

"The Man Who Knew Too Much" (Richard Case Nagell, Carroll & Graf) HW 12/12/92

The title fits neither the author nor his impossible, irrational hero. Neither knows a damned thing that is relevant in the first 10% of this overly-large book of 800pp with much that I've seen mere padding. And all of it depends on Nagell's unsupported word. Russell's conviction that Nagell was telling the truth comes from his misinterpretation of one of four pages of a military intelligence record, its second page. When that report repeats what Nagell said, as the first page always makes clear, Russell chooses to misinterpret it as recounting what military intelligence said. I am inclined to believe this comes from Russell's ignorance of such matters rather than intended dishonesty. His ignorance is apparent in many areas but in common with most if not all of those who exploit conspiracy theories he assumes that his dime-novel concepts are the reality. Thus he has just about everyone having any kind of alleged connection with the CIA as CIA agents. They are not. And what he is talking about comes from the fake book Farewell America in any event. He plays it and all such trash as real and dependable.

His foreword is by another college-educated ignoramus, Carl Oglesby, and it, too, is trash.

He begins with page after page of names briefly identified, some misidentified. I did not read them all because almost all appear to have no relevance to the JFK assassination or its investigations.

He even inflates the work he did by classifying such things as telephone chitchat as formal interviews. When he phoned me to ask me about a few irrelevant records that becomes an interview in his inflation.

His case is so diaphanous a whisper can demolish it: if Nagell or the nuts like Fensterwald say it it is true and relevant as it never is,

I may continue into the book to get to the supposed meat but if I do it will be a waste of time. The Nagell story is impossible and if it were not it would not be reasonable. His supposed CIA connection was to keep tabs on Marina, etc., for it. For that the CIA had no need of outsiders. Nor would it have run any such risk, that kind of work being precluded for it. The story appears to be that Nagell was hired by the CIA to kill Oswald in advance of the assassination. That also makes no sense. Nor does it that if the CIA had any such intent it would have hired one like Nagell for it. There are professional shooters and any check by it on Nagell would have disclosed immediately that he suffered brain damage when he survived the plane wreck near Baltimore years earlier. No spookery would risk using such a person for such a mission. The danger would have been too great.

His cited sources, even on documents, is other published work. Or, he has not made any real use of the available documents. Perhaps he lacked the time, the book having taken, he says, only 17 years. And what books they are!