government."

SECRET SERVICE Inspector Thomas J. Kelley quoted Oswald as saying, "I have my own views on the President's national policy . . . but because of the charges I do not think I should comment further."

U.S. Postal Inspector H. D. Holmes found Oswald was "quite alert and showed no hesitancy in answering those questions which he wanted to answer, and quite skillful in parrying those questions which he did not want to an-

swer."

Manchester says in his foreword he "felt entitled to record my opinions" and was "forming judgments."

But he does not pinpoint the passages in his book where fact leaves off and "opinion" or "judgment" begins.

He says that Mrs. Kennedy, contrary to McNamara and other federal officials, "hoped" a conspiracy had taken her husband's life. The book says, ". . . For then there would be an air of inevitability about the tragedy; then she could persuade herself that if the plotters had missed on Elm street they would have eventually succeeded elsewhere."

Manchester does not say whether Mrs. Kennedy told him this. He does not tell the reader whether it is fact or his judgment.

### Since Book on Sale, Review Is Published

NEW YORK (AP)—"Women's Wear Daily" published today a review of William Manchester's "The Death of a President" although an April 6 release date had been fixed by the book's publishers, Harper & Row.

In an accompanying note the retail clothing trade organ said:

"The date was acceptable to Women's Wear Daily so long as the book did not earlier go on sale in normal commerce. Yesterday, March 27, Kaufmann's (department store) in Pittsburgh began selling the book at \$10.50 (tax included) in its book department.

"Kaufmann's advertised immediate sale of the book in the Pittsburgh Press Sunday (March 26).