

Author claims he met real assassin of JFK, didn't check out story

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Staff Writers

An author who purports to have found the "real" assassin of President John F. Kennedy and extracted a confession from him acknowledges he never came to Dallas to verify whether the tale he wrote a book about is even plausibly possible.

"I just believe him; I sat and talked to him and I think he was telling the truth, that's all," said Hugh C. McDonald, former law-enforcement officer and author of "Appointment in Dallas: The Final Solution to the Assassination of JFK."

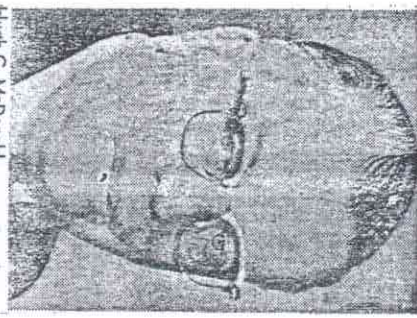
Nevertheless, McDonald said in an interview Wednesday that his book, co-authored by Geoffrey Boorer, is already in the third printing and likely will net him about \$400,000 when an anticipated 2 million copies are sold.

The book details how McDonald was contacted by a mysterious intelligence group called "Blue Fox" and traveled more than 50,000 miles through 10 nations, eventually meeting the alleged assassin he calls "Saul."

When they talked at a hotel in London, the book asserts, Saul confessed that Oswald was a decoy gunman in the Texas School Book Depository and that he (Saul) fired the shots which actually killed the President — from the second floor of the Dallas County Records Annex Building.

Saul, according to McDonald, then provided a table of being hired by unidentified interests for \$30,000 to shoot Kennedy, and that on Nov. 22, 1963, while Oswald was firing away from the depository, he fired a rifle fitted with a silencer from the second floor of the other building.

"I wasn't completely satisfied with Saul's story and when I came back (to the U.S.) so I did a lot of checking," McDonald said. He said the checking consisted mostly of comparing the alleged assassin's story against the report of the Warren Commission.



Hugh C. McDonald, author of 'real' assassin

According to 1963 city directory listings, the second floor of the Annex building was occupied on the west side (the side facing the presidential motorcade) by judges' chambers and clerks' offices. Workers in those offices told The Times Herald the windows in question were filled with employees watching the President's motorcade. A large tree in Dealey Plaza obstructs the view from the windows to where the President was hit.

These trees were about half their present size on Nov. 22, 1963.

McDonald said he never checked out whether Kennedy could have been shot from that floor, or whether it could have been in any way plausible.

"I have never seen that building," McDonald said. "I've never been up there. I don't know whether it (the scenario of his book) is plausible."

McDonald's book states Saul was an assassin used at times by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and had participated in the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961. He claims a photo of "an unidentified man" included in Warren Commission exhibits is actually Saul.

He noted he felt an "element" of the CIA was actually behind the assassination.

"One of the proofs of Saul's story, to me, is that it's not perfect. It's not pat," McDonald said. "If it got a lot of holes in it."

McDonald, who was in Dallas on a promotion tour for his book, said his interest in Saul and the assassination began in 1964 when he directed security

for presidential candidate Barry Goldwater.

At that time, McDonald claims, a retired CIA supervisor, Hermon Ramsey, took him to Dealey Plaza and told him Saul (McDonald's name for him; he claims the man's real name is unknown) had actually killed the President from the Records Annex building.

McDonald said he pursued other investigative work for several years until called to Europe by "Blue Fox" at which time he decided to try to locate Saul.

McDonald would not discuss "Blue Fox" other than to say it was a highly secret intelligence organization of 250 people's top spies. He said the secret assignment was to gather information about an exotic Russian germ warfare project on the island of Vozrozhdeniya where the Soviets were allowing behind the scenes via missiles up into "the main jet stream."

But after several weeks of crisscrossing Europe—and having an assassin

nearly sit his throne in a West Germany hotel room—McDonald said he finally met with Saul in London in mid-1972. Saul had come to the meeting, McDonald said, because McDonald had pressed word he wanted to hire a professional assassin.

According to McDonald, Saul told him detailed facts of being hired by another unknown man he called "Troll" (that's not his name, that's Boorer's, said McDonald), of shadowing Oswald in Mexico City for three days and of arriving in Dallas two days before the assassination to finalize his plans.

Oswald, the story goes, had been told by "Troll" that he would be doing a great service for his country if he shot from the depository building close to the President's car—once but not to hit it—so the Secret Service could demonstrate the need for stronger protection for the chief executive.

Saul is supposed to have fired the two killing shots that hit Kennedy while Oswald simply powered three close ones.

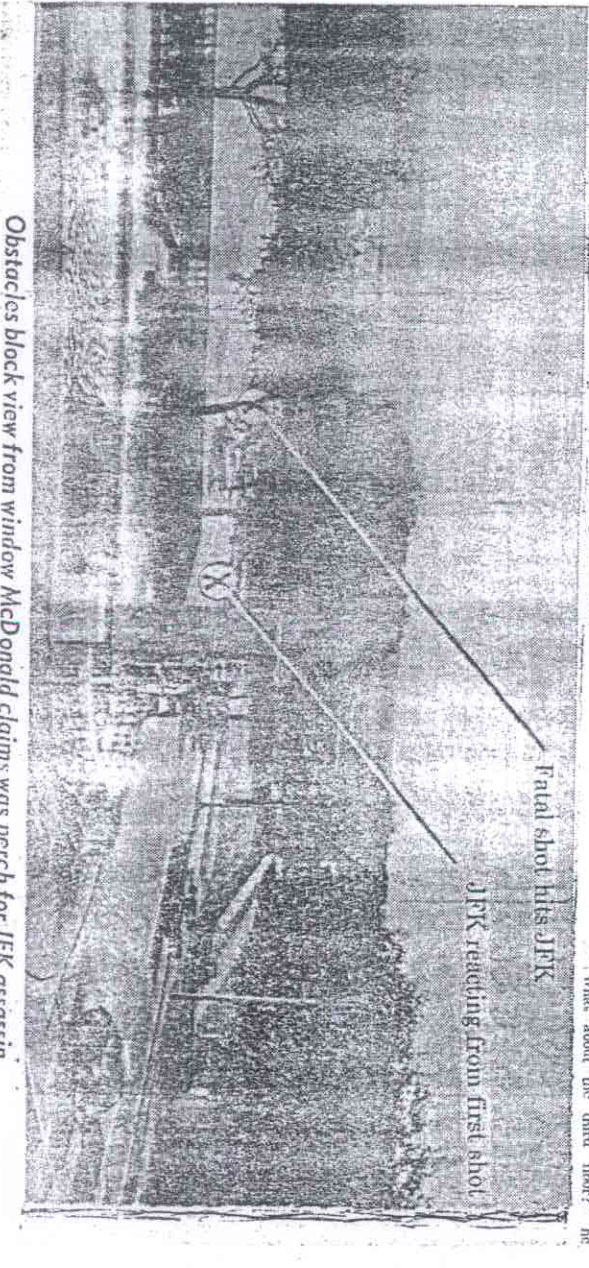
Saul said he expected the Secret Service to return Oswald's shots and his further assignment was to kill Oswald as he arose from his widow stance. Since no shots were fired at Oswald, Saul, the story continues, couldn't shoot Oswald and had to sneak off out of there without completing his mission.

Saul's bullets, said McDonald, were "high velocity . . . the kind that explode on contact" so there was no evidence of his shots.

That necessarily provided some other problems in matching Saul's story with known facts, since a bullet was found on Gov. John Connally's stretcher and the Warren probers claimed this was the first shot, that hit Kennedy's back, went through his throat and injured Connally. "That had to have been planned there," McDonald opined.

When McDonald was told the court clerks comprised the only access to the four second-story windows of the Annex building, he admitted it seemed "unlucky" Saul could have fired from there.

"What about the third floor?" he



Fatal shot hits JFK
JFK retreating from first shot

Obstacles block view from window McDonald claims was perch for JFK assassin

asked. He had also been told the sheriff's office had been on the first floor.

Told the third through the ninth floors were at that time occupied by the county jail, McDonald said, "I'm sure he meant that building. What about the roof?"

Since Saul had told him he had watched Oswald briefly in the cross-hairs of his rifle scope and the only building from which such a view could have been had was the Annex building, did McDonald have any second thoughts about the veracity of the whole Saul episode?

"No, there's no way I would testify as to the truth of Saul's statement; I couldn't. All I do say is that in my opinion Saul is telling the truth. It's up to some body or agency to bring it out."

McDonald said he knew a good bit about how the CIA operated because he was a "contract man" for the agency several times both domestically and abroad. He would give no further particulars, and a CIA spokesman in Washington said he had "never heard of McDonald."

The former lawman (several California detective posts and a former Howard Hughes security man) said one of the jobs he turned down for the CIA was the U-2 spy plane mission, on which Francis Gary Powers was shot down over Russia in 1960. "I didn't like the deal, I told them so."

McDonald said money was not the motivation for his book. "I have an annual income over \$50,000 for the rest of my life. I don't need money."

Several publishers, he said, wanted to print his treatise as fiction, but he didn't go for that idea. Finally he formed his own publishing company.

He said 400,000 copies had been printed three months ago in the initial printing. "If it continues to go like we think it will, I will make a lot of money," he said.

Oddly enough, in the front of the book is a disclaimer of sorts that reads: "Any literary coloration is at the behest of my co-author."

Just how much Bocca "colored" the book is not known, but McDonald seemed unfamiliar with some portions of it—though he said he had checked and authorized every word.

For instance, in one chapter the book claims McDonald found out that William (sic) Bremer was hired by an Algerian terrorist group to shoot Gov. George Wallace. McDonald said he didn't recall anything about Bremer or the Algerian connection.

McDonald said he was on "an extremely tight schedule" promoting the book and might not have time to visit Dealey Plaza to check for himself the likelihood of Saul's strange story.

He said he hoped congressional committees would call him to testify, "so I can go under oath with this thing."

How does he feel when disbelievers call him a "nut" or claim he made the whole thing up? "I don't react to that at all," he said.