

December 14, 1975

Mr. Benjamin Bradlee
Editor, The Washington Post
1515 L Street, NW
Washington, D. C. 20006

Dear Mr. Bradlee:

Rudy Maxa's piece in today's Potomac illustrates the problem faced by anyone who has not made a career of studying it in reporting almost anything about the JFK assassination and reminds me again of the difficulty of my own situation in trying to take and hold a middle-of-the-road position.

It also leads me to make you a parlay offer.

Hugh G. McDonald (called "George" by Maxa) did not write the book of which I have three contradictory versions. I was engaged as a consultant by a well-known publisher to read what was offered him. After reading two paragraphs, I phoned to get permission to conduct an investigation in addition because this trash has all the characteristics of a spookery's "black book."

Thereafter I was commissioned by a publication considering ancillary rights offered by Zebra.

During the course of this I met and had the not easy task of learning from McDonald, an expert on interrogations, who his then unidentified characters were.

From beginning to end the book is a deliberate fraud, still another of the miserable commercializations of the original and subsequent tragedies. Neither McDonald nor his ghost nor his publisher (the unobservant Mr. Maxa did not note that the book gives two different publishers) is or can be innocent. Even the account of the assassination is impossible by any version, including the official one on which the book claims expert knowledge by McDonald.

Some of the alterations as a consequence of my work indicate hastiness. For example, where the original versions have "Saul" (how much closer can you get to "Raul" in the King assassination?) lurking for an hour in a "safe" lair - a ladies' room - the printed version replaces this with three dots.

My proposals are (a) commission me at your regular rates for a decent-size article on McDonald and his book and (b) have us together as guests at one of your book-and-author luncheons.

If you accept, I would strongly suggest an able and determined moderator and I would request agreement in advance by both parties for all of it to be taped with no restrictions on use.

So you will understand, each of the three versions has a different locale and a different situation for the "confession." In his first version he has Lyndon Johnson as the contractor. In the first and second versions and in the situations in all three, his intermediary "Troit" is a real person whose name I give you in confidence because of the libel, an off-beat character, George de Mohrenschildt, despite the actuality of the impossibility, well authenticated in more than fifty pages of FBI reports in my possession.

Let me be explicit. The book is so inherently incredible to a non-expert, so overloaded with self-destructs, that the first question I asked the publisher who commissioned me was why he didn't fire the reader. The description of the assassination is a total physical impossibility, so completely so I can't believe McDonald took the time to read the Warren Report (his additions to the printed version are consistent with this, lacking citations and confusing between the Report and the 26 later volumes).

~~What~~ I would write would be regarded as libelous by the uninformed. Therefore, I would grant you the right to edit out anything about which your editor might have doubts.

If you accept and the confrontation were to be at any time in the near future, I might have to spend most of my time sitting down; but glib and persuasive as is this slickest of con men I have ever met, I would look forward to it if I had to be on a stretcher.

On a different note that bears on my confidence, I inform you of a series of events of which I presume you have no personal knowledge.

On November 14 I held a press conference to announce my newest book, POST MORTEM, embargoed until am's of the 16th. At that time I stated that the book (the Post had an advance copy) accused named Warren Commission witnesses of perjury and lawyers of suborning it. I challenged all to appear and testify with me before any duly constituted Congressional committee with all of us subject to the penalties of perjury. The challenge was carried by the wire services. At that time I had a contract for a debate with David Belin at Vanderbilt University on the 19th. He had seen a copy of POST MORTEM in advance, ordered one I rushed to him. He began to read it prior to our debate. For this occasion I prepared and read a speech devoted entirely to David Belin's area of work on the Warren Commission, to his suborning of perjury, and presented sworn evidence he personally suppressed. Three days later he announced his support, if overloaded with the self-serving, of a Congressional investigation of the JFK assassination. Because I was in such bad physical condition, I had with me an able-bodied local college student who can corroborate whatever anyone may have doubts about after reading the prepared text.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg