

March 9, 1995

Ms. Claudia Collins
Chief, Information Security
National Security Agency
Fort Meade, Maryland

Dear Claudia:

On behalf of the Review Board and staff, I would like to again thank you and Renee for coming to meet with us on Tuesday and to explain NSA's policies and concerns with respect to assassination records.¹ Your presentation was informative and we appreciate the cooperation that you have shown.

As you are aware from the discussion during our meeting, the Review Board has many questions about NSA records, the type of search that has been performed, and the completeness of the record. We appreciate your willingness to look into those questions and we hope for an early meeting with you to help clarify the answers.

¹I use the term "assassination records" throughout consistently with the Review Board's proposed Guidance on Interpreting and Implementing the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992, 60 FR 7506 (Feb. 8, 1995), copy enclosed.

My notes suggest that the following issues were among those of particular concern to the Review Board:

First, what technical capabilities did NSA have during the early 1960s? For example, when did NSA first have satellite COMINT intercept capability? Did Harvest/Stretch -- or any other NSA computer system -- have the capability of identifying target words from tapes?

Second, what cryptological capabilities did NSA have during the early 1960s, particularly with respect to communications involving the Soviet Union, Cuba, Mexico, and France?

Third, what COMINT did NSA actually intercept during the early 1960s from the Soviet Union, Cuba, Mexico, France, or from organized crime or international drug and arms smugglers?

Fourth, what actions did NSA take in the immediate wake of President Kennedy's assassination? For example, did any agency task NSA to perform any functions regarding the assassination? Was any task force, group, directorate, or other entity at NSA formed or charged with any responsibilities for collecting information that in any way pertained to the assassination of President Kennedy? Was any traffic analysis performed? Were any product reports produced? Were there any TSR reports?

Fifth, did NSA ever collect, isolate, or segregate any records relating to the assassination?

Sixth, what actions has NSA taken since 1964 with respect to the assassination? For example, other than with respect to the House Select

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Committee on Assassinations (HSCA), has NSA had any program to collect any data with respect to the assassination?

Seventh, what files or records has NSA ever had pertaining to congressional investigations of the assassination or the intelligence community? For example, are there (or were there) NSA files on the Warren Commission, the HSCA, the Church Committee, the Pike Committee, etc.

Eighth, what records retention (and records destruction) policies has NSA ever proposed or implemented that might have affected records pertaining to the assassination? You stated, for example, that records identifying Americans were destroyed in the wake of the Church Committee investigation, and you suggested that records identifying Oswald might have been among those destroyed. What were the destruction orders; who implemented them; how many records were destroyed; and how were records identified for destruction?

Ninth, what records from intercepts involving the Soviet Union, the Soviet Bloc, Cuba, Mexico, and France from the early 1960s are still extant? For example, does NSA have untranscribed Cuban tapes from 1963? Does NSA have tapes in codes that were not broken in 1963 (but that may subsequently have been broken)? What records does NSA have from the Bay of Pigs and from the Cuban Missile Crisis?

Tenth, does NSA have files on any American defectors to Communist countries? More specifically, does NSA have any files on the two NSA

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employees who defected to the Soviet Bloc at about the same time that Oswald went to the Soviet Union?²

Eleventh, did any foreign government or intelligence service ever supply NSA with any information pertaining to the assassination?

We would also very much appreciate your sending to us your tasking memoranda on the search for JFK records. If those memoranda contain classified information, we are of course willing to take appropriate precautions in handling the information.

Once again, let me reiterate our appreciation for your willingness to come and speak to us. We hope that we will be able to work well together and to engage in a productive dialogue that will enable both of our agencies to comply with the law and to fulfill our obligations to the American public.

Sincerely yours,

*David G. Marwell
Executive Director*

²The NSA employees previously have been identified as William Martin and Bernon Mitchell.

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cc: Review Board

T. Jeremy Gunn

Enclosure