

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

SECRET

DATE: 3/5/76

- Assoc. Dir. _____
- Dep. AD Adm. _____
- Dep. AD Inv. _____
- Asst. Dir.:
- Admin. _____
- Comp. Syst. _____
- Ext. Affairs _____
- Files & Com. _____
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- Laboratory _____
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- Spec. Inv. _____
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- Telephone Rm. _____
- Director Sec'y _____

TO : Mr. Gallagher

FROM : B. H. Cooke

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE.

- 1 - Mr. Callahan
- 1 - Mr. Adams
- 1 - Mr. Jenkins
- 1 - Mr. Gallagher
- 1 - Mr. O'Connell
- 1 - Mr. Cooke
- 1 - Mr. Nettles
- 1 - Mr. Schran
- 1 - Mr. [redacted]
- 1 - Mr. [redacted]
- 1 - Mr. [redacted]
- 1 - Mr. [redacted]
- 1 - Mr. J. P. Lee

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY
11/22/63
DALLAS, TEXAS

3/14/83
Classified by SP4 [redacted]
Declassify on: CIA R
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b7c REC-89 11-21-81 31 41

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BACKGROUND: A book, Appointment in Dallas: The Final Solution to the Assassination of JFK, by Hugh C. McDonald, as told to Geoffrey Bocca, was published by the Hugh McDonald Publishing Corporation, 380 Madison Avenue, New York, New York, in October, 1975. McDonald claims to have tracked down and interviewed the "true" assassin of President John F. Kennedy.

The author is a graduate of the 67th Session of the National Academy (NA) (1961). In 1967 he retired from the Los Angeles County, California, Sheriff's Department. At the time of his retirement he was a Division Chief, in charge of detectives. Currently, he is Director of Security, Hollywood Park Racetrack, in California. McDonald is the inventor of the "Identi-Kit," a widely used law enforcement tool which consists of a series of negatives of facial characteristics which may be placed on top of each other to form a composite picture. He has authored several books on law enforcement, primarily pertaining to interrogation techniques. In the past, he has been the principal helicopter training instructor for Hughes Aircraft Company and has been involved in developing certain aircraft for law enforcement purposes. During World War II, he was an officer in the U.S. Army in the field of military intelligence. He claims to have done contract work for the CIA over the years since then. In 1964, he took a 90-day leave of absence from the Sheriff's Department to serve as security chief for Presidential candidate Barry Goldwater.

SI-116 REC-89 62-109060-7509

The Director has instructed that an in-depth study be made of this book in-house.

As a first step in such an analysis, Dallas SAC Theodore Gunderson was instructed to have SA Robert P. Gemberling review

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the book. SA Gemberling was the case Agent on the assassination of President Kennedy investigation and has continued to handle the case over the years.

SYNOPSIS: General Investigative Division (GID) details the basic plot of the book, Bureau file reviews of the author and characters, as well as an overall analysis of the book. GID observes that as early as 1967, an "Eastern group" put up a lot of money to learn the truth about the assassination. The group was working through McDonald, who allegedly knew that President Johnson had prior knowledge of the plans to assassinate President Kennedy and that George De Mohrenschildt was part of the conspiracy. There has been much speculation in the past that De Mohrenschildt, who was friendly with Lee Harvey Oswald, was involved, but the Warren Commission concluded otherwise. From an analysis of the book, it appears that McDonald has cleverly taken many of the most questioned conclusions of the Warren Commission and conveniently fitted them into his allegedly true story. He leaves himself an out in case his story is disproved by leaving the impression he has taken the word of an old friend (Herman Kimsey, formerly of the CIA, who is now deceased) and of the alleged assassin, in good faith. An article from the 1/19/76 edition of "The Sacramento Bee," Sacramento, California, describes the book as ". . . one in a recent deluge of moneymaking stories claiming the truth behind JFK's murder. It is sloppily written, illogical in parts, filled with holes and riddled with typographical errors, as if it were produced in a hurry, which it was."

RECOMMENDATION: GID recommends that no investigative attention be directed to McDonald's allegations.

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DETAILS:

Basic Plot of the Book

former member of

The author claims that while attending the NA he visited his CIA contact, Herman Kimsey, on 4/27/61, in Washington, D.C. (WDC). An individual burst into the office and complained violently to Kimsey about the Bay of Pigs invasion failure, indicating he was there. Kimsey later told McDonald the individual was one of the best assassins there is.

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In September, 1964, when McDonald was security chief for Presidential Candidate Barry Goldwater, Kimsey took him to Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Texas, which is where the assassination of President Kennedy occurred. Kimsey told him Lee Harvey Oswald was not the true assassin of President Kennedy; he was a "patsy." The true assassin was the person McDonald had seen in Kimsey's office in 1961. He fired from the second floor of the County Records Building (which is directly behind the location of the President's car). The assassin told Kimsey about the assassination. He said a private group with strong Government connections hired the assassin. The assassin first met the person who subsequently hired him for the assassination at a staging camp for the Bay of Pigs invasion in Guatemala, where it was thought the person had a connection with the U.S. Government. The assassin next met this person in Haiti, where the assassination plan was first told to him.

Kimsey told McDonald that if he ever told the story, he (Kimsey) would deny it. He also told McDonald that if anything happened to him, Len Davidov, a WDC associate of his, would have his notes and papers.

McDonald states he thereafter studied the Warren Commission Report and was startled to see that the person in photographic Commission Exhibit #237 was the same person he had seen in Kimsey's office in 1961. (This exhibit is a photograph of an individual taken by CIA in Mexico City near the Soviet Embassy, who was originally thought to be Oswald, but who has never been identified.) McDonald decided he had to track this person down. He gave the assassin a code name -- "Saul."

Beginning in 1968, while on CIA contract trips to Europe, he put out feelers with an organization he had been in touch with since his days in military intelligence. He calls this organization "Blue Fox." He says its sole purpose is to observe, analyze, and report on Russia's activities. Although they make their information available from time to time to many of the intelligence agencies of the major western countries, McDonald says they are not funded by the U.S., nor to his knowledge are they connected to any Government.

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Mexico Texas

EUROPE

After three trips to Europe, he was finally put in touch with "Saul" in London, England, in June of 1972. They talked for an hour and 40 minutes in the lobby of the Westbury Hotel.

"Saul" said while he was training in Guatemala for the Bay of Pigs invasion, he met a man he thought to be an American agent. "Saul" gave this person the code name "Troit." In the Spring of 1963, "Saul" began to get word from several sources asking if he was available. In May, 1963, he met "Troit" at a residence in Port Au Prince, Haiti. "Troit" asked him if he could be hired to kill President Kennedy. He was given \$2,000 to think it over. They next met in Guatemala 13 days later, and "Saul" told "Troit" the price would be \$50,000. He was given \$25,000 advance money and was told the assassination would take place in Texas and had to be in 1963.

TEXAS
11/17/77

"Troit" told "Saul" he had a friend who had recently returned from the Soviet Union who was crazy enough to do anything "Troit" told him to do. "Troit" said he had convinced the friend that he ("Troit") was working for the Government and wanted someone to shoot close to the President to scare him and cause him to make better use of his Secret Service protection. "Troit" said that as a test of the friend he had him fire some shots at General Walker in April, 1963.

The next day "Troit" identified the friend to "Saul" as Harvey Oswald. He said Oswald would fire several shots from a rifle close to the President, but would have no knowledge of the assassination plot. He would be told he was in the pay of the CIA. "Saul" would fire his shots under the cover of the noise of Oswald's shots. It was expected that the Secret Service agents would fire at Oswald believing that he was trying to assassinate the President. "Saul" was then to shoot Oswald under the cover of the noise of the Secret Service shots.

"Troit" said the plan called for planting a bullet from Oswald's gun in a place which would tie the killing to Oswald. (This would be the so-called "pristine" bullet.) "Saul" was to fire bullets which disintegrate. "Troit" agreed to have Oswald go to Mexico City, Mexico, so "Saul" could observe him prior to the assassination.

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On 9/10 or 11/63, "Saul" met "Troit" in Guatemala, where he was told the assassination would take place in Dallas, Texas, between 11/18 and 22/63.

"Saul" then went to Mexico City, where he observed Oswald extensively from 9/26/63, to 10/3/63. (The Warren Commission Report shows Oswald entered Mexico on 9/26/63, and returned to the U.S. on 10/3/63, on his trip to Mexico City.)

"Saul" thereafter came to Dallas on 11/20/63, and took a room at a small hotel within walking distance of the assassination location. He then sent a messenger for a prearranged package containing maps and the time of the assassination, which was set for late morning, 11/22/63.

"Saul" went to the County Records Building on that morning at approximately 11:40 a.m. He carried his weapon strapped to his upper body under the right armpit, with the barrel extending down into his pants leg. He described his ammunition as being very high velocity, not explosive, which shattered into fragments when it hit a hard object, thus denying any possible ballistics comparisons.

"Saul" said that about 8 minutes later he saw Oswald in position in the window of the Texas School Book Depository (TSBD).

As the President passed, Oswald fired and "Saul" fired. "Saul's" shot struck the President on the right shoulder to the right of the middle of his back, drove straight through, exited the President's throat, then hit Governor Connally. "Saul" and Oswald then fired again, with "Saul's" shot blowing out the right side of the President's head. "Saul" claims he saw Oswald's second shot hit the right hand curb of the street. Oswald then fired again. "Saul" swung his rifle towards Oswald but the Secret Service did not shoot and "Saul" was unable to shoot Oswald as he had no cover for his shots.

"Saul" says there was a back-up plan providing for Jack Ruby to kill Oswald.

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FILE REVIEWS

(1) Hugh C. McDonald

WDC
In addition to the normal material relating to McDonald's attendance at the NA and other law enforcement contacts, Bureau files contain an 11/1/67 memorandum concerning a visit of an I. Irving Davidson to FBIHQ on 10/31/67 (62-109060-5837). Davidson said he had been approached by Leonard Davidov, whom he described as a business acquaintance who was president of Security Associates, a WDC closed-circuit and burglar alarm company. Davidov had told Davidson that an "Eastern group" was putting up a lot of money to learn the truth about the assassination of President Kennedy. The group was working through McDonald, who allegedly knew that President Lyndon Johnson had prior knowledge of the plans to assassinate President Kennedy and that a George De Mohrenschildt was part of the conspiracy and supposedly was instrumental in the training of Oswald for the actual murder. Davidson said McDonald at the time was associated with Howard Hughes in the sale of helicopters to law enforcement agencies and McDonald had promised a share of the police helicopter business to Davidov if he would help McDonald.

No indication was found in Bureau files of any connection of McDonald with CIA.

(2) I. Irving Davidson

Davidson is described as a registered agent for several foreign governments, including the Governments of Haiti and Indonesia.

(3) Leonard Davidov

CIA
WDC

*8002 Whittier Boulevard,
Bethesda, Maryland*

Davidov is listed as one of the persons hired by McDonald to assist him in security of the Goldwater campaign in 1964. He is also the person in the book Kimsey had told McDonald to go see to get his records if anything happened to him. In the book, McDonald claims that after Kimsey's death he went to Davidov for the records, but was told that the CIA, FBI, and other intelligence agencies had taken over the records immediately after Kimsey's death. No indication has been found in the files of the FBI obtaining such records.

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Davidov's firm, Securities Associates, is listed in the files at two addresses in 1965 -- 6900 Wisconsin Avenue, WDC, and 4846 Cordell Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland.

The current Maryland suburban telephone book lists Leonard and Eleanor Davidov as living at 8002 Whittier Boulevard, Bethesda, Maryland.

(4) Herman Kimsey

Kimsey is shown in various files as being [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He lived at the Vivian Hotel, 1923 [REDACTED] G Street, N.W., WDC. In 1965, he is shown as a former CIA employee associated with a Cleve Backster in the Academy of Scientific Interrogation, New York City, a polygraph operator's firm.

(5) George De Mohrenschildt

De Mohrenschildt was born in Poland of Russian parents and is a naturalized citizen. He was a social acquaintance of Lee and Marina Oswald in Dallas prior to the assassination. There was considerable speculation during the investigation of the assassination that De Mohrenschildt might have been involved, but no evidence was ever developed indicating this to be so. In 1964, he took up residence in Haiti where he worked as a consulting engineer for the government of that country. He has been described as an unprincipled adventurer who has lived primarily by his wits. He has been characterized as a braggart of poor moral character who has engaged in a number of illicit affairs.

On 5/3/67, a representative of the Netherlands Television Company (NTC) contacted the New York Office to advise the NTC had received information from an informant in Western Europe that De Mohrenschildt was the principal organizer of the assassination of President Kennedy and that his brother, Dimitri, was a participant and possibly the second assassin who fired from the woods simultaneously with Oswald. NTC planned to release a story regarding this.

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The Warren Commission Report on pages 282-3 states that De Mohrenschildt and his wife took an eight-month hike beginning in 1961 from the U.S. - Mexican border to Panama. The report says that by happenstance they were in Guatemala at the time of the Bay of Pigs invasion. They kept a log and took pictures and made a report to the U.S. Government upon their return. The agency to which they reported is not identified.

ANALYSIS

(1) No less than 17 pages of the book are devoted to self-aggrandizement by the author. He constantly praises his investigative abilities, contacts, experience, and plugs his "Identi-Kit."

(1) The author tries to prove his self-thought fantastic ability for making identifications. He claims to have recognized "Saul" from 40 feet away in 1972, after having seen him only briefly in 1961.

11/13/73 declassified
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(3) The author mentions the deaths of other persons, such as Adlai Stevenson and James Forrestal, stating they may have been accomplished by use of air propelled needle capsules and subliminal suggestion. He offers no real facts regarding these deaths, but in raising questions, may be laying the groundwork for future books.

(4) Much material is devoted to demonstrating McDonald's "super sleuth" image -- his vast contacts with the so-called "Blue Fox" intelligence network in Europe, his persistency in sticking with the search for "Saul" in spite of the personal expense and danger involved and the setbacks (dead-end leads to various parts of the world).

(5) The author's search for "Saul" began at the Westbury Hotel in London, England, and ended there several years later. This appears to be fantastic considering the time and travel that elapsed in the interim.

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(6) The author claims he interviewed "Saul" in the lobby of the Westbury Hotel. This appears strange for an experienced law enforcement officer to track a person for so many years and then interview him in a public place about a matter of such magnitude.

(7) The author says that "Troit" had told "Saul" that Lee Harvey Oswald was paid \$1,000 for shooting at General Walker. Detailed investigation of Oswald in 1963 and 1964 did not reveal any indication of his having an extra \$1,000. Additionally, a letter was found in Oswald's room by his wife on 5/10/63, which indicated he expected to be killed or imprisoned for shooting General Walker. This was on the same date as the actual shooting at General Walker.

(8) McDonald claims "Saul" fired from the second floor of the County Records Building, which is to the left rear of the point where President Kennedy was hit. Several studies, including one reported on the 11/25/75 CBS Television documentary regarding the assassination, have concluded the shots came from the right rear, which is where Oswald was in the TSBD.

(9) "Saul" told McDonald that on the night of 11/21/63, he went to his hotel restaurant and had one gin and tonic. It is noted that in 1963, liquor by the drink sales was not permitted in Dallas, Texas, except in private clubs. To have a drink in a hotel restaurant, "Saul" would have to have brought his own bottle.

(10) "Saul" indicated that after assuming his firing position in the County Records Building at 11:40 a.m., he saw Oswald in the 6th floor window of the TSBD at 11:48 a.m. The first report of shots being fired at the President was at 12:35 p.m. This would indicate that "Saul" spent approximately 50 minutes in an office area of the County Records Building, where numerous office workers were viewing the motorcade.

(11) "Saul" indicated he fired two shots and Oswald fired three. The odds of two people firing from different locations, endeavoring to make the shots sound as if they are coming from one location, is remote.

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(12) McDonald indicates Oswald's trip to Mexico had to have something to do with the President. Considerable information was reported during the investigation of the assassination indicating the purpose of Oswald's trip was to find a way to get to Cuba.

(13) McDonald indicates in the book he has some reservations about putting his reputation on the line by saying he believes "Saul" told him the truth. This appears to be a self-serving statement for McDonald in the event the contents of the book are questioned or disproven. He can always say he believed what "Saul" told him and published it in good faith.

(14) The second floor of the County Records Building (from where "Saul" claims he fired) has four windows overlooking Dealey Plaza. In 1963, the rooms containing these four windows consisted of courtrooms, judge's offices, and judge's secretaries' offices. The availability of any of these offices for approximately 50 minutes by anyone with a rifle is highly unlikely.

(15) McDonald claims to have done contract work for the CIA on numerous occasions over the years, receiving his assignments from Herman Kimsey. Bureau files contain no information regarding such a connection.

(16) "Saul" allegedly met "Troit" in Guatemala at a staging camp for the Bay of Pigs Invasion. The Warren Commission Report states that De Mohrenschildt was in Guatemala City just prior to the Bay of Pigs invasion, a convenient piece of information for McDonald to fit into his story.

(17) "Saul" next met "Troit" in Haiti in the middle of May, 1963. The meeting took place in a house that Kimsey told McDonald could have been U.S. Government property or had some sort of official connection. Bureau files state De Mohrenschildt was under contract to the government of Haiti in 1963, conducting a geological survey. The Warren Commission Report says he was engaged in a government-oriented business venture in Haiti in 1963, another convenient piece of information for McDonald.

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(18) "Troit," according to the book, had Oswald shoot at General Walker. In Marina Oswald's testimony before the Warren Commission, she said that shortly after the General Walker incident, De Mohrenschildt asked Lee Harvey Oswald how could he have missed. Oswald later asked his wife if she had told De Mohrenschildt that he shot at General Walker. She said no, and Oswald said, "How did he guess it." This exchange raises possible doubts and is also convenient for McDonald's use.

(19) McDonald claims that the Caucasian male in Warren Commission Photographic Exhibit Number 237 is "Saul." This photograph was taken by a CIA [redacted] outside the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City in 1963 and was furnished to the FBI. There was much speculation about the photograph during the assassination investigation. CIA mistakenly identified the photograph as being Oswald. Oswald's mother said it was Jack Ruby. Quite obviously, the person in the photograph is neither Oswald nor Ruby. The person was never identified. This, of course, leaves room for speculation which McDonald has cleverly fitted into his story.

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(20) McDonald states Herman Kimsey told him that Leonard Davidov would have his notes and papers regarding "Saul" if anything ever happened to him. McDonald claims that after Kimsey's death he was told by Davidov that the CIA, the FBI, and every other intelligence agency in town had been by and had taken the notes and papers away in a medium-size briefcase. FBIHQ files contain no information indicating the FBI obtained such papers or even had an interest in them.

(21) Noting that he interviewed "Saul" in 1972, but did nothing with his information until he wrote this book, McDonald indicates that he never furnished the information to the FBI, as he felt the FBI was subject to serious political pressures. He mentions Watergate, which was occurring at the time of his decision. This seems like a very drastic change of opinion for a person who had been in law enforcement for so many years, and who, by his own admission, had been so close to the FBI over the years.

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(22) McDonald states in his book that Kimsey's CIA territory was Cuba. Information regarding Kimsey in FBIHO files indicates he was primarily involved in research, [redacted] and other technical areas. [C] see letter dtd 2/28/83

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(23) McDonald states "Equally obvious was the fact that both the CIA and the FBI were compromised at the very top, since both agencies had denied any knowledge of 'Saul.'" Here he is referring to affidavits submitted by FBI and CIA personnel regarding not knowing the identity of the person in Commission Exhibit Number 237. This is an absurd overstatement. A person with McDonald's alleged expertise in the fields of intelligence and law enforcement would know that many photographs are taken [redacted] and all are not identified, especially in foreign countries where follow-up investigations are undoubtedly limited. (X) (u)

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(24) McDonald makes mention of "Saul" allegedly observing Oswald leaving the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City with a person who walked with him several blocks trying to explain something to him. During the assassination investigation, Pedro Gutierrez Valencia, a credit investigator for a Mexico City department store, advised that on 9/30/63, or 10/1/63, he observed a Cuban and an individual later believed by him to be Oswald leaving the Cuban Embassy. They were engaged in a heated conversation involving "Castro, Cuba, and Kennedy." The Cuban handed some money to the person believed to be Oswald. They both entered an automobile and left the area. Although extensive investigation was conducted regarding this, the Cuban was never identified, nor was it confirmed that the other person was Oswald; another area of exploitation for McDonald.

(25) McDonald says "Saul" claimed he used very high velocity ammunition, which was a disintegrating type, not explosive. "Saul" explained this to be a type which shatters into fragments when it strikes a hard object, such as a human skull. Thus it denies the possibility of ballistics comparison to match a weapon with the bullet. "Saul" said his first shot hit President Kennedy on the right shoulder and exited from his throat. It did not disintegrate since it did not hit bone. The bullet then hit Governor John Connally's ribs, disintegrated, and did severe damage to his lung cavity. Fragments of it exited, struck the Governor's wrist and penetrated his thigh. The questions which have been raised over the years by critics about the shots fired are easily and conveniently answered by McDonald's explanation.

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(26) "Saul" allegedly told McDonald that Oswald's first shot struck the street behind and to the left of the President's car. He claims his ("Saul's") second shot blew out the right side of the President's head. He said Oswald's second shot struck the right hand curb side and he ("Saul") says he saw it hit. Oswald fired a third shot. "Saul" said he did not know where it hit. "Saul" then swung around and aimed at Oswald, but was unable to shoot him since the Secret Service agents did not start shooting at Oswald and give him a cover for his gunfire.

"Saul" claimed he was firing a European semiautomatic rifle with a German-built scope. He describes the time between his shots as being minute.

It does not seem reasonable that a person taking aim and shooting a rifle with a scope would be able to observe where another person's bullets were hitting.

(27) By "Saul's" account, two of Oswald's bullets hit outside the President's car and he doesn't know where the third hit. Search of the President's car revealed two bullet fragments which were identified as being from Oswald's rifle. Of course, McDonald could say these fragments came from Oswald's third shot since "Saul" did not know where it hit.

Overall it would appear that McDonald has cleverly and conveniently taken certain aspects of the Warren Commission Report which in and of themselves are not fully explained (or are even explainable), and tailored his confession from "Saul" to include them. In any major investigation, where volumes of information are dealt with, such areas will develop and will quite possibly be left hanging. McDonald makes the same mistake as do many of the assassination investigation critics; failure to take into account the totality of evidence. This book would appear to be the first overt act of the previously mentioned "Eastern group" which was planning as long ago as 1967 to show that De Mohrenschildt was part of an assassination conspiracy. Their next step could conceivably be to publish another book containing convenient "facts" to link President Lyndon B. Johnson to the assassination, as was another of their 1967 goals.

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Several newspaper articles about McDonald's book have been received from field offices in different parts of the country. Most place little stock in McDonald's allegations. An article from the 1/19/76 edition of "The Sacramento Bee," Sacramento, California, describes the book as ". . . one in a recent deluge of moneymaking stories claiming the truth behind JFK's murder. It is sloppily written, illogical in parts, filled with holes and riddled with typographical errors, as if it were produced in a hurry, which it was."

The subject of this book came up recently in a conversation with [redacted] Staff Member, U.S. Senate Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations With Respect To Intelligence Activities. [redacted] remarked that some staff members had read the book and would not recommend it for reading by anyone else, much less recommend it for the attention of that committee.

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