

12/5/76

mr. henry durkin
xxx Bex 74
westfield, n.j.
07090

dear henry,

hope i remember address correctly. temporary tendon problem. improving but i am following orders literally to speed healing up.

timing of your 12.1 perfect. had been discussing the hagath core. offer with jim lesar. had not read the piece you sent. thanks.

i would like to go for that \$10,000 and if it can be obtained give it to lesar, all of it, for use foia cases. the costs are already fantastic and unpaid but i am getting a very large number of records. i have also made arrangements for them to be a university archive and what may interest you, in a conservative area and entirely non-political in nature, administration, etc.

so there will be no personal benefit to me and there will be no political use/misuse.

for the immediate future there are reasons for my preferring not to figure in this. i am therefore asking that you obtain the information for me. if you get it by mail please attach the envelope to the contents after making a copy of both and send me either set. if as is possible after what sprague wrote they back out please engage in correspondence with the same kind of record keeping and establish a record. i have in mind a future case of using the mails, etc. long ago i asked levi to prosecute. no response. here is background. sprague knows, says too little.

a well-known publisher hired me as a consultant. he had offered a \$20,000 advance to mcdonald. his lawyer was uneasy. i read first two drafts and asked for expenses to conduct investigation, by phone. i could see fraud charges vs. prospective publisher.

after my inquiry there was a meeting between this publisher, his counsel and chief editor and mcod., his two agents, one known to me and apprehensive about my appearance, his ghost and a slew of his lawyers in their fancy nyc offices. the problem was that the publisher saw a pot of money in the formula and some fun and was inclined to ignore the possibility of a fraud rap while his lawyer wanted to keep his client within the law. this led to an unusual kind of confrontation between mcdonald and me in which i had to interrogate the teacher of interrogations, when he was supported by all these people, and obtain from him what it was against his interest to say. i did it but by not interrogating him. the result is that the publisher offered to go ahead with the deal after the meeting - decided at lunch right after - but as a novel. mcod. would not go for it. this is what led him to sebra. later, when publication was close, i was consultant to a popular publication that had offered \$25,000 for the ancillary rights. they withdrew. these were, as i am sure you understand, confidential relationships. for me, aside from my knowledge of the book and its content, was an understanding of mcod. he is either an exceptionally gifted con man, a psyché or both. he can pass a psé or a polygraph easily. i can also prove fraud without problems.

the inquiry led me to three different versions of the same work of supposed non-fiction and to one of the real characters in it as well as the lady friend of a second. this is one of the more daring aspects, the use of real characters one of whom can be hurt by any attention, the other safely dead. latter herman kinsey, not kinsey. his lady friend of the era after he was fired by cia is a friend of ours now. the dead kinsey, a conservative as is his friend, was libelled by mcdonald, who may have stolen those inventions from kinsey, who is believed to have developed them while a cia employee. it has not responded to my foia requests.

if bennett had a statement of results or proofs of the ose reading that "proves" mod. is an honest man i'd sue like it. the pee is about to be used in a manner that may bury truth deeper.

reur 11/29, thanks. i no longer subscribe to the so-called newsmags. the stories of three of the four past weekends are all disinformation operations by the specks, so anything you see on such leaks also could be helpful.

there has been a printing delay in the appearance of photow. for some strange reason the printer just does not correct when i send corrections. but thanks and we will send when it gets here.

in order to get some of the books out, those of which i had an adequate supply, i made a profitless deal with a distributor. i will be lucky to break even. this is why you see them. only post mortem seems to be selling well from what i have heard.

buy these books from hawkins. you can resell them at a profit. oswald in new orleans is bringin up to \$50 i hear.

thanks and best regards,

SPEED LETTER®

TO Harold Weisberg

FROM Henry Durkin

SUBJECT _____

— No. 9 & 10 FOLD

MESSAGE

DATE 12/1/76 19__

*Analysis of McDonald's book from 11/76
"People & Pursuit" - in case you've not
seen it.*

SIGNED H

REPLY

DATE _____ 19__

— No. 9 FOLD

— No. 10 FOLD

SIGNED _____

Appraising the Book "Appointment in Dallas" by

Hugh C. McDonald

by Richard H. Bennett, Jr., Issaquah, Washington

Dick Hamilton, Issaquah, Washington

Hugh C. McDonald

Richard E. Sprague, Hartsdale, N.Y.

"In an interview with 'The News Mill,' Rick Bennett, President of Hagoth Corporation ... announced the offer of a \$10,000 reward to the first person, or group, to prove Hugh C. McDonald to be a fraud."

1. From: Richard H. Bennett, Jr., President
July 4, 1976
Hagoth Corporation (maker of a new voice -
stress analysis device)
12350 208th Place Southeast
Issaquah, Wash. 98027

In the book "Appointment in Dallas" (Zebra, 1975), Hugh C. McDonald claims to have tracked down and interviewed the man who really shot President Kennedy. According to McDonald, that man is still living. There is substantial evidence that McDonald's account of the real assassination plot is authentic.

On June 29, 1976, I conducted a telephone interview with McDonald and, without his knowledge or permission, subjected his story to a thorough voice stress study. The device used in the voice stress analysis was the HAGOTH HS/1 Scanner, a new product from my company. A complete transcript with analysis is available on request.

Mr. McDonald makes at least one very disturbing revelation. To date, he has never been contacted by any of the Attorney General, the FBI, the CIA, the Senate, or any other agency of the Federal Government. His account of the successful assassination of the President of the United States has sold over one million copies. Yet not one federal agency has seen fit to seek McDonald's help and testimony. At its best, this is unprecedented negligence. At its worst, this is evidence of total disinterest by the Federal government in the facts — and worse besides.

I am convinced McDonald's is an authentic account. I have offered \$10,000 to the person who can prove that McDonald's account is a fraud.

McDonald has unusual credentials: He holds the patents on Identi-kit, a composite photograph system used by police all over the world to identify criminals from descriptions given by witnesses to crimes. He was selected by Goldwater (and cleared by the Secret Service) to handle Republican security during the 1964 presidential campaign. He was chief of detectives of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Dept. when he retired. He has written several textbooks on criminology and has taught at several universities. He was a contract agent with the CIA and responsible for publicizing Russian germ warfare in a book "The Hour of the Blue Fox."

2. By Dick Hamilton, Reporter
"The News Mill," July 4, 1976
Issaquah, Wash. 98027

In an interview with "The News Mill," Rick Bennett, President of Hagoth Corporation (manufacturer

of the Hagoth Scanner — a voice activated lie detector) announced the offer of a \$10,000 reward to the first person, or group, to prove Hugh C. McDonald to be a fraud. (McDonald is the author of "Appointment in Dallas" — a recent best-seller that claims to have identified the real assassin of John F. Kennedy.)

Ironically, Bennett's offer stems from his own frustrated attempts to prove McDonald to be a fraud. Bennett interviewed McDonald on June 29. The interview, conducted by telephone, was tape recorded and subsequently subjected to analysis by the Hagoth Scanner. Bennett hoped to prove the book to be a fictitious concoction -- and thereby receive publicity for his firm's lie detector. Bennett, instead, has convinced himself of the absolute authenticity of McDonald's reporting.

According to Bennett, "The impact of the realization that McDonald is totally truthful, and competent as well ... is enormous. When a man writes a book in which he offers significant evidence which might lead to capture of the murderer of the President of the United States, why was he not even questioned by any official representative of the United States government? Bennett further explains that publicity for his device is now secondary. "The credibility of the device is no longer in question. Even McDonald is familiar with the first several generations of these devices -- and of their reliability. But, what is important now is what we can learn from the use of the Scanner. Or, I guess I should say what we have already learned. When a book such as "Appointment in Dallas" sells over a million copies, and when the author's statements can be validated, and when the authorities don't even bother to check him out, when they don't even ask about his evidence about the killing of the President of the United States, then this is, at the least, unprecedented incompetence. At its worst, it could be ten times worse than Watergate."

When asked about the reward, Bennett replied, "I really hope that people try to claim it. When they do, they will have to start digging. And when they do that, they will have to come to the same conclusions that I have. And when that happens, it won't just be me asking the government what's going on." Bennett was asked why he is taking such an unqualified stand on this issue -- particularly when, in the past, he has been less than willing to make a flat statement relative to the truthfulness of some statements or stories. Bennett replied, "In this case, McDonald is truly an honest man. When he exaggerates, he catches himself and adds the appropriate qualifiers to his statements. McDonald is an honest man. His story is true. Beyond that I have gathered more experience with the use of the scanner.

My confidence in the unit's reliability is now at 100%. In fact, if the unit had said that McDonald was a fraud, I was prepared to risk a lawsuit in order to say so."

3. Transcript (abridged) of interview by telephone between Richard H. Bennett, Jr., (RHB) and Hugh C. McDonald (MCD), author of "Appointment in Dallas," on June 29, 1976

RHB: ... since the book, "Appointment in Dallas," has there ever been an attempt by Saul to contact you again?

MCD: No. But I wouldn't think there would be. I believe, of course, that Saul is alive, and I believe that the Central Intelligence Agency probably knows where he is. They surely know who he is. And I would guess they know where he is.

RHB: I would be surprised if they didn't.

MCD: So would I.

RHB: Have you ever been asked to testify before any of the Senate committees?

MCD: No, I have not been. I have offered to all across the nation. You see the book sold over a million copies.

RHB: Well, it's probably going to sell a lot more than if it's reprinted.

MCD: Yes and I was in some seventeen cities on sixty-three major shows and on each one of them I offered and asked for the privilege of testifying in front of the Committee, and I have heard nothing.

RHB: And you have had no contact from any authorities?

MCD: No. No authority would contact me. I can understand that. I think that the authorities involved are not anxious to have the Saul story come out. But it's coming out.

RHB: At any rate, you do not feel there is any sign or evidence to lead you to believe that someone was setting you up or putting you on then?

MCD: No, I have nothing to indicate that at all. The person who would have done that, the star of that, would have been Kimsey.

RHB: Um hum.

MCD: If his talk to me at Dealey Plaza when I was with Goldwater was a setup, I can't imagine what his point would have been. And there's where it would have had to have started.

RHB: OK and then, when you got the story from Saul, the recollection that you went up to the hotel room and showed him the transcript then was absolutely correct?

MCD: That's correct. There's no question. The other thing is, the problem was only reiterating what Herman (Kimsey) had told me. He simply confirmed it.

RHB: OK, so in my mind, that really eliminates that possibility that you were set up, which then, of course, the other possibility is that you had either fabricated this or imagined it. And with your credentials, I guess we'll just have to let that stand on the record.

MCD: Someone has to believe someone, you know. And you stop to consider with everybody involved in the Warren Commission, I suspect that the tendency to believe me is far more justified than almost anyone else in the investigation.

RHB: That's absolutely true.

MCD: So, hell, one of the things that bothers me is the nerve of any politician, any politician in Washington today questioning either my motives or truthfulness -- there's a real problem there.

RHB: Oh, absolutely. Especially, when they haven't gone to the trouble to corroborate your story and go into some depth with you. That, in my

mind, is unforgiveable. And I think you ought to play it up in the next print of the book.

MCD: Yes.

RHB: That the book sold a million copies and yet you haven't heard from No. 1. So from your own lips then, you're telling me that this is truth. Right?

MCD: Of course, it's true. That is, the truth of Saul's story, I cannot attest to.

RHB: That's correct. But the ...

MCD: But of those circumstances taking me to Saul and my interview with him are all true.

4. From: Richard H. Bennett, Jr., President
October 31, 1976
Hagoth Corporation
12350 208th Place Southeast
Issaquah, Wash. 98027

There were some interesting developments after July 4, 1976 when the report in "The New Mill" was published.

In July I was talking with a friend who has a relative (whom I shall call John Jones), an ex-Air Force Intelligence officer who had been on duty in Hawaii in 1970 or 1971. During Jones' military assignment there, he and his staff had seen and read a Central Intelligence Agency document which had the code name "Click Beetle." This document contained a discussion of why the CIA had had President Kennedy killed, and how John McCone had issued the order, and what the position and policy of the CIA should be in the event that these facts became known. I talked with Jones, and he said McDonald's small piece of the puzzle was accurate. But Jones did not want to discuss the subject with me at all, he said, because as a result of knowledge of this document several of his friends had died or had been completely discredited.

In early September I gave a radio talk on my voice stress analysis of the telephone interview with Hugh McDonald. The stress analyzer device showed stress only when McDonald replied to my question, "Do you believe it possible that John McCone issued the order to kill President Kennedy?" At that point, he showed a lot of stress, denying it firmly. But the stress indicator indicated that McDonald did believe it possible that John McCone did give such an order, and that McDonald was lying.

A few days after my broadcast, I received a call from a friend of mine in Chicago (where I used to live) who was an ex-CIA agent. I was surprised to hear from him; three months had passed since I last talked with him. He began by asking how business was, and I told him, and I mentioned my radio talk on the validity of the reporting in the book "Appointment in Dallas." He said "If you know what is good for you, you will drop the matter. You are playing a very dangerous game."

This warning astonished me. So on September 14, I telephoned John McCone, who spends about a month a year in Seattle, Washington (Issaquah is a suburb of Seattle), and asked him if he had any comments. He heard what I said, was upset, and denied knowing who McDonald was. So I wrote Mr. McCone a letter enclosing McDonald's book "Appointment in Dallas" and referring to "Click Beetle." I asked to talk with him and sent the letter by certified mail. I received a reply from Mr. McCone saying he would be willing to see me in Los Angeles, but he "would not discuss the subject you mention."

A little later in September, I received a letter from George Bush, present head of the Central Intel-
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Bennett et al - *Continued from page 3*
ligence Agency; the letter said that a search of the Agency's records had failed to locate any document called "Click Beetle."

5. *From: Richard E. Sprague, October 31, 1976*
Hartsdale, NY 10530

I saw the book by Hugh McDonald, "a pointment in Dallas," before it was printed in 1975. He brought it to the office of the Committee to Investigate Assassinations in Washington about 1973, seeking help to get it published. There were several copies of the manuscript there for several months. A number of the researchers examined it, including Bud Fensterwald, Bob Smith, Paris Flammonde, Fletcher Prouty, myself, and others.

In the original book McDonald said Saul fired from the second floor of the County Records Building in Dealey Plaza. The trees, walls, etc., in Dealey Plaza make that impossible. In the final book he does not mention the floor of the County Records Building from which Saul is supposed to have fired. In the original book, he says he met Saul in Spain. In the final book he says he met Saul in London. In the original book, he said he made Saul confess by holding a pistol to his head. In the final book there is nothing like that. In the original book he says he tracked down Saul by the use of photographs, and there is no mention of the CIA agent Kimsey. In the book as published, the tracking down by photographs is not mentioned and Kimsey plays a leading role.

These changes (and probably others) cast considerable doubt for me on Hugh McDonald's reporting. □