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Review: AMERICAN ASSASSINATION

Book takes controversial look at Wellstone death

By Andrew Griffin

The Town Talk

I recently read "American Assassination: The Strange Death of Senator Paul Wellstone" by Four Arrows and Jim Fetzer (Vox Pop) and was stunned by what I read in those pages.

Before the mid-term elections in 2002, the United States Senate was divided 50-49 with the Democrats in control. But after the 2002 elections, Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minnesota, was dead and the Republicans had regained control of the Senate, with former Wellstone's replacement being former St. Paul mayor Norm Coleman, a man specifically selected by the Bush administration.

Was there more to Wellstone's death which occurred as the result of a mysterious plane crash in northern Minnesota on Oct. 25, 2002? Why did the plane go down in relatively harmless weather just a week before the elections?

Well, intrepid investigative researchers Jim Fetzer and Dr. Don Trent Jacobs (a.k.a. Four Arrows) felt there was more to the story than that provided by the government and they proceeded to investigate this tragedy. Their research, meticulously laid out in these 182 pages, should shake this country to its very foundations.

In the preface, Fetzer and Four Arrows write that in finding out whether this was an accident or an assassination they "have proven beyond a reasonable doubt that the official account presented by the National Transportation Safety Board cannot be logically sustained. Its 'findings' are even contradicted by its own evidence."

And "prove beyond a reasonable doubt," they do.

There's the weather, which was claimed to have been icy and dangerous. However, this was disputed by others flying in the area.

Then there's the presence of the FBI within 90 minutes of the crash. The authors note that it would've taken agents at least three hours to reach the swampy and remote crash site. How they got there from the Twin Cities so quickly remains a mystery.

And in addition to that, the NTSB normally takes over crash sites of this nature. Why the NTSB allowed the FBI to take control is unknown.

In researching this incident, the two undertook an independent and objective analysis of the available evidence in this case, using the pattern of scientific reasoning known as "inference to the best explanation."

Fetzer and Four Arrows note how other outspoken leaders have died in mysterious plane crashes -- from Louisiana's Rep. Hale Boggs in 1972 to Missouri Gov. Mel Carnahan in 2000, among others.

In a chapter titled "Motives for Murder," the authors note how Wellstone had become a "hunted man" by those on the right because of his progressive stances on issues both foreign and domestic.

The beloved lawmaker, a humanitarian and compassionate man to the very end who even came to Louisiana to speak out against the brutal conditions in the state's private juvenile prisons, had already spoken out against the U.S. anti-drug "Plan Colombia" policy. In fact there was an attempt on Wellstone's life while he was visiting the South American country in 2001.

Wellstone was also disliked by right-wing corporate interests because of his desire to "bar corporate tax dodgers from being eligible for defense department contracts" via an amendment to the then upcoming Homeland Security bill. Wellstone's amendment was deleted in the final version -- after his death.

The two conclude that Wellstone himself would greenlight their independent investigation were he here with us.

"We believe that Paul Wellstone, who was committed to truth as well as to justice for every human being, would approve of our inquiry, precisely because the issues are profound. They affect each and every one of us who believe in democracy and the American way or wishes they still could."

And while this book isn't on any bestseller lists, it's already turning out to be an underground favorite.

Book editor Sander Hicks, with Vox Pop, told The Town Talk that the first edition of 2,500 copies sold out and that the new edition will have a new cover and more information.

"This got out by word of mouth," Hicks said. "There's a buzz building."

Hicks has been in touch with Wellstone Action! and hopes to have a serious discussion about their findings with members of the Wellstone family. In the meantime he's getting the word out on liberal radio network, Air America.

Hicks marveled that a Republican wrote an Amazon.com review of the book saying that despite voting for the re-election of George W. Bush, the book gets to the "raw truth." That inspired Hicks to go forward with more related to the findings in "American Assassination."

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