

DRAFT MEMORANDUM

May 15, 2017

To: Jeremy Gunn

From: Irene Marr

Subject: Wrap-up Memo on Marita Lorenz

The purpose of this research project was to determine whether DEA or INS had any files on Marita Lorenz that could be identified as assassination records. This was a follow-up action on a lead provided by former HSCA investigators during the panel interview with ARRB on October 28, 1996. Gaeton Fonzi met with Lorenz while he was working with the HSCA Committee. Though he regarded her with a great deal of skepticism, Fonzi did find it significant that Lorenz claimed to have witnessed a meeting between Frank Sturgis and Howard Hunt who had sworn under oath that they did not know each other. Furthermore, in *Oswald and the CIA*, John Newman suggests there was a connection between Marita Lorenz and CIA informant June Cobb. In light of this, I extended my search to include the CIA Microfilm Collection to determine whether there were any CIA files on Lorenz. As a result of ARRB requests to DEA and INS and a separate review of CIA files, I did not find any additional records on Marita Lorenz relevant to the assassination. There were references to Lorenz being an informant for Customs, however, as that agency's records are destroyed it was not possible to pursue that lead. The FBI does have files on Marita Lorenz and those files are being reviewed and processed by the JFK Task force and verified for assassination-related content by ARRB staff.

Background

The effort to search for additional government records on Marita Lorenz was prompted by the lead provided by HSCA investigators. She is featured in many of the assassination books as one of the more colorful, yet questionable, characters. Most accounts of Marita Lorenz cast doubt on her credibility. Gaeton Fonzi had a particular interest in Lorenz which began when he was working for the Schweiker Committee. He later wrote about her in his book *The Last Investigation*. His source for the more colorful stories on Lorenz is New York *Daily News* reporter Paul Meskil, whom he noted as having "a prodigious talent for lively tabloid writing." During the early sixties, Marita Lorenz allegedly was involved in one of the earlier failed plots orchestrated by Frank Sturgis to kill Fidel Castro; was associated with some anti-Castro Cuban elements and New York city criminal figures; and claimed to have been unwittingly involved in an assassination plot to kill Kennedy. Fonzi thought Lorenz was worth looking into because she provided evidence on the

alleged perjury of Frank Sturgis and Howard Hunt. Despite her lack of credibility, Fonzi and Lopez expressed regret that the HSCA did not fully investigate her and recommended that the ARRB include her as a subject in its search for additional records.

Results of ARRB Search for Records

The Review Board submitted requests to INS and DEA. INS completed a search and found no files on Lorenz. The DEA conducted a computerized search and found only two files on Marita Lorenz, but under her alias Ilona Marita Kirkland. I reviewed these files and recommend no Review Board action is required as they were rather unremarkable. They covered Lorenz's stints as a source in 1977 and as a confidential informant in 1983. Her 1977 file indicated that she was developed as source for the Jimmy Hoffa and John Rosselli murders and was also used for her associations with other New York City criminal figures. She proved to be unreliable and was also considered "difficult." She was re-activated as a confidential source for DEA from January 1983 through December 1983. The contents of the files were administrative in nature with summaries of who was, why she was being used as a source, when she was activated and when she was debriefed. They did not contain any reports of what information, if any, she actually did provide.

In *Oswald and the CIA*, John Newman points out a connection between June Cobb and Marita Lorenz. As I did not find any references to Marita Lorenz in the index of the Microfilm Collection, I thought it would be worthwhile to look into the June Cobb files that remain closed. Although the CIA in compliance with the JFK Act has released files on June Cobb that were determined to be assassination records, there were other files designated as not believed relevant (NBR) in the Microfilm Collection. I reviewed these files, which were outside the timeframe of interest and contained primarily administrative and personnel records. Amongst those files, I did not find any references to Marita Lorenz.

I believe that the best source of additional records on Marita Lorenz will be the FBI. These files are being reviewed and processed by the FBI JFK Task Force in accordance with the JFK Act.

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