

Extra space

It was inevitable that Lifton and Livingstone would become enemies.

As enemies they deserve each other.

Between them they deceived, misled and misinformed more people about the JFK assassination than all others in recent years.

During these recent years the government has been silent about the assassination.

But those disagreeing with the official account have correctly assumed that there was a growing market for books pretending to solve the crime with theories.

Perhaps the greatest single impetus came from Oliver Stone's movie mistitled JFK as he sought his own and very successful commercialization and exploitation of the crime. In it he added his own uninhibited imagination to ~~the~~ former New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison self-justification, his book also mistitled, On the Trail of the Assassins, and ^K Jim Marrs' incompetent and inadequate compendium of all the nutty and unproven assassination theories, Crossfire.

The trail of the assassin is the one trail Garrison never took. I was there. I know.

Garrison had no case against the man he charged, Clay Shaw. It took the jury, which believed there had been a conspiracy to kill JFK, less than an hour to acquit Shaw.

He had no case against anyone else, either.

Not because he was not going to file new charges. Until I made it impossible for him, at the request of his staff, which had not been able to persuade him, Garrison was actually going to charge two men with being assassins on that Dallas grassy knoll.

One was a man he misidentified^d as being in an entirely irrelevant series of pictures taken an hour and a half after the assassination.

The other was a man who to Garrison's knowledge as well as mine, had killed himself, in New Orleans, fifteen months before Garrison was going to charge him with being an assassin!

When Oliver Stone announced that he was going to record their history for the people, tell them who killed their President, why and how, ~~Secrets and details~~ based on Garrison's book, I wrote him at length and in detail telling him that Garrison was

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 a tragic fraud. I ~~afforded~~ gave him some proof, offered him more and to answer any questions he might have, and he did not respond, That was two months before he started shooting. Then I was given a copy of the script that Stone himself had ^U given out. Faced with Stone's silence and his false representation of his coming film that would reach so vast an audience, I gave my notes, documentation and the memorandum that prevented Garrison's planned commemoration of the fifth assassination anniversary - by charging a dead man with killing JFK! - to George Lardner of the Washington Post. That started the not inconsiderable controversy about the Stone rewriting of our history.

Stone had an unquestionable right to say anything he wanted to say as long as he did not lie about it and tell the world that his fiction movie was nonfiction.

I had no less a right to attempt to have the truth known.

Stone's movie made the most meretricious, the most indecent, the most outrageous and impossible books acceptable and they appeared, with considerable promotion and large sales.

Livingstone titled his High Treason, distinguishing them by adding numbers. As I write this he is under contract for High Treason 3, scheduled to appear in October.

There were books attributing the assassination- about which they said little or nothing, assuming the general outlines of the official mythology - to the mafia, an easy mark. Some were new, some were republication of earlier books.

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There were many and they sold well. They all added to the existing confusion and they all served to make the official account more credible when it, too, was at best a theory that was not and could not be proven.

Of them all perhaps the most indecent was Howard Donahue's Mortal Error (St. Martin's Press, New York,). What made it publishable when it falsely charged a living man with killing the President illustrated the morals and the ethics of book publishers when they visualize a flood of profit.

Donahue, a gunsmith and an extraordinarily profess proficient marksman, imagined that Secret Service Agent George Hickey, sitting in the followup car of the motorcade, shot the President by accident.

After some correspondence he and his wife came to visit us. As I do with all writers I offered him access to all the records I obtained by all those FOIA lawsuits and I gave him both a detailed disproof of his theory and told him ~~that~~ about the existing film that proved beyond question that it was impossible.

Donahue either did not consult the film to which I referred him or he did not give a damn, preferring the fame and profit from a successful book.

And his certainly was different.

Contrary to what the Dinahues said when they were here and the pleasant thank-you letter from his wife, Donau Donahue felt the need to slur me. As he made his theory up out of nothing he referred to that visit by reporting what had not happened and could not have happened. He said that I grumbled throughout it, complaining that the University of Maryland had no interest in the archive I have. I had long before made the arrangements for the archive I wanted to make and I had never had any interest in the University of Maryland as the depository.

What made that authentic mortal error publishable when it is so clearly impossible, if not libelous, I discovered by the accident of a dear friend of my youth being in Israel and sending me the story from the Jerusalem Post in which an investigator hired by Donovan sought his moment of glory.

Pick up with quotation of that story and then with what St. Martin's said.

Knowing that poor, suffering Hickey shunned all contacts, all public attention and would not sue is all St. Martin's Press needed to dip into the public pocketbook, like all the works of theoretical conspiracy solutions to the crime, ripping off the public mind while rapping off the public purse.

And, as was inevitable, as soon as the book was published St. Martin's was informed by my Fort Worth, Texas friend, Gary Mack, that the existing pictures proved without any possible question, that Donague's entirely imaginary "solution" was entirely impossible.