

'Massive' book traces 1932-72

"The Glory and the Dream." By William Manchester. Little, Brown. \$20.

To say a book was a massive undertaking is the poorest of clichés. Yet that is what Manchester's history of America is. The two-volume narrative traces the years 1932-1972. Together, the volumes total nearly 1,700 pages.

Manchester was the author of "The Death of a President", commissioned and then opposed by the family of John F. Kennedy. The book exerted a magnet-like force and left readers exhausted from reading it. And then we wondered how he pulled it off—that substantial work dealt with just six days of history.

vince boucher footnotes

Nation's life

Manchester's subject in *The Glory and the Dream* is 50 years in the life of the most complicated nation on earth. At its outset, which he calls "Rock Bottom," Manchester tells of President Hoover denying the existence of a depression while scores of ragged World War I veterans demanded money to feed their families.

At the end of the spectrum is 1972, dominated by the opening days of the Watergate drama. The United States, tired from the final years of the 1960s, years of war, protest and Nixon, begins a new decade with Watergate as the herald of the 1970s.

What Manchester tells in between is the story of his generation. He was 10 in 1932 and the following years are filled with the events which

shaped his life—the Roosevelts, depression, World War II, Truman, Korea and Eisenhower; years that saw the Swing, Willkie, Will Rogers, the New Look, Kinsey and flying saucers. The author weaves the smaller bits of American social history into the larger canvas of national and world events.

Origins of Discontent

Later Manchester talks of the more recent past; the Kennedys, Martin Luther King, Little Rock, SDS and Tonkin. These years are familiar to students, but to place them with the rest, as Manchester does in his epilogue, shows the complete origins of the discontent of the Johnson-Nixon era.

Manchester writes: "As the Johnson administration grew older, . . . American businessmen were astonished to find that demonstrators were turning on them and accusing them of committing monstrous crimes with products like napalm. They couldn't understand it; didn't these angry people know that management and government were natural antagonists, not co-conspirators? They believed that and thought it should be obvious to everyone."

What Manchester writes of is a country often at cross-purposes, a nation founded to permit that kind of difference. He writes, "Any people can cheer an Eisenhower, a MacArthur, a John Glenn, a Neil Armstrong; it takes generosity of spirit to suffer the Weathermen who hated LBJ, the Birchers who baited JFK, the Liberty Leaguers who heckled FDR. . . the strains on the nation's tolerance had been great. Sometimes it had been too much, and the names of the places where patience was exhausted strain the pages of U.S. history with shame: Attica, Kent State, My Lai, Birmingham. . ."

The Bluegrass Crusade will perform at a covered dish supper and square dance party Feb. 9, 7 to 11 p.m. The free event, open to the public, will be held at the Welfare Society Hall, 1430 N. 10th St.

Originally sponsored by the Farmers for the Legalization of Marijuana (FLM), the party is now being underwritten solely by Len Schropfer. In addition to his participation in the FLM, Schropfer is a volunteer lobbyist for state wildlife and conservation legislation.

The party is intended to bring people together for music and dancing, he said. Schropfer, who said he is considering running for political office in the future, said he would like to see more events like this bringing like-minded people together to talk and exchange ideas.

Coffee, fruit punch, dishes and silverware will be provided for the dinner. Donations will be taken to offset costs.

As a part of the Abendmusik series, the St. Olaf College band will present a concert Friday at First Plymouth Church, 20th and D St., at 7:30 p.m. A free-will offering will be taken.

Director Miles H. Johnson, said the 80-member band plays liturgical music. The program will include pieces by Aaron Copland and Wahoo native Howard Hanson.

Crusade to perform at public supper

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