

BRAD AYERS INTERVIEW: MAY 12, 1995

FILE No.: 4.0.2

TOPIC/QUESTION LIST

Once again, the purpose of the Review Board is to locate and review for eventual release any documents relating to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. My specific assignment is to investigate the anti-Castro activities of the CIA during the period of 1959-1964 and 1) determine if any of these activities related in any way to the assassination, and 2) to ascertain possible areas of further document searches. We are *not* tasked with reinvestigating or solving this case, and none of the questions I'm about to ask you should be construed as an effort to do so.

PRETOPICS: Background

What dates were you assigned to JMWAVE?

Follow-up: Are there any discrepancies between the official record and your recollection regarding these dates? If so, what are they? [IF there was an effort to discredit you, one way they might do it would be to alter the dates of your service to make it appear as if you weren't where you say you were at the times in question.]

****TOPIC #1: "AM" OPERATIONS**

In your book you refer to four specific operations by name: AMTRACK, AMARK, AMTHUMB and AMCHECK.

- A. What were these operations specifically? What role, if any, did you play in each?
- B. Which other personnel (i.e., Shackley, Morales, Wall, Rodriguez, etc.) were involved in or in charge of these operations?
- **C. Were you or are you aware of ANY operations that took place DURING the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962? If so, at whose direction do you feel they took place?

Follow-up: How compartmentalized was it-- did everybody at the station know when an operation had been carried out? Were the code names well-known? Did people discuss past successes (or failures) openly? Was there ever a feeling that the commando teams were being "yanked"; that is, did anyone ever voice the suspicion that the Administration (or the CIA) was not serious about

removing Castro?

TOPIC #2: JOHN AND ROBERT KENNEDY

In your book, you claim to have met Bobby Kennedy twice during your time in Miami, at social gatherings for JMWAVE personnel.

A. Are there any people now living who can corroborate RFK's presence in Miami with CIA personnel? If so, whom?

B. In what regard were John and Robert Kennedy held by both the senior staff and the field operatives at JMWAVE:

- 1) from the Bay of Pigs to the Missile Crisis?
- 2) from the Missile Crisis to November 22, 1963?
- 3) after November 22, 1963?

**C. Which groups or people SPECIFICALLY liked the Kennedys? Disliked them?

**D. Who was the contact with JFK/RFK?

Follow-up: What were your personal feelings (at the time) about the Kennedys? Was anyone ever particularly vehement in expressing their feelings about the Kennedys one way or another? Were any other members of the Administration or representatives of the Kennedys ever present in Miami?

TOPIC #3: GORDON CAMPBELL

In your suggested revisions for *The Zenith Secret*, you suggest that you believe Gordon Campbell to have had the pseudonym "Bishop", based on pillow talk with Margaret.

A. Elaborate on what it was she said about Campbell.

**B. Outside of the romantic context, did Margaret (or anyone else at the station, for that matter) ever refer to Campbell as "Bishop"? Ever see anything in writing?

C. Do you know of any documentation of the pseudonyms used by JMWAVE personnel during their operations? Was there a list that existed of who was whom? If so, where was it kept?

D. Do you know how long the company kept pseudo-identification lists? Are they kept only during the active service time of the individual, or post-service as well?

Follow-up: Was there ever a listing of "front" companies or organizations, like Paragon Air, compiled? If you believe Campbell was Bishop, and you were Gaeton Fonzi's source for THE LAST INVESTIGATION, how do you explain the fact that Fonzi insists David Atlee Phillips was Bishop?

****TOPIC #4: DAVID ATLEE PHILLIPS AND DAVID MORALES**

These two are major players in the anti-Castro movement, by all accounts.

- A. What were these guys up to; i.e., what was their role in JMWAVE/MONGOOSE? (Obviously, Morales was the Chief of Operations at JMWAVE, but what exactly did that entail? What did he do?) Why does CIA try to hide Morales' role?
- B. How often was Phillips in Miami? Did you ever have any contact with him?
- C. To your knowledge, what was Phillips doing in Mexico City in support of MONGOOSE, JMWAVE, Task Force W or SAS/SG (Augmented)? Did he have any communications to JMWAVE that did not go through Mexico City CoS Win Scott?
- D. What were relations like between Morales and Phillips? Did they get along? How well did they work together?

Follow-up: What did Morales personally think of the Kennedys? Did he ever express that to you? Was Phillips ever assigned a member of the exile community to work with? Did Morales resent ALL outside help or assistance, or just that of the military? Did Morales ever go on missions to Cuba? Did Morales ever try to pass himself off (or did the Agency ever try and pass him off) as Cuban?

*****TOPIC #5: Standard Operating Procedure at JMWAVE***

A few questions on the way the station worked and how integrated it was with the rest of MONGOOSE:

- A. Was it unusual for the station to use anyone but Cubans for their operations? That is to say, were there ever any international mercenaries (Corsican hit men, QJWIN types, OAS, etc.) used?
- B. Beyond John Roselli, did you ever see any evidence of other Mafia types (specifically Giancana, Trafficante, or their representatives) being involved in any way with the operations at JMWAVE?
- C. To whom did Shackley report? Fitzgerald? Helms? Lansdale? RFK? What was his chain of command? Did he have autonomy for station operations, or was he merely carrying out someone else's orders? Who made the decisions?
- D. How well known was it (among all staff, but especially among the field personnel) that the assassination of Castro was part of MONGOOSE/JMWAVE?
- E. How much penetration of the training units or other JMWAVE operations and staff was there by the DGI? How serious of a problem did Shackley and other station leadership believe it to be? How serious did the field commanders (you, Rodriguez, Robertson) believe the problem to be?

Follow-up: Were personnel files ever kept for all recruits or commandoes brought into the program? If so, where were they kept? Assuming they were not destroyed, where might those files be now? [There have been rumors and allegations that Howard Hughes admired Meyer Lansky and wanted to try and accomplish in Havana what Lansky did in Las Vegas. Other than the use of Cay Sal, did you ever see evidence of Hughes' involvement?] Were the names of Lansky or any other members of organized crime ever mentioned? Did the Agency, to your knowledge, ever use the Mafia to launder the money it was paying its operatives at JMWAVE, or did they do it all themselves? To what extent did you see William Harvey, or anyone else from higher up in CIA, at Miami? Did you get the feeling that the shots were being called by a higher source? Did Shackley have to seek approval

from anyone for ideas that sprung from within the station? Did the trainees generally look favorably on the idea of killing Fidel Castro? If the assassination plans were well-known, were they talked about openly or kept an unwritten secret? How much CI was there at JMWAVE? Was it effective? What was done in cases where penetration was suspected? Were any major operations compromised or scuttled due to penetration by the DGI?

*****TOPIC #6: JMWAVE personnel and the death of JFK***

You intimate in your book that you and several of your colleagues in Miami felt that some of the people you had been working with might have been responsible in some way for John Kennedy's death. ["I guess I felt that way too. A lot of the station people did, right from the moment they heard that the President had been shot. There was some connection, and we felt it strongly." pp. 181] I would like you to elaborate.

- A. Why did you and the others believe this? Was there anything specific that led you to think this way?
- B. What kind of "connection" did you mean? Retribution by Castro? Or some activity by the Cuba people, either exiles or American agents?
- C. Who, specifically, at JMWAVE did you and perhaps others feel might have been involved in the Kennedy killing?
- D. Did you EVER hear or see any reference to Lee Harvey Oswald at JMWAVE *prior to* the president's assassination?

Follow-up: Had anything been said by anyone at the station to lead you to believe that something was "in the air" before the assassination? Was there any sort of an investigation done by anyone at JMWAVE to determine if Oswald had any connection to the station? Was there an investigation, even a cursory one, into the assassination run out of JMWAVE? Did Shackley or Morales ever make a comment to you about the assassination? Were any of the Agency "higher-ups" among those who felt that there may have been a connection between your work and JFK's death? Had any of the exiles that you were working with ever heard of Oswald before the shooting? Did you have any kind of response from your Pentagon superiors regarding the shooting?

*****TOPIC #7: Other government entities***

MONGOOSE was certainly not merely a CIA operation.

- A. What other government agencies (e.g., DIA, G-2, any others) were involved in the execution or planning of MONGOOSE?
- B. Did you ever have any indication that DIA, G-2 or any other government entity was “running” other exile groups without the knowledge or approval of CIA?

Follow-up: Do you know where G-2 records were/are kept, then or now? Did JMWA VE ever work, directly or indirectly, with other government agencies on missions or operations? Were there ever any other military personnel like yourself who were assigned to JMWA VE at a later date? What ever happened to Ed Rodrick?

TOPIC #8: The Cuban exile community and its leaders

In *The War That Never Was*, you mention that the only exile leader you worked with personally was Manuel Artime. In your notes for *The Zenith Secret*, you mention Orlando Bosch.

- A. Which other exile leaders were working directly with JMWA VE?
- B. Which groups was JMWA VE or the CIA (through other sources) supporting, either through funding, intelligence or consultation?
- C. Did you ever see, come in contact with, or know Antonio Veciana? Who was the case officer assigned to Veciana, if there was one?
- D. How reliable were/are these people? Whom can we trust to give us the truth?
- E. Where are they now? Have you stayed in touch with ANY of the exiles active during that time? How can we contact them?
- F. With whom, Cuban exile or American agent, should we talk to learn more about this area?

Follow-up: Did Morales ever have any contact with Bosch? Were any of the exile leaders directly on the Agency payroll (even under pseudonym or front company)? How did the exiles feel about the Kennedys? Before Bay of Pigs? Before the Missile Crisis? Between Missile Crisis and his death? After his death? How did the exiles and trainees react to the news of Kennedy's death? Which of the exile leaders or groups that JMWA VE was working with were considered particularly effective or vicious? Were there any persons or groups the Agency WOULD NOT work with, due to their being too violent or uncontrollable?

TOPIC #9: The anti-Castro operation in its larger sense

Regarding the effort to oust Castro in "the big picture" sense:

- A. Were you aware of then, or do you believe you know of now, any CIA help to exile groups in New Orleans? Tampa? Mexico City? Anywhere else?
- B. Which groups were being helped in these cities? Which people were they in contact with?
- C. What exactly was being done out of Mexico City in support of MONGOOSE? Were personnel at JMWAVE aware of this? How much did Shackley, Campbell and Morales know about these efforts?
- D. Are you aware of which government personnel were involved in the overall effort; i.e., who might Shackley have been coordinating efforts with?
- E. Can you point us in the direction of specific personnel or contract agents who might be able to provide us with information?

Follow-up: How much did Shackley know about the whole anti-Castro operation-- did he know only what originated at his station, or was he in the loop on everything? Did JMWAVE ever cooperate on the same mission or operation with any other station? Give me names of people we ought to talk to.

TOPIC #10: Bimonthly reports

In *The War That Never Was*, you wrote that you were compiling bimonthly reports on your activities. These reports, once cleared by Shackley, were being sent to your superiors at the Pentagon.

- A. Who was receiving these reports? Was it Col. Bond? Did Gen. Rosson also read them? Did anyone else (to your knowledge) in the Pentagon receive copies?
- B. Which unit/detail were Bond and Rosson (and technically, you) specifically assigned to?
- C. To your knowledge, were these reports “eyes only” and then destroyed, or were they maintained?
- D. If the reports were kept, where were they stored then, and where might they be now? (Obviously Army intelligence, but where specifically?)

Follow-up: What did you say in those reports? What did Shackley not allow you to say? Did you ever have any military contact with anybody besides Bond and Rosson?

TOPIC # 11: Miscellaneous

- A. How much did the University of Miami know about its tenants? In your opinion, would the school have any records worth our attention?
- B. As both a writer and a source for much information on this area, you are in a unique position to be aware of most of the books written on JMWAVE. Can you recommend to me/the Review Board a good bibliography?
- C. How much contact did you have with the HSCA? Anyone beyond Gaeton Fonzi? Were they cooperative with you? Did you feel your story and the story of what happened at JMWAVE were fairly told in the HSCA report? Was there anything you felt was inaccurate in the report (regarding the JMWAVE and anti-Castro operations ONLY)?
- D. Again, can you give me the names of specific people that representatives of the Review Board should contact in order to learn more about this subject area and possible records relating to the assassination of John Kennedy?
- E. Is there anything else you would like to add that you believe would help the Review Board accomplish its mission?