

Dear Dave,

3/13/89

Since mentioning it is what I wrote you yesterday the amusing matter of how Pete Model was able to rip off what he did in the book he "coauthored" with Rober Groden, which means only how he got what he got from Groden, who would have done no writing, has lingered in my mind so instead of continuing with High Reason this early morning I'll record a brief account of it.

I was in New York on what was in its way an amusing consultation that culminated a real challenge. A friend who was a close personal friend of a well-known left-of-center publisher who does not want his name disclosed, had phoned me to ask me if I would read and offer an opinion on a lengthy summary of a book on the JFK assassination that had been proposed to him. He offered me a more than acceptable fee for reading and phoning him my impressions or beliefs after reading about 65 pages. I was happy to do this. It turned out to be the summary of Hugh McDonald's book that later appeared as Assignment in Dallas. Not Assignment, Appointment. I went much farther than I'd been asked and wound up with three not identical "solutions" McDonald had invented. Even with local angles, one involving a friend who had been the lady friend of one of the villains, who'd been a friend of McDonald's and along with him and Len Davidson had been security in Barry Goldwater's presidential campaign. I did not have to get far into what McDonald had written to know it was a complete fraud but I wanted to go farther. So, after I phoned my report to my friend he asked me to go to New York for a conference with the publisher. We spent a pleasant Sunday afternoon and early evening together and then they asked me to accompany them to a conference with him and his representatives the next morning. I did and was quite surprised to find in the lawyers' offices in which we met that McDonald's agent had been mine for a brief period of time and had managed never to get an accounting from Dell on their reprint of Whitewash II, John Starr. He was visibly unhappy because, I am sure, he was sure I'd have spotted the proposal as a fraud. I said almost nothing at the conference and left one to give Starr a chance to explode, which he did. After smoking a cigarette I returned and made a few constructive proposals and suggestions, one of which was that - and this is literally what McDonald had in his proposal - the assassin would have lingered undetected in the lady's room of the courts building for an hour, at lunchtime, and not be seen. My principal offered a \$25,000 advance to McDonald to do the book as a novel and he huffed and puffed and rejected it. The three of us then adjourned to a Japanese restaurant for lunch, I spent a little time with my friend and was about to start back when I had a phone call. It was from the editor of a men's magazine, as I recall the name True. Not Saga. He wanted to talk to me. I said I could stay over but had made no arrangements for a place to stay and he told me to go to The Roosevelt, where a reservation will have been made. It was and I had not been in my room long when there came a knock on the door and a woman introduced herself as the magazine's managing editor. I think her name was Schmidt. I wasn't impressed. We chatted for a while and then two different strangers appeared. One was the young man who was the editor and the other was introduced to me as one who wrote for it, Peter Model. As soon as this editor got in my room he started making what I presume he thought was a search for bugs. He went behind the pictures, took the mouthpiece off the phone and peered into it, etc. We chatted for a brief period and then the editor suggested that we eat. He told me that the magazine was picking up the charges so we'd just put it on my check. We went down to the Crowdaddy room and had a good meal with long and often pleasant conversation.

This editor proposed either an article or a series of the JFK assassination and what we talked about was what I could say. We were the last to leave that dining room. We ate well (I recall that the Beef Tartar was really fine) and we drank well and frequently. I did not even look at the check when I signed it, but aside from the food we had a long night of intense drinking, most of us, and we continued until after 2 a.m. They kept on asking questions, mostly Model, and in addition to what I'd said I began with I responded fully. This was some time before I published Post Mortem. They seemed quite pleased and I was under the impression that I would hear from them and that they had Model there sort of

as their consultant. I was forthright, as was necessary for them to understand what I'd be writing and how, I'm sure, I knew certain things and how I'd support them. We parted and I went to my room. I'd started to undress when I remember I'd better leave a call for the early morning so I could be on the first Metroliner to Baltimore, where I'd parked my car.

I picked up the phone and it was dead! That nut in his silly check for bugs had rendered it inoperative. I could not get it to work, so I dressed again and went down to the desk and reported this and asked that I be awakened by knocking on the door, as I now recall at 5 so I could breakfast and get to the station in time for the early train. The assistant manager awakened me at 5 and I returned home.

Some time passed and I heard nothing. I guess I forgot about it. Then I got a bill from the Roosevelt. It turned out that instead of charging my room to True the same publishing combine owned a Tennis magazine, perhaps American Tennis. They'd told the hotel to bill them and American Tennis had refused to pay. I suppose it was all news to them. Anyway, I wrote the hotel refusing to pay and telling it who had made the reservation and assured payment. I heard nothing more from the hotel.

Then the Model-Groden paperback appeared and there was all I'd been offering to do for the magazine with the understanding that it would go no farther if we did not come to an understanding.

Model and Groden were unabashed. I don't know what Groden knew but I did, of course know how Model learned what he'd written, as I now recall not all that accurately. So unabashed was Model that when I spoke at Barnard he came up to me afterward and spoke to me for a while. (So also did Alard Lowenstein. That was the last time we met and spoke. He was, as I now recall, teaching there and he'd been in the audience and particularly enjoyed how I'd handled the disruptive Yippies. Others wanted to throw them out but I insisted that they remain and be heard. I silenced them before long, the audience also enjoying that.)

And, when McDonald's book appeared, that supposed nonfiction, his assassin, "Saul," no longer spent the hour before his appointment in Dallas lingering in that lady's room!

My concern, when I was barely into McDonald's supposed summary, was that this publisher, who I had reason to believe was not loved by the CIA, might be the intended victim of a setup. McDonald's character, Troit, was George DeMohrenshuldts and he had the sponsor of the assassination LBJ.

The local angle involved the man the CIA had fired and whose first name only I recall, Jim. After being fired by the CIA he went to work for Len Davidov's security outfit, then quartered in the Chaleschaelton Hotel at 16 and R Sts, NW, D.C. He'd been a close friend of the family, including children, and lived at the Chaelton, perhaps in the offices. His lady friend was Eve Leonard, whose husband established Frederick's first radio station and today its most successful, WFMD. She had a farm not far from here. So did Davidov. When she mentioned to him what I'd been asking her about he wanted to meet me. So, she arranged it. He and his wife and Eve came here and we went to dinner and then returned to converse more. His concept of true friendship was to make himself part of this evil thing that the third of the Goldwater trio was doing to him after he was safely dead. The Davidov's had a farm near here. I never heard from them again. They have no listing in the current phone book. That farm must have been worth millions long ago, that is how this area has been growing. Len was then also a vice president of the People's Drug chain, I think through a corporation "Oak."

What notes and records I might have would be under McDonald's book. Jim had been interested in the assassination. He'd been to the offices of Fensterwald's Committee to Investigate Assassinations when it was on 15 near K nw. I'll have his name in the file. He had a consuming interest in the Romanoffs and believed the USSR's story about killing them was false. Eve believed that she could still commune with Jim and when we were talking would ask him if she should respond and how.

Handwritten signature