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Henry J. Taylor

'A Tainted Product'



IN LOOK'S first extract from "The Death of a President" William Manchester is guilty of the most distorted picture of Lee Harvey Oswald I ever read — utterly inexcusable if you respect the truth.

Let me start with an example and tell you what I mean.

MANCHESTER PICTURES Oswald on the eve of the assassination: "We know that the fire storm in Lee Oswald's head ignited on the evening of November 21." We know nothing of the kind. "... He was going mad . . . the total eclipse of his reason occurred shortly before 9 p.m. that evening." On the record, this is completely false. Manchester has no proof of this—exactly the reverse. Yet look how he dresses up his fabrication to make it sound factual and impressive.

I recently wrote three documented articles about Oswald, two from New Orleans, one from Dallas. And if I could get the truth, so could Manchester.

Oswald's long and unremitting Communist record in New Orleans continues to the end in Dallas, documented not by opinion, not by debatable testimony, but by Oswald himself.

By Oswald's own written declarations, the fact sheet he provided (Sept. 27) Castro's Mexico City Embassy, his memorandum to "Comrade Kostin" at the Soviet Embassy there, his letters to the Soviet Embassy in Washington as late as November 9, the forgeries and innumerable incriminating documents in Oswald's own

handwriting — this assassin was a drilled, dedicated, obedient, cool and canny Communist.

Yet Manchester has the unmitigated gall to pass up all the evidence and call Oswald crazy!

Manchester contrives a neat little picture of "paranoia," of which he says "madness does not strike you all at once" and then elects to have it strike Oswald on the eve of the assassination.

That leaves Manchester faced by the evidence of Oswald's condition after the assassination. Remember, Oswald was quizzed day and night after he allegedly killed the President. Manchester fixes that by completely ignoring the testimony of the U.S. Postal Inspector, FBI, CIA, Secret Service, etc., interrogators.

U.S. Postal Inspector Harry D. Holmes' words summarize the interrogators' statements, not alone those I talked with but the rest whose official testimony is in the appendices of the Warren Report:

"Oswald had a disciplined mind and reflexes. He unhesitatingly answered questions he wanted to, skillfully parried the others, and lied instantly whenever cornered."

Here we have Manchester's so-called research revealed to be utterly phony and selected to serve his purpose.

THE KENNEDYS should never have commissioned a book about the assassination in the first place. Both the Kennedy purpose and the Manchester product are tainted from start to finish.