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December 17, 1975

Robert Dahlin
Editor, Trade News
Publishers Weekly
1180 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10036

Dear Mr. Dahlin:

Your December 1 review, "Fresh Wave of JFK Assassination Titles Suggests a Host of New Theories," disproves the reasons given me by your department of Publishers' Weekly for refusing even to mention the appearance of my last two books on the JFK assassination.

Consultation with your own records will show that I have published by far the greatest amount of work in this field and even the FBI has certified to a federal court that I know more about the subject than anyone in the FBI. This is included in facsimile in the more recent of these newest two books of mine, the only ones Publishers' Weekly has failed to mention.

When I raised this question with Miss Neely, her response was that I did not give PW six weeks advance notice. This was not PW's requirement with my first three books, all of which it mentioned and on none of which it had advance notice.

Mine are close to instant books. I did inform PW in advance of publication of the latest, but I could not give six weeks notice when the book was printed less than a month after it was completed.

However, your article is of an entirely different nature. I believe you have compounded this discrimination by making no reference to these books, the only ones to bring any new fact to light (you have also discriminated against a truly fine book by Howard Roffman, Presumed Guilty).

Reviewers are always in a difficult position when they deal with subjects of complexity; thus, I cannot really fault you for not recognizing the book ghosted for Hugh McDonald as an overt fraud. It is a complete fabrication as anyone familiar with the most elemental fact that is beyond question should immediately recognize. The only other works you mention are cheap commercializations without substance, without real value, deceptive in all cases, and largely unoriginal whether or not the laws about plagiarism have been violated.

So here you are (nothing personal) claiming that "if the investigation is reopened, book publishers will have proved instrumental in initiating the change of mind." The actuality is exactly the opposite. Those in the Congress who have been in contact with me are sick and distressed over all the wild and irresponsible conjecturing, none of which can withstand the examination of a real expert.

Consistent with the long record, painful to one with a love of books going back to childhood and with my experiences, almost without exception the commercial publishers have eschewed substantial work

and have gone for the crap they can commercialize.

Anson's book, for example, is a hasty rehash of the work of others, both uncredited and wrongly credited, to which he has added most of the nut theories that have plagued and crushed the few of us who have done responsible work. He visualizes in your own words a conspiracy that omits only the whores' union.

PW, because of its unique position, assumes a responsibility I believe it has deliberately disregarded with respect to my work. The two books it refused to mention made headlines coast-to-coast as news, commonly page one, and although books they were new and with news content. The first of these, the fourth of the WHITEWASH series, was made possible by and reports an unprecedented Freedom of Information lawsuit by which I obtained and reproduced in facsimile 90 top secret pages of Warren Commission executive sessions. It and part of the second of these two books, ^{which} another of these top secret executive sessions was reproduced in facsimile, are perhaps the most widely ripped-off material of recent times, including by two of the authors you mention.

So, while you glory in the nonperformance of commercial publishers and their rehashes and fabrications, you suppress the only works that bring to light anything new and factual. There are, for example, in POST MORTEM, the book about which PW knew in advance, almost 200 pages of facsimile reproduction of documentary suppressed evidence, some formerly top secret. In order to be able to do this, aside from the enormous labor and cost involved for a one-man publisher, I had to file and prevail in a series of Freedom of Information lawsuits. No man, rich or poor, has filed as many. The Congress cited one as the first of those requiring amending of the law. That amending is a boon to the entire publishing industry as well as to the country.

It may not be your intent, but the practical purpose accomplished by this discrimination by PW, which follows the change in its ownership, is to deny booksellers knowledge of the existence of books that are entirely unique, books that are available commercially and under normal commercial terms. You have denied booksellers the profit they could have made. You have denied book readers the knowledge they could have acquired/ You have denied countless libraries and institutions the information they want. And you have put some of those who depend upon you and your unique position to considerable cost so that they can do business properly and honestly. Why, for example, should conscientious booksellers have to place long distance calls to me to find out if I am the publisher whose work their customers read about on the front pages of their newspapers and they see nothing about in PW?

Because of the representations made in your article and because it goes back as far as it does, I believe you owe your readers and me some mention of the existence of these two titles.

So that you can compare it with the regurgitation you praise in Anson's commercialization, I enclose herewith a copy of POST MORTEM. You will find in the appendix and in facsimile documents that are without precedent in our history. Such as the President's own physician approving the destruction by burning of the records of the President's autopsy; his "verification" of the total disproof of

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the Warren Report, his death certificate that the Warren Commission never even had, and countless other documents that I think, in any fair appraisal, are close to unique.

I did offer a review copy to PW and received no response.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

P.S. If you want a copy of WHITEWASH IV: TOP SECRET JFK Assassination Transcript for purposes of evaluating whether or not Publishers' Weekly has met its responsibilities, although I think I sent one, I will be happy to send you another.

TRADE NEWS

Editor:

Robert Dahlin

Fresh Wave of JFK Assassination Titles Suggests a Host of New Theories

Considerably less sacrosanct in 1975 than when published in 1964, the Warren Commission Report is being constantly undermined by what could be the truth about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. New theories are cropping up in a spate of titles, both nonfiction and fiction, and if the investigation is reopened, book publishers will have proved instrumental in initiating the change of mind.

The newest book to piece together the facts slowly surfacing over the past 12 years and meld them into a single narrative, is Bantam Books' recent 56th Extra, "They've Killed the President!" (\$2.50, original) by Robert Sam Anson. To put it most simply, Anson, a former *Time* and *New Times* correspondent, postulates that those responsible for JFK's assassination were members of the CIA, the Mafia and anti-Castro Cubans who believed the President abandoned them with the fiasco of the Bay of Pigs.

Anson says up front, "What this book seeks to do, on the basis of the available evidence, is to establish a few core facts—that there was a conspiracy; that Oswald had numerous links to the intelligence community; that Oswald... was implicated in the crime by the intentional use of a look-alike... that vital information about Oswald's and Ruby's background was deliberately withheld from the Warren Commission by the CIA and the FBI... The final conclusions are left for you to draw."

The photographs that illustrate his suppositions include one of the "magic bullet" which, the Warren Commission asserted, penetrated Kennedy's neck, went on to fracture John Connally's wrist, and yet emerged practically intact; the fateful frames of Abraham Zapruder's film showing the moment of impact of the assassins' bullets (plural intentional) on JFK's body; and photos of Oswald in Russia in which he appeared to be shorter than when he himself was murdered.

Agitating for a new postmortem, Anson proposes specific unanswered questions that should be put to E. Howard Hunt, former CIA director Richard Helms, FBI chief Clarence Kelley and others. He states positively, "What the full facts about the Kennedy assassina-

tion might provide is a basis on which Americans' shattered confidence in themselves and their institutions can be rebuilt."

In a telephone conversation with *PW*, Anson said he didn't believe that much evidence exists in the CIA archives. "I suspect more information can be found there on Marina Oswald, on some of Oswald's associates in Dallas and New Orleans and their intelligence connections. There won't be hard facts, but there will be points to pursue." As for his immediate plans, Anson, as a political journalist, doesn't want to become obsessed with a single subject. However, he admitted, "I am planning to spend a month or six weeks in Detroit, New Orleans and Mexico City to see if I can come up with anything new. Right now I'm not planning on writing anything else on the assassination unless I do uncover something." For the present, Anson is on an extended promotion tour and the book, with a first printing of 250,000 copies, went back on publication date, November 17, for an additional 25,000 copies.

Charles McCarry, author of Fawcett's January novel, "The Tears of Autumn" (\$1.95, *Saturday Review Press/Dutton*), told *PW*: "If I had one aim with my book, it was to shock people into thinking about Americans as we really are. Illusions tend to survive the most ferocious battering of reality."

What was not generally known when the hardcover edition of his book was published last year is that McCarry is a former member of the CIA. His novel submits an alternate theory. Because President Kennedy authorized the assassination of South Vietnam's Ngo Dinh Diem, the Vietnamese, seeking revenge through anti-American Cubans, secured Oswald as JFK's assassin. Because of Oswald's journey to the USSR, the Russians sought to obfuscate that link by having their Mafia confederates eliminate Oswald.

When asked if he subscribed to this theory, McCarry said: "I always believed Oswald acted alone. However, knowing intelligence agencies the way I do, I began wondering if the Warren Commission were given all the information that American intelligence had. When the Pentagon Papers were released, I decided to examine the known facts within the

framework of a novel. To my astonishment, everyone believed it." Fawcett points out that many of the hardcover reviews characterized the book as one based on fact.

Is such a theory possible? McCarry responded: "It is inconceivable to me that any act such as Diem's assassination could have been executed without Presidential approval. Yet people will not accept JFK's death as a consequence of his own actions. After writing the book, I think the thesis is as plausible in life as it is in fiction, although," McCarry quickly added, "in all the 10 years I was with the CIA, I never heard any suggestions of violent acts. If Diem's execution involved the agency, it could only have been a very closely held plot within a compartmentalized section of the organization."

Will we ever find out the truth about the assassination? "I don't think so, unless the press insists," McCarry said. "But I do feel America is on the verge of a renaissance. We're becoming more open, we're talking more. That's a good sign."

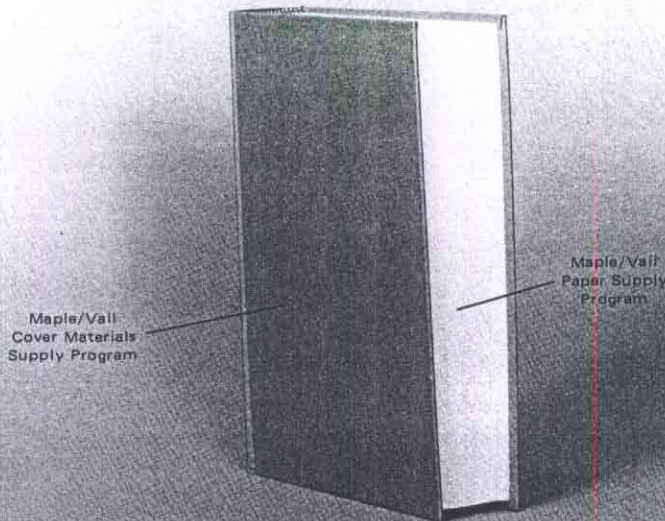
At a recent New York press conference, the former chief of detectives of the Los Angeles County sheriff's department, Hugh C. McDonald, announced that he had tracked down and interviewed the man who actually shot Kennedy. And yet the revelation of this man, with 40 years' experience in law enforcement, was given little attention by the press. Because his story is so incredibly astonishing? McDonald's account of what he sees as the true facts is published as "Appointment in Dallas: The Final Solution to the Assassination of JFK" (\$1.95, original) by Zebra Books under the imprint of the Hugh McDonald Publishing Corp. McDonald claims that a former CIA agent, now deceased, confessed to him the actual assassination plot, disclosing the existence of a second man whose job it was to kill Kennedy. He was then supposed to kill Oswald under the cover of the anticipated gunfire from the Secret Service agents surrounding the dead President. Since no shots were fired in exchange, Oswald escaped the man's bullets. McDonald doesn't know the identity of the self-proclaimed assassin, but he explains his willingness to talk, "Because of the enormity of his act, Saul

duction department must carry back to top management. Top management, in turn, must back up the production department when it carries this message to the rest of the house. After all, the production department acts as the conduit and buffer between its industrially oriented suppliers and the work of a diverse group of human beings (authors, editors, copyeditors, designers, indexers, artists, and the like) who may have less than an overwhelming compulsion to work to the rigid schedules that the nature of industrial production demands. Somewhere there is a point of compromise—with which neither side will be entirely happy—between the (relatively) free spirits who write and edit the book and design its binding and jacket, and the soulless machines (and their minions) that will grind out the thousands of copies. It is the production department's unhappy but essential job to be caught between these basically irreconcilable opposites, bearing the onus of continually harping on the ever-increasing cost of delays and changes (of which the rising cost of author's alterations is only the most obvious example).

Production management must also do more to help its suppliers, not only by better scheduling of components and specifications, but also by making a much more determined effort to flatten out the peaks and valleys of the demand curve. Heretofore, the production manager's attitude too often has been: "I've got enough problems here in the house. If my suppliers have too much work at some times and not enough at other times of the year, that's their problem—not mine." But with limited flexibility in being able to increase or decrease their work forces and with high investment in plant and equipment, book manufacturing suppliers must at least cover their costs whether their plants are running or not. And that cost is higher than ever with the new technologies. This year's down time on equipment will be reflected in next year's price increases (many already announced).

Worse, in the past few years some suppliers have gone out of business or encountered serious financial difficulties. In some cases, this may have been deserved. There are different explanations—inefficiency, bad management, undercapitalization, etc.—offered for each specific case. Nevertheless, the reduction and increasing concentration of book manufacturing capacity is one that requires the serious and continued attention of production directors and top publishing management as well. The production department has a job to do in this area. Consistent with its function as the publisher's purchasing and traffic division, it must foster a profitable book manufacturing industry.

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[the name McDonald gave the man] had to talk to *someone*. You just don't kill the President of the United States, walk away from it and then not mention it to anyone forever."

A pertinent anthology of primarily original essays will be published in February by NAL. "The Politics of Conspiracy" (\$1.50) by Harvey Yazjian and Sid Blumenthal and the Boston-based Assassination Information Bureau examines from various points of view, JFK's assassination and the possible cover-ups, from Dallas to today. The manuscript is not yet complete, so *PW* could not ascertain what, if any, new theories will be put forth by this book. The contributors, however, include Robert Groden, Peter Dale Scott and L. Fletcher Prouty, all of whom figure in one way or another in Bantam's "They've Killed the President!" The introduction is by Philip Agee, author of Stonehill's "Inside the Company: CIA Diary."

A July release from the Third Press was "Coup D'Etat in America: The CIA and the Assassination of John F. Kennedy" (\$11.95) by Michael Canfield and Alan J. Weberman. After analyzing the facts, the authors arrived at the theory that Oswald was a CIA patsy, placed in this position by an assassination section of the agency which was working with anti-Castro Cubans and the Mafia. They suspect that E. Howard Hunt and Frank Sturgis were deeply involved.

George O'Toole is the author of "The Assassination Tapes" (\$8.95), also out last summer from Penthouse Press. O'Toole, a former CIA computer specialist, posits his faith in a machine, the psychological stress evaluator, that records vocal cord stress supposedly indicating when a speaker is lying. Since the machine works both on live and taped voices, O'Toole tested tape recordings of witnesses' testimony before the Warren Commission and decided many of them were lying. He also believes Oswald's voice does not lie when he swore on tape he did not kill the President.

Even a casual glance at the above books confirms a surprising unanimity in the suspected culprits among authors—reporters, police and ex-CIA men—who would appear to be strange allies. A week ago, David Belin, a former staff lawyer for the Warren Commission and a defender of its Report, called for reopening the investigation to put all doubters at ease; and now Senator Frank Church's Committee on Intelligence Activities has a subcommittee, designated, in Anson's words, "to sort out Oswald's connections to American intelligence, as well as go over what evidence the Agency withheld from the Warren Commission." When the legislators begin their investigation, they will have an enormous number of leads to follow because, in part, these new books are successfully keeping the issue alive.

ROBERT DAHLIN

Paperbacks in the News

PENGUIN BOOK REVEALS NEW LOCH NESS PICTURES

There may be a real Nessie after all. Penguin Books is publishing "The Loch Ness Story" (\$2.25 in U.S. and Canada) by Nicholas Witchell in January, but because of an approaching news break which Penguin hopes will have major impact, copies will be released in early December. This chronicle of the Loch Ness research was first published in Great Britain by Terence Dalton Ltd., but as the English paperback was being set for December publication, it became known that a Dr. Robert Rines and a team of scientists and photographers from the Academy of Applied Science in Boston photographed what they claim is an enormous living creature under the murky waters of Loch Ness. On December 9, these photos will be released at Edinburgh University. The Penguin paperback was updated and new material was added to report the new chapter in the Loch Ness saga. The photos that were taken this past June reportedly show the face, a flipper and the underside of a creature closely resembling a plesiosaur, a marine dinosaur thought to have been extinct for 70 million years. The clincher will be if it is true that, as Penguin says, "At this time all indications are that the British Museum and the Smithsonian Institution will attend the meeting to endorse the photographs and give their views about the possible identification of one of the species." East Coast orders have exhausted a 15,000 first printing in the standard Penguin English format. A 50,000-copy printing of a mass market edition is on order for U.S. publication. The "Penguin Special" will be available in a counterpack of 32 copies (\$72 retail) and Penguin's 50% prepublication discount for 10 copies or more is being extended through the end of February for this title.

The sales of John Jakes's original Bicentennial series for Pyramid are growing with each release. "The Furies," the fourth entry in the series, will be published in January with a first printing of 1.5-million copies. The chronological report on these historical adventures (all at \$1.75) reads like an escalation clause, with "The Bastard" at 600,000 copies in print, "The Rebels" with 800,000 copies in print, "The Seekers" up to 1,200,000 copies and now the initial print for "The Furies" topping the rest. Two more John Jakes titles are upcoming on Pyramid's list: "The Titans" in April and "The Americans" in July. These six were originally planned to comprise the entire series, but, because of its popularity, Pyramid hints there may be a couple more.

The first two books from a brand new publisher, East River Press, Inc. (505 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017) are large-format paperback reissues of Walker Evans's "American Photographs" (\$7.50) and "Man Ray: Photographs" (\$8.50). The publisher notes that both books are now collector's items, with the Evans book first published in 1938 and the Man Ray title dating from 1934. "American Photographs" is a collection of 87 pictures of the American scene during the 30s which was assembled by the photographer himself. Man Ray pioneered in the attempt to make photography responsive to the concerns and concepts of 20th century art, and his book consists of 104 reproductions.

A prototypical feminist who denied herself marriage and children to fight for civil rights for women and blacks during the post-Civil War period will become better known with Les Femmes Publishing's "Emily Howland: Odyssey of a Humanitarian" (\$5.95) by Judith Colucci Breault in January. Anti-slavery, women's rights, peace, temperance and minority education were among the crusades of Ms. Howland, who died at the age of 101 in 1929. The book contains her diaries and correspondence with a variety of celebrated figures of the period, such as Susan B. Anthony, Carrie Putnam and Sallie Holley. Family photographs and drawings by the subject illustrate the book. Les Femmes Publishing is an imprint of Celestial Arts.

A new McGraw-Hill book is "Women in a Changing World" (\$3.95) edited by Uta West. This is a collection of recent articles by Doris Lessing, Grace Paley, Donald Barthelme and others that have appeared in *Viva, Village Voice, Ms.* and a variety of publications. The articles include one by Lois Gould who explains why pornography fails to entice women and another by Anais Nin, "In Favor of the Sensitive Man."

Popular Library will publish Ruth Montgomery's "Companions Along the Way" (\$1.75, Coward, McCann & Geoghegan) in March. A book concerned with reincarnations of herself and a medium, Arthur Ford, it claims to offer first-hand detail of life in Biblical Palestine, with a new account of Jesus' life and ministry. In the same month, Popular Library will also reissue the author's "Born to Heal" (\$1.75, Coward), the story of the anonymous Mr. A., who is reportedly able to heal with "the laying on of hands." Montgomery is also the author of "The Gift of Prophecy" with Jeane Dixon (Bantam) and "The Here and Hereafter" (Fawcett). In January Popular Library reports it will be releasing "To the Precipice" (\$1.75, Morrow) by Judith Rossner, an earlier novel by the author of the best-selling "Looking for Mister Goodbar."