

PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATION FOR COMMUNITY RELEASE BOARD
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CMC

This is the second psychiatric evaluation for the Adult Authority of this 31-year-old, white, unmarried male inmate received on 11/17/71 for the offense of Murder 1st, 7 counts and Conspiracy, all CC (187 and 182.1 P.C.). Watson was examined by the full Psychiatric Council composed of Alfred Owre, Jr., M.D., Chief Psychiatrist; James B. Hollingsworth, M.D., Senior Psychiatrist; Robert Brandmeyer, M.D., Senior Psychiatrist; Sherman Butler, M.D., Senior Psychiatrist, Kenneth Malek, M.D., Staff Psychiatrist; and IrmaDelle Brown, M.D., Staff Psychiatrist.

The report is, therefore, based upon the opinion of the Psychiatric Council in its entirety. Several of the members of the Council have known of inmate Watson since 1971 when he was admitted to Atascadero State Hospital under statute 1370 P.C. as unfit to stand trial. Dr. Owre was his psychiatrist during that admission period and after being returned to court as fit to stand trial and being convicted, Watson eventually came to CMC-East where his psychiatrist has been Dr. James B. Hollingsworth. As a group, therefore, the Psychiatric Council has been following him with very few interruptions over the past six years.

When Watson was admitted to Atascadero State Hospital in 1971, he was underweight and depressed, but not psychotic. The depression was mobilized with ease, and he began to eat and gain weight, and soon was able to be evaluated and tested psychologically. It was noted at the time that he was "malingering" or-in-other-words feigning mental illness. He was returned to court for resumption of criminal proceedings with the diagnosis of no mental disorder and drug dependence, hallucinogens, LSD. He returned to court on or about the first of March, 1971. Testimony was given to the court by the Atascadero psychiatric staff to the effect that he was fit to stand trial. It was learned at the trial, during a conference with defense counsel, that he (Watson) had been instructed by his attorney to prolong his stay at Atascadero as long as possible. This was to insure that he would be given a separate trial from the rest of the Manson Family.

After being received in Corrections on 11/17/71 he spent some time on death row. Following the Supreme Court decision outlawing the death penalty, his sentence was changed from death to life, and he was received at CMC-East on 9/19/72 from San Quentin. During the almost five years that he has been here he has been in all respects a model inmate. He's had no violence on his record. He's been an excellent worker. His first job was as clerk to the chief psychiatric nurse. He had this for over two years. Following this he went to work as a clerk for the Protestant Chaplain and he's been doing this for the last two years. Two years ago he states that he was converted to Christ, and that his new life began. Of this more later. On 9/19/74 he was evaluated by Dr. Bill J. Barkley, Ph.D. Psychological diagnosis was no mental disorder and #2. drug dependence. Hallucinogens, LSD.

In retrospect, therefore, the psychiatric problems are seen to be connected with events in his criminal career which occurred prior to his admission to Atascadero State Hospital in the last month of 1970. The psychodynamics underlying the multiple murders of which Watson stands convicted need to be clarified. It was also necessary during the interview to find out

whether or not Watson could handle the murders retrospectively in such a manner to indicate that he had worked through his psychic conflicts connected with them, and this would have to be done in sufficient depth and with sufficient stress being administered to the inmate in order to convince the panel that Watson would not recidivate.

The work of the interview was not made any easier by the fact that at least seven doctors had examined Watson at the time of his trial. These neurologists and forensic psychiatrists gave several different diagnoses. The opinion of the Court of Appeal filed on March 20, 1973 in his file indicates that Dr. Frank diagnosed Watson as schizophrenic; he testified that Watson and Manson were suffering from "folie a deux." Dr. Walter, a neurologist, found abnormal brain waves in Watson's EEG. Dr. Palmer, a psychologist, found brain damage. Dr. Swarez diagnosed Watson as schizophrenic. Dr. Bohr diagnosed drug induced psychosis and organic brain damage, as did Dr. Dittman, a psychiatrist. Drs. Tweed and Markman agreed with Drs. Bohr and Dittman. Dr. Seymour Pollack had seen Watson in the L.A. County Jail before he came to Atascadero. His diagnostic impression was schizophrenia, catatonic type. So an additional goal in the interview was to reconcile these various psychiatric opinions which conflict with each other and which were brought out by the adversary system in trial.

The interview lasted an hour and ten minutes. It took place in one of the therapy rooms on D-Quad. Watson was neatly dressed, he was most cooperative in the work of the interview. He told his story in detail. He seemed to be eager to talk; to get it off his chest. He intimated that he had been looking forward to the interview.

He was asked in the beginning to tell the group what progress he felt he had made since he first came into Corrections. He said that when he was first in Corrections that he was still coming down from drugs. He said he was still getting his head together; he said he was still trying to recover from the conflict which he had developed between him and Manson and the Family. When he came back to L.A. from Texas he felt that he was coming back to Manson and Manson's domination. At that point he felt that he "flipped out," "didn't care any more." He said he was "willing to die." He weighed 110 pounds. He wouldn't eat. He said he was depressed. He felt this was due to the differing environment because he had been nine months in Texas where he was "OK" but then he came back to Los Angeles County Jail and the pressures mounted all over again. His Texas attorney, Bill Boyd, had advised him not to say anything. He said, "Anything you say will be used against you." His Los Angeles attorney, Sam Bublick, said the same thing. He indicated that his refusal to talk was in agreement with their advice and did not constitute an emotional problem. He was then sent to Atascadero and he said that things started to get a lot better. He got his feet on the ground. He felt he could get his trial over with.

At this point he digressed briefly and stated that he had had "a Christian experience" in the L.A. County Jail. He then said he was tried and convicted and was sent to death row in San Quentin. After the death penalty was repealed he was sent to CMC-East where he really felt he had come to a country club in comparison with San Quentin. He got a job working for MTA Green as a clerk. The drugs were stored in a room next to his office; when Sacramento heard about this they took him out of the job because he was too close to the medications. He then got a job

working as a clerk for the Chief Psychiatric RN. He clerked briefly after that for Dr. Hollingsworth, then he went back to working with the Chief Psychiatric RN. He said he kept growing and growing and getting himself in shape and getting his mental capacity back all through this period. He had a girl that he would see regularly in the visiting rooms, his parents came to see him. They never gave up on him. They were asking him to "do it for God." After work he would carve toys for children, and for 2½ years this was his routine. He stated, however, that he was still unhappy, that he was still missing something. At this point about two years ago he went to work for the Protestant Chaplain. He said he got in touch with Chaplain Ray who runs the prison mission in Dallas, Texas and from him he said he "got Christ's message." He kept seeing his girl in the visiting room. She was not as enthusiastic about Christ as he was. He felt that God was working on his life so he split up with his girlfriend. He states that before he was converted to Christ he was afraid to speak out. He was afraid of crowds and after his religious conversion he has been growing spiritually. He states that he started out as a deacon in the church and then advanced to student chaplain and that he felt that the word of God was everything.

At this point one of the psychiatrists asked him if he felt that Charles Colson's conversion to Christ was genuine, and inmate Watson said he thought it was a genuine conversion. Since the interview was acquiring the aura of the confessional, the author of this report inquired politely as to whether or not Watson was still eating peanut butter -- he's a vegetarian. Watson feels it's constipating but that he is substituting other vegetarian foods, such as cheese, fish, and vegetables, etc., etc. He said that he stuck to his diet religiously. One of the psychiatrists then asked whether there was any connection between his religion and the diet, and there was no response from inmate Watson at this point. To get back on track, one of the psychiatrists asked inmate Watson about Charles Manson and Watson stated that Manson had a freedom and a love which he wanted and that after he had been with him he did find out what he (Manson) wanted and that it was not what he (Watson) wanted.. He stated spontaneously "Manson is not God. I was deceived."

A shift in topics was then needed, so the council asked to be enlightened about his earlier years. He stated that he was in college in Texas and he was always searching for something, excitement, wild parties, girls, etc. etc. He joined a fraternity; he went to work for Braniff International Airlines. He needed the money to "burn", by which he meant "indulge in the pleasures of the world." At Braniff in Dallas he could fly any place on a company pass. He went to California to see a college friend. He got introduced to the pleasures of marijuana in California. He flew to California five times in August of 1967, and then he decided to go to California and transfer his credits. He got a job selling wigs in a wig shop, made good at it, and registered in college. He had an apartment. It was something of a rat race. He got "heavier and heavier into grass" and into drugs. He quit college. He lost his job. He still had some money so he went out to Malibu and moved in with another young hedonistic pseudo-hippy type and then one day when he was driving west on Santa Monica Blvd. to Malibu he picked up a hitchhiker, one Denny Wilson, a drummer in "the Beachboys," a rock outfit. He took Denny Wilson to his home in Beverly Hills which was a \$3000 a month mansion and there he met Charles Manson and his girls; they were smoking hash. He was strongly

attracted to the pleasurable life style and kept coming back to see Denny and he kept meeting Manson and the girls there. Finally he moved out of his "pad" and went over to Dennis' house and became his house manager for when he was on tour. His smoking of marijuana and ingestion of hallucinogenic drugs continued. Manson became more and more of a figure in Watson's life. Watson stated that he began losing his mind. He started to ingest cannabinal which is a purified hallucinogenic drug made from marijuana. At this point he remembers driving to Ukiah with a friend by the name of Dennis Morehouse. Morehouse had to undergo trial for drug possession in Ukiah. He was found innocent. They both returned to L.A. at this point. He had no place to stay so he went to Manson's ranch and he stayed in a tent. Apparently Morehouse's daughter was one of Manson's "slaves." At first Manson would not take Tex into the family--he felt Watson was "too closely computed" and by that he meant still too closely identified with his bourgeois background. Manson began giving him LSD. Watson remembers hallucinating. He remembers losing everything he had been "programmed to." After three months of this in December of 1968 he called David, his original friend in Malibu; who came out and picked him up. He went back with David, but felt that he "snuck away". He felt guilty about leaving Manson. Yet he continued using hallucinogens just like he had been doing with Manson.

Then his friend David went into the army. Tex (Watson) took up with David's girl friend for awhile, but he still felt he was running from something, and in another three months he went back with Charlie (Manson).

He was accepted back because he stated that he felt he had been running from him and found "Charlie was on a different trip", "Helter Skelter." The world was ending, they were all getting ready to go to the desert, there was only one purpose in the Family's activities; to get ready for the end of the world, which would include a great race riot. They were using LSD. They were using speed.

Watson remembers taking a "bad trip" on Belladonna, he wound up in jail for one night. During this period of heavy drug usage he states that he felt happy since his mind was empty, that everything had been erased. He was just a "now state of mind." He'd really been "gotten out of it" and by this he meant that he was pretty well depersonalized. The operation "Helter Skelter" was to engender a race war between blacks and whites and would lead to the destruction of both blacks and whites.

Here, Watson stated that the Family was in such a state of ego fusion that they were really running into each other all the time; they felt the world was coming to an end and this became a sheer delusion. He (Watson) felt that the girls and Manson were one and the same person, they all had dilated pupils, they would make a circle and become one person, "Manson would take the fear out of us"; he would put knives to their chests and take them on wild car rides "to take the fear out of us." Here Watson stated he felt that it was sheer paranoia; he stated that everybody was willing to die for him meaning Manson and the Family.

Then one night Manson came to him and said, "We're going to have to do it, the blacks won't do it" and Manson gave him the orders to commit the Tate murders. Watson says he remembers he was directed to kill everyone there; he remembers every bit of it. At this point he says

"it's terrible." At this point he was asked whether he dreams about it and said no he does not, but he used to. He says he has forgiven himself, he says God has forgiven him.

Brought back to the murders he said "I kicked this guy, I told him I was the devil and I was going to do the devil's business" and then he killed all those people. He had no feeling for them. "I was told to do it," And here he says he was high on speed and LSD and he'd also dumped some Belladonna earlier in the day. At this point he was asked if he ever cried about the murders. Tears came briefly into his eyes and he said yes at one time he had but no longer.

Back to the Manson topic he said that he still gets messages from Manson. Manson thinks Tex is a rat and the messages are in code form but they all amount to "Tex, you better shape up." Watson volunteered that he had pity for the other Family members because of the way they were all deceived and confused by drug use.

Here he said that he was concerned also for other inmates and he compared this to the feeling that the psychiatrist has for his patients. He was brought back to his relationship with Manson and he said that he thought he'd been deceived and misled.

The main work of the interview now being over, the panel commenced to reduce the tension. One of the psychiatrists asked him if he thought the "Moonies" were being deceived and Watson allowed as how he thought they were being deceived. Another psychiatrist then administered the Bender-Gestalt test to him. Another of the psychiatrists asked him if he thought he had grown and he thought he had. Another psychiatrist asked if he thought he was dangerous and he thought he wasn't. We then brought him back to Manson and asked him if he thought he (Manson) was crazy now and he said "yes but he knows what he's doing." "How about at the time of the murders?" Watson said he wasn't crazy then and "I looked up to him at that time."

To terminate the interview we gave Watson something positive asking him if he really didn't think that he'd done the best of all the Family in rehabilitating himself because we certainly thought so, and he said that he had enjoyed talking with us, and the interview terminated.

Watson is in excellent physical health. On 4/11/73 an EEG was done which showed "Cerebral Dysrhythmia by EEG that is exacerbated by respiratory alkalosis." This is an extraneous finding and is not truly pathological. Watson was in group therapy with Dr. Bill Barkley for two years. So much for the facts of the case.

An analytical reconstruction of the mystifying and, indeed, terrifying events that led up to the bizarre multiple Tate-LaBianca murders would go as follows: Watson, a young, middle class Texan who is in college, who has good marks, who is looked up to by the community, is still relatively unsophisticated and dependent upon his semi-rural environment and his parents' standard of behaviour. He comes to California. He is introduced to drugs. He gets deeper and deeper into the California drug scene. Through a chance encounter he meets Charles Manson and his Family. Manson and Family are also deeply into drug usage. These are hallucinogenic drugs. Watson is still a rather dependent and easily led person. He falls under the influence of Charles Manson. He joins the Family. He becomes

wholeheartedly involved in the group and its activities. The end result is the production over a period of months of a "drug induced, shared psychosis," with a certain amount of brain damage in Watson that has fortunately -in retrospect- proved to be reversible. The process of psychotic ego fusion becomes complete and the group is one person, "group of submissives" with Manson as the "dominant". Under his instructions the group manages to depersonalize the victims and from then on it's easy to carry out the multiple murders.

After it was all over Watson left and went back to Texas. He was picked up. He was-jailed there. He fought extradition. He internalized his guilt. He became depressed. He was returned to L.A. The process of depression deepened. He was finally sent to Atascadero State Hospital where we cured his depression. Then he was returned to court. He was convicted, and we know the rest. A word about shared psychoses at this point is in order. The original concept of shared psychosis was "folie a deux" a French term to indicate a form of paranoid psychosis shared between two people, one dominant and the other submissive. The submissive is allowed to relate to the dominant partner by accepting the dominant partner's psychotic ideas or delusions. The cure for shared psychosis is deceptively simple, one merely separates the two and the submissive party invariably gets better. Unfortunately the dominant--in this case Manson--does not get better. For this reason he still periodically decompensates into psychosis and winds up at CMF in a closed ward. So that when Watson went back to Texas he was curing himself.

Other little known facts about the shared psychosis is that there do not have to be two members. There can be more than two. There can be "folie a trois", "folie a quatre," etc., etc. In fact some observers even postulate "folie a nation." A classic example of the latter being Germany's paranoia in Hitler's time. This theory being applied to Manson and his Family really will explain the entire bizarre series of events. Manson was a dominant leader, he was clever, he had the drugs, he drove them crazy and submissive and then used them for his own psychotic purposes. The females he gave sex to, also drugs; the males he gave drugs and females to. Were it not for the terrible outcome, it almost sounds like it would be fun to the average college age person. Group suasions or pressures will insure that the bizarre murders are carried out. Any psychotherapist who has conducted group therapy is convinced of the power of group suasions and certainly this is an example of same.

Mental Status: Watson's speech is normal. His motor behavior is unremarkable. His affect or feeling tone is warm and friendly. He is not depressed or suicidal. He is oriented. His memory is intact. His estimated intelligence is normal. His fund of knowledge and information is extensive. His goal directed behavior is better than that of the average inmate. His religious conversion is felt by the Psychiatric Council in the main to be genuine. It is also self serving, but this is not unusual, and it serves as a strength for him in his present position. Delusions, hallucinations, ideas of reference and control are not present. He's able correctly to count, calculate, abstract and desymbolize. Psychological testing at Atascadero State Hospital and at CMC-East has shown no psychopathology to be present at the times of testing.

Psychiatric Diagnosis: Drug induced shared psychosis by history.
Drug dependence, multiple, hallucinogens
by history.

Psychiatric Conclusions: The Psychiatric Council concurred in the opinion that Watson is not presently dangerous to prospective victims and seems unlikely to return to the use of hallucinogens. The Psychiatric Council concurred in the opinion that Watson has been able to work through his psychic conflicts about the murders. The Psychiatric Council recommends that he be retained on psychiatric referral. The Psychiatric Council concludes that retention in Corrections will have to be on grounds other than psychiatric ones. An additional conclusion is that the public will never be able entirely to forget what he has done. Watson himself is "undoing" and has been doing so for five years and this is a healthy mental mechanism. Nevertheless, it is difficult to forget entirely what he has done.

Recommendations: Continue present programming.

THE ESSENCE OF THIS REPORT HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE SUBJECT.

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