

MEMORANDUM

September 23, 1996

To: Tim Wray
 cc: Jeremy Gunn, David Marwell, Brian Rosen, Joan Zimmerman
 From: Christopher Barger
 Subj: "Mr. X" allegations in the film JFK

After review of the "Mr. X" segment of JFK, I have identified 35 different allegations or contentions of that character. Since X is supposed to be based on Fletcher Prouty, we should ask Prouty first which of these allegations are based on his theories, or that he subscribes to, and which Stone wrote in for dramatic purposes. Secondly, for those that Prouty either inspired or subscribes to, we should ask him the basis for the contention; i.e., is there documentation for such a contention?

I have arranged the allegations into two categories: those which could be directly verified or discredited by research on our part, and those which are more theoretical in nature. For the first category, we should be asking for specific documentation and verifiable references; for the second, we may wish not to ask about them at all, or we may wish to merely ask for the basis and possible documentation of that belief.

Where questions have occurred to me based on these allegations, I have included them.

CATEGORY ONE: SPECIFIC ALLEGATIONS

1. X "was one of those guys in the Pentagon who supplied military hardware" for black ops.
Response: Was one of Prouty's duties to provide military supplies for operations? Was that in addition to presidential security? What exactly were the nature of Prouty's duties?

2. Another invasion of Cuba had been planned for October 1962; Khrushchev sent the missiles to resist the invasion, and that instigated the Missile Crisis. Kennedy refused to invade, and left the covert planners hanging.
Response: Where does Prouty get the idea that there was another invasion planned? Does he have any documents which might back up this contention? How does he explain that no documents, either which have been available to the public before, or through FOIA requests, or through the work of ARRB, have ever indicated that this was the case?

3. Mr. X was sent to Antarctica in November 1963, “one week after the assassination of President Diem, and two weeks before the assassination of our president.”

Response: Is the time line cited here correct? Did Prouty's trip begin approximately Nov. 8?

4. In the film, in a background conversation, Mr. X refers to General Y as “Ed.”

Response: Confirm that the character “General Y” is supposed to be Edward Lansdale.

5. Mr. X was sent to Antarctica as the military escort for a group on international VIP's.

Response: Was that the duty and justification for Prouty's trip?

6. Oswald was charged at 7:00 p.m. Dallas time with Tippit's murder (2:00 p.m. Saturday NZ time); the Christchurch Star had an edition out with a detailed Oswald bio, Russian information, and was “pretty sure” that Oswald had killed the president alone-- even though it was four more hours before Oswald was even charged with that crime in Dallas.

Response: [Summary of our actions on this issue to date: 1. We have made arrangements with the Christchurch Star to have a photocopy of the appropriate pages sent to us (request made 9.17), along with information about what time the paper went to press and when it hit the streets. (Our letter of request which was faxed to Christchurch is enclosed with this memo.) 2. Using the Warren Commission Report as my source, I have put together a time line of Oswald's police chronology. Oswald was arrested at 1:51 p.m. CST (7:51 a.m. Saturday NZT). He was arraigned for Tippit's murder at 7:10 p.m. CST (1:10 p.m. NZT). Capt. Fritz signed the complaint charging Oswald with Kennedy's murder at 11:26 p.m. CST (5:26 p.m. Saturday NZT). Oswald was arraigned for JFK's murder at 1:35 a.m. Saturday CST (7:35 p.m. Saturday NZT).¹ Once we receive the information from the Star, we will be able to compare the time lines. We established the correct time difference by referring to the Christchurch Press from Nov 23, 1963 (included as enclosure 2), which states that the shooting took place at 12:30 CST, or 6:30 a.m. Saturday NZT. This establishes an 18 hour difference between here and NZ. Important to note is that the film gets the time wrong, much as Posner did. Questions: Does Prouty recall what time he read the paper? Can he document any other cases where “cover stories” were sent to the press in anticipation of events taking place?

7. X was the “Chief of Special Ops.” He says, “One of my routine duties, had I been in Washington, would have been to arrange for additional security in Texas.”

Response: Was presidential security an additional duty of Prouty's? How is it that a Chief of Special Ops, whose job it was to provide military supplies for covert ops, had as a supplemental duty protective security for the President-- aren't they unrelated, and both full time concerns? How often did Prouty arrange for security? Can he document it?

¹ Warren Commission Report, p. 198

8. "Someone had told the 112th military intelligence group at 4th Army HQ at Ft. Sam Houston to stand down that day-- over the protests of the unit commander, Col. Reich."

Response: Do you have proof of this? Who did you talk to in the 112th? Did you ever talk with Reich? Did your source indicate whether the 112th had done this type of duty before?

9. "It is standard operating procedure... to supplement the Secret Service."

Response: Does/did Prouty have access to a USSS manual or other material which would have indicated that this was standard operating procedure? How about the military-- if it was standard, they'd have had a manual for the procedure, wouldn't they? What was it called, and how can we get it?

The next several allegations deal with alleged military security procedures. The only questions we should ask are whether there exists a standard manual for these procedures, and whether Prouty can document any occasions prior to Dallas where these procedures were followed.

10. "We (Army) would have had at least 100-200 agents on the sidewalk without question."

11. "We would have arrived days in advance... studied the route... *never* would have allowed all those wide open windows overlooking Dealey Plaza..."

12. "We'd have had our own snipers covering the area-- the moment a window went up, they'd have been on the radio..."

13. "We never would have allowed the limousine to slow to ten mph, much less take that unusual curve at Houston and Elm."

14. "You would have felt an Army presence that day... it was a violation of the most basic protection codes we have..." *Response: Where are those codes?*

SEPARATE ALLEGATIONS RESUMED

15. "There were some individual Army intelligence personnel in Dallas that day..."

Response: Is Prouty aware of the Powell story and Powell's explanation?

16. "Army Intel had a 'Harvey Lee Oswald' on file, but all those files have been destroyed."

Response: If the files have been destroyed, how does Prouty know that there were such files? Had he seen them? Can he verify them now?

17. “We had the entire Cabinet on a trip to the Far East... [Contention: “to get their perceptions out of the way.”]

Response: How unusual was this trip? How long in advance had it been scheduled? Had the entire Cabinet not traveled together before? [Note: I expect that it would have unusual for the Cabinet to travel together, because a plane crash could foreseeably wipe out the entire hierarchy of the government. For security reasons, it would seem that trips of this nature would have been ill-advised and not commonplace, though this assertion is my own, and not based on a document.]

18. “We had 1/3 of a combat division returning from Germany in the air above the United States at the time of the shooting.” [Contention: “for possible riot control.”]

Response: Does Prouty know about Operation BIGLIFT? Is he aware that this plane full of personnel carried only 59 men? Can he document any flights in the air at that time which carried more troops and had arms necessary to do riot control?

19. “At 12:34 p.m., the entire phone system went out in Washington DC for a solid hour...”

[Contention: “to keep the wrong stories from spreading if anything went wrong with the plan.”]

Response: The phone troubles in Washington are well documented; what is unclear is both the time the troubles started, and the degree of the troubles. Some call it a blackout, others call it a brownout. Manchester’s references to the phone problems are enclosure 3.

20. “Word was radioed from the White House Situations Room to Lyndon Johnson on the plane on the way back to DC that one man had killed the president.”

Response: Is this documented? Do we know from any transmission transcripts that this is the case? Has Prouty ever seen such a transcript? How does he know this transmission took place?

21. “I knew Allen Dulles very well-- I briefed him many a time at his house.”

Response: Did Prouty ever do so? How often? [Note: How likely is it that a briefing of a DCI, especially one as legendarily security conscious as Dulles, would have taken place at a private home?]

22. “Dulles was General Y’s benefactor.” *Response: The relationship between Dulles and Lansdale is documented in JFK and Vietnam by John Newman. Enclosure 4.*

23. In 1961, Kennedy issues NSAMs 55, 56, and 57; these give responsibility for covert military action to the JCS, out of the purview of the CIA.

Response: Have we checked these NSAM’s? Is this correct? [I know from history courses that this was done, but I am unsure of the numbers of the NSAM’s.]

24. “Cuba was turned over to [X’s] department as Operation MONGOOSE; based out of JMWA VE, with 300 agents, 7000 select Cubans, budgeted over hundreds of millions of dollars, 50 fake business fronts... all of this was under the control of General Y.”

Response: The existence and nature of JMWA VE is well known and unchallenged. We are looking for documentation here. The script for the film cites The Fish is Red by Hinckle and Turner; does Prouty remember where he got his specific numbers on the extent of JMWA VE? As for General Y, we do know that for some time, Lansdale did run MONGOOSE.

25. Kennedy refused to invade Cuba in 1962. *Response: Where is the documentation for this contention? How does Prouty have evidence that an invasion was planned, or that Kennedy refused to execute the plan?*

It is important to note that it is entirely possible that some of these contentions either did not originate with Prouty or were created by Stone to further his story. Prouty should be first asked whether he subscribes to or originated each contention, and be asked to elaborate only on those he claims as his own. He can’t be asked to verify or substantiate allegations that are not his own.

CATEGORY TWO: GENERAL QUESTIONS

We may wish to ask about these; we may not. They are statements made by Mr. X; we may or may not find them useful to follow up. I have suggested no questions on these until we decide whether to follow up these statements.

1. During September 1963, Kennedy began assembling a plan to withdraw all US personnel out of Vietnam by the end of 1965; NSAM 263, which ordered home the first 1000 advisors, was only the first step in this plan.
- 2.. The Oswald story “felt like a cover story was being put up... like we would in a black op.”
3. “Those of us who had been in secret ops from the beginning knew the Warren Commission was fiction.”
4. Kennedy called for cuts in the defense budget in March of 1963; 52 installations in 25 states and 21 overseas bases were targeted.

5. Bell Helicopter, through the 1st National Bank of Boston, approached the CIA about developing the helicopter for Indochina use. *[Note: Is it plausible that a private firm would approach the CIA, and not the military, for developing said helicopters? Moreover, how often did private firm approach the government instead of it being the other way around?]*
6. Defense budgets rose from \$10 billion in 1949 to over \$200 billion by the time Vietnam was over.
7. Kennedy wanted to call off the moon race in favor of cooperation with the Soviets.
8. The Kennedy brothers targeted key voting districts for TFX fighter contracts.
9. NSAM 273, signed Nov 26 1963 by President Johnson, reversed Kennedy's Vietnam policy.

As with the first category, if Prouty is asked about these statements, he should only be asked to elaborate on statements he claims as his own. As these statements are more theoretical and speculative, it is the opinion of this analyst that asking about them accomplishes less, and should only be done if time permits, after the first category and all other questions have been asked.