

"Act of Treason," Mark North's new addition to the ever-expanding number of books misleading and deceiving the people about the JFK assassination, should be considered as "Act of Unreason," which is what at its better moments it is.

The book's "revelations," according to the dust jacket, "are not based on speculation or circumstantial evidence. The conclusions are based on documented facts gathered over five years of intensive research." The most sensational of these "conclusions" is that "J. Edgar Hoover, the Director of the FBI, had learned by September 1962 of a plot to kill the President" and "not only did nothing to prevent ~~it~~ the assassination from taking place, he actually worked to make sure the plan would be successful."

~~He~~ ^{and} Hoover, the leading assassin, "insured" ~~its~~ ^{He} ~~success~~ ⁿ "made Lyndon Johnson an agent of his plans."

North, a lawyer, musters "irrefutable evidence" from, among other sources, he says in his "author's note," "government documents" not one of which is listed in ~~xxxx~~ his seven pages of bibliography, unless, without so saying, the "data" he says is in this book ~~is~~ "for the first time" is those documents previously published by official investigations. I do not recall citation of a single official record in his 80 pages of notes.

His interest in examining the ~~available~~ previously-withheld quarter of a million pages ~~I got through a series of Freedom of Information lawsuits~~

More than a quarter of a million pages of previously-withheld government records, mostly those of his arch-villain Hoover's FBI, have been available ~~since~~ before he began his "five years of investigating and research," this many pages being available to all writers from me after years of litigating a series of Freedom of Information lawsuits that forced their disclosure to me. But, available as they were long before he began his work, he had no interest in them at all. In fact he does not even refer to their existence.

Perhaps this is because ~~xxxxxx~~ in addition to being a lawyer, he also "holds a degree in history."

To ^{describe} ~~deserve~~ this tome of 671 pages a trash is to praise it.

It is an atrocity of disinformation, misinformation and childish speculation, the speculation its boasts it does not resort to, that, like so many such previous books by ego-tripping, self-important and ignorant authors, amounts to an exculpation of those official miscreants who failed to meet their public obligations at the time of this terrible crime and ever since.

The failed agencies can, as they have in the ~~past~~, quote a few of the more outrageous and irrational speculations and distribute them within the government or to friends in the media with the comment that this is another of those exploiting books that can't get anything right and that once again prove the government was correct in its conclusions.

Ignorance of the readily-available government records and of their content that includes much fact that is beyond reasonable question was no liability to North. ~~It~~ ^{It} was

for him an asset: it liberated him from these ~~re~~ restraints, restraints that would have kept an honest writer from writing this very bad book. His ignorance extends to his bibliography. It ~~op~~ includes a not inconsiderable amount of junk and excludes what is well-known and relevant. This bibliography would be inadequate for a reasonably intelligent high school student.

Also inadequate is his knowledge of the FBI, of how it works, how it files, even what it consists of. He has a chapter on this, "The Bureaucracy: Structure of the FBI During the Kennedy Administration," and another, "The System: FBI record keeping." These chapters are woefully out of date and are otherwise ~~inaccurate~~ inaccurate.

For example, he says, among other misstatements about FBI filing, that as of 1991, the date of his book, FBI records in its Central Records system "fell into more than one hundred and fifty categories." There were more than 200 and they are not of categories but ^{are} of classifications. Many of these classifications are pursuant to specific laws. (37) Others are more inclusive, some are general. To illustrate he says that a record relating to Louisiana Mafioso Carlos Marcello is "categorized under the Mafia (92)." There is no "Mafia" category and 92, according to the ^{classification} ~~readily available~~ ^{FBI's} description of ~~the FBI's~~ its filing system, which it published and makes available, this "classification" is for "Anti-Racketeering; A.R. - Lea Act; A.R. - Interference with Government Communications Systems; A.R. - Hobbs Act." (38)

Moreover, records relating to Marcello and others in the mafia are included in other file classifications.

He lumps wiretaps and microphone surveillance, bugs, together as "technical surveillance." The FBI's "taps," as it calls them, do not include bugs. ^{Bugs} They are "taps," for microphone surveillance. (39)

"Data suitable for Hoover's private files were stored solely within his suite of offices..." (39) Like so much else, this is false. FBI records disclosed to me make it clear that Hoover's own files, of which North mentions only "official and confidential" when some were "personal and confidential," included copies of records filed in the regular files. I have copies from those files and from Hoover's, of identical records.

In building his case on ignorance and lies, he says that "in the case of Mafia death threats against President Kennedy, the above procedures were simply ignored by Hoover. Instead, the information went into his private files." (42) *False.*

North has a thing about Carlos Marcello threatening to kill JFK. So, with what I quote above in mind, I report that FBI records disclosed to me from its regular files, ~~not~~ Hoover's, include Marcello's discussion of these allegations that he intended to kill the President.

As North claptraps his way to his accusation against Hoover, in his "Treason" chapter (189ff). he gets to the sole source of this widely-known fiction, Edward Becker.

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Becker was an FBI "symbol" informer, that is his employment as an informer was approved by headquarters and thereafter is identified by a symbol that consists of the abbreviation of the city of the field office, an arbitrary number assigned to him and letters denoting the kind of informer he was, "C" for criminal, "S" for security, meaning, really, political, etc. The index lists eight ^{references to} ~~citations~~ of Becker in the book, including one that ^{does not} exist, "607 nt. 3." (There is no 3 or note 3 on that page.)

Hoover is supposed to know all about what Becker allegedly reported and to have kept it in tightest secrecy in his office files. So, how was he to have known what Becker, who lacks credibility, reported?

Becker went directly from his meeting with Marcello to the New Orleans FBI. I have its report on what Becker told it. It has no mention of any threat by Marcello against anyone, specifically not against JFK.

So how does North know that Becker told the FBI of this alleged threat in his book that he says holds no conjecture? "...it could seem plausible" that he passed this "information" along. (214)

Aside from his baseless conjectures and factual errors, and the conjectures he says he eschews while bragging about what is in this book "for the first time," what is in it that is in any way new?

Two trivialities of no significance at all, 28 pages of appendices. The first is 17 pages of chitchat correspondence between Hoover and LBJ, mostly ^{very, very short} thank you notes or brief statements of praise. ~~and the second~~ They are so short one of a mere 20 words is not unusual. The second appendix is of Lee Harvey Oswald's 1962 tax return. Marina Oswald got them in the usual manner, about which North attempts to weave mystery and intent to withhold them. *humane*

In the seven pages of conjectural and entirely baseless text to this appendix North assumes that Oswald was a paid FBI informer, "criminal" yet rather than political. There is no indication of this in the tax returns and the exact opposite is explicit: Oswald's declared income is precisely the amount ^{by} it is known he earned on two low-paying jobs, less that \$1200 for the entire year!

So, how does North make Oswald an a paid FBI informer and have that no showing ^{of it} on his tax return when informer income was required to be included?

He conjectures that the tax return was "altered," of which there is no evidence at all.

and he conjectures that the FBI hired Oswald when he "was approached by the Dallas FBI." He was interviewed, not "approached," and he was asked to tell the FBI if the KGB made any contact with him. ^{or Marina} So this formal and not at all unusual "contact" was not in any sense a recruiting approach.

Of this and at the very point North, who never conjectures, says "It is then very possible that Oswald was, however briefly, recruited in the fall of 1962, and received a small amount of informant pay." (566)

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What little I've read of this book is more than enough to justify characterizing it as worse than worthless because it misleads and misinforms and promotes still another assassination mythology along with endorsing earlier such evil.

Conspiracy sells, however, so publishers do not bother to have such books checked by ~~the~~ those who have factual knowledge or, as happened with a different publisher, did publish as a really rotten book after it was taken apart, page by page, in a lengthy and detailed analysis of the entire manuscript.

The North publisher, Carroll & Graf, published Jim Marrs' [†] frightful compendium of all the nutty JFK assassination theories, "Crossfire," and was so satisfied with its hardback sale they reprinted it in paperback, with an index added.

North praises them - says they are "deserving of great praise," for publishing Marrs' unscholarly gibberish and for their reprinting, which he fails to say is a reprinting, of David Lifton's exploitation and commercialization of this great tragedy, a lengthy book in which Lifton stakes a claim to have brought to light all this is known about the JFK assassination many years after he read ^{it} every factual word in his book (in books published as much as 20 years earlier). All that was new in Lifton's book when it was published, by Macmillan, is a theory he knew was impossible, of the alleged kidnapping of the President's corpse so it could be altered.

So, there is every reason to believe that this newest exploitation and commercialization will not be unprofitable to the publisher.

In hardback the book costs \$26.95.

The reader would be as well and as accurately informed about the JFK assassination were he to spend that sum on comic books.

Comic books, at least, would not mislead and misinform about this great tragedy, the most serious crime of the century."

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