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MANCHESTER BOOK

NEW YORK, APRIL 4 (AP)-WILLIAM MANCHESTER'S BOOK "THE DEATH OF A PRESIDENT" HAS RECEIVED GENERALLY ENTHUSIASTIC REVIEWS FROM BOOK CRITICS. BUT THEY HATED IT IN TEXAS.

ARTHUR DARACK, BOOK CRITIC OF THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER, SAID MANCHESTER WROTE IN "A TELEGRAPHIC, VIVID, NON-LITERARY STYLE" AND THAT HIS WORK IS "HARD TO READ AND HARD TO PUT DOWN."

WILLIAM TUCKER OF THE MIAMI NEWS DESCRIBED IT AS A "SOLID TEXTBOOK AND HANDBOOK OF THE ASSASSINATION" OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY IN DALLAS ON NOV. 22, 1963.

"WILLIAM MANCHESTER'S VAST, MOVING STORY STRIKES LIKE A METEOR SHOWER OF FACTS AND PENETRATING DETAIL ABOUT ONE OF THE MOMENTOUS EVENTS OF HISTORY," TUCKER SAID.

STANTON PECKHAM OF THE DENVER POST COMMENTED THAT "SOME WILL THINK IT REVEALS TOO MUCH. IT WILL HURT FEELINGS. BUT FOR ANY ONE WHO WANTS TO KNOW WHAT REALLY HAPPENED IN AMERICA THAT TRAGIC WEEKEND AND HOW PEOPLE TOOK IT--ESPECIALLY THOSE CLOSEST TO THAT WEEKEND--THERE CAN BE NO MORE INFORMATIVE OR AUTHORITATIVE ACCOUNT."

A DISSENTING OPINION CAME FROM LON TINKLE OF THE DALLAS NEWS, WHO HAD THIS TO SAY:

"IT IS EASY TO FAULT WILLIAM MANCHESTER'S VIVID AND ARTISTICALLY STRUCTURED NARRATIVE OF THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION--ALAS, TOO EASY, FOR HERE IS A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY THROWN OUT THE WINDOW.

"NO OTHER WRITER NOW WILL BENEFIT FROM THE MEMORIES OF THE PERSON CLOSEST TO THE TRAGEDY, JACQUELINE KENNEDY, AND EVEN SHE HAS VIOLENTLY FAULTED THE BOOK.

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"THE MULTIPLE ERRORS IN FACT AND IN INTERPRETATION ARE ALREADY BEING DOCUMENTED BY HISTORIANS. WHAT IS MOST INTERESTING IS WHY THE BOOK--FOR WHICH MANY GOOD THINGS CAN BE SAID--WENT WRONG.

"MANCHESTER, A TALENTED ARTIST OBVIOUSLY, WORKED UNDER WHITE-HOT PRESSURE AND RELIED TOO MUCH ON HIS UNCANNY SENSE OF INTUITION. THIS GIFT HE SUBSTITUTED FOR WHAT THE ASSIGNMENT REQUIRED: THE HISTORIAN'S DETACHMENT, OBJECTIVITY AND A DEVOTION TO PERSPECTIVE...

HE MAKES A DRAMA, NOT A HISTORICAL RECORD."

A SIMILAR VIEW WAS TAKEN BY ROBERT M. JACKSON, EDITOR OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI, TEX., CALLER.

"MANCHESTER WAS THE PUBLIC RECIPIENT OF EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS," JACKSON WROTE. "HE WAS, IN EFFECT, GIVEN A FRANCHISE.

"DESPITE THE GRUESOME FASCINATION OF SOME PARTS OF THE BOOK ONE IS INCLINED TO SURMISE THAT 'THE DEATH OF A PRESIDENT' IS GOING TO BE READ ABOUT MORE THAN IT IS GOING TO BE READ."

JACKSON DECLARED THAT THE BOOK "ISN'T WORTH \$10" AND ADVISED WOULD-BE READERS TO WAIT. "SOONER OR LATER YOUR NEIGHBOR WHO BELONGS TO THE BOOK CLUB WILL LEND IT TO YOU, OR YOU CAN ALWAYS WAIT FOR THE PAPERBACK EDITION."

SOME OTHER COMMENT:

PAUL E. SALSINI, MILWAUKEE JOURNAL--"MANCHESTER IS A SUPERB WRITER....IT IS A MASTERFUL ACCOUNT, FOR MANCHESTER IS NOT ONLY A WRITER BUT A HISTORIAN...THERE UNDOUBTEDLY WILL BE OTHER ACCOUNTS OF THE ASSASSINATION AND ITS IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH. THE JOHNSON MEMOIRS REMAIN TO BE WRITTEN. AS OF NOW, THIS IS THE DEFINITIVE ACCOUNT."

ELIOT FREMONT-SMITH, NEW YORK TIMES--"A MASSIVE, ARTICULATELY ORGANIZED AND UTTERLY COMPELLING COMPILATION OF THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY AMOUNT OF DATA."

WILBUR ELSTON, DETROIT NEWS--"FOR THIS REVIEWER, THE VERDICT CAME EARLY AND EASILY: 'THE DEATH OF A PRESIDENT' IS A MAGNIFICENT ACHIEVEMENT, EVEN THOUGH IT'S OFTEN WORDY, MAWKISH AND BURDENED WITH UNNECESSARY DETAILS."

NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN--"DURING THE HEIGHT OF THE CONTROVERSY, MANCHESTER ASKED SIMPLY THAT THE BOOK BE ALLOWED TO SPEAK FOR ITSELF. AND THAT IT DOES, MOST ELOQUENTLY."

END ADV TUES PMS APRIL 4 SENT APRIL 3.

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(EDS: 11TH GRAF ABOVE 2ND LINE READ: OF THE CORPUS CHRISTI, TEX., CALLER.)

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