

MEMORANDUM

April 7, 1998

To: T. Jeremy Gunn
Executive Director

From: Laura Denk
Chief Analyst for FBI Records

Subject: "NBR" Information in the FBI's "John Orion Pittman" File

The FBI Team has completed its review of two documents within the FBI's "John Orion Pittman" main files (HQ 100-30067 sects. 1-5 and HQ MF 100-479036) (part of the FBI's Segregated Collection). The staff recommends that the Review Board designate the majority of the information within these two records as not believed relevant to the assassination, or "NBR."

Description of John Orion Pittman and the FBI's Records on Pittman

Defected to USSR between 1958 and 1962.
HSCA Vol 12, pp. 437-439; HSCA Reel 14, Box 9, Folder G (AMKW 10)

The HSCA requested all FBI HQ records that mentioned John Orion Pittman, and the FBI made available to the HSCA two main files on Pittman.

The Review Board staff has reviewed, and is in the process of negotiating with the FBI for the release of the Pittman files.

Description of the Two Records that are Not Believed Relevant to the Assassination

Two records in the Pittman files describe a currently classified operational detail.¹

¹ These documents are 105-20814-79 dated 10/10/58, 105-20814-78 dated 9/17/58, 105-20814-63 dated 8/22/58, 105-20814-63 dated 8/22/58, 105-20814-137 dated 8/22/58, and 105-20814-136 dated 8/1/59.

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Shimon's name arises in these six documents only because he attended a party that was hosted by an individual who was under investigation by the FBI. In his capacity as a member of the D.C. Police Force, Shimon was investigating this individual's complaint that he believed that the FBI had tapped his telephone. The individual who is the subject of the file is not relevant to the assassination.

The six records comprise 95 total pages. Although none of the information in these records is related to the assassination, the FBI has consented to negotiate release of 10 of the 95 pages. The remaining 85 pages contain very detailed descriptions of an FBI operation that is still classified.

Recommendation

The Review Board's Guidelines for NBR information state that where information in a record under review truly has no apparent relevance to the assassination and where the information appears, on its face, to fall within one of the specific grounds for postponement, the record fits within the Review Board's definition of an "NBR" record. Because the staff believes that the two documents at issue are not relevant to the assassination, and because the records, on their face, appear to be eligible for postponement under section 6(1) of the JFK Act, the staff believes that the pages fit within the Review Board's "NBR" Guidelines.

The staff recommends that the Review Board designate these two documents as "NBR" records and release the FBI from any further obligation to provide evidence in support of its postponements for the "NBR" pages. Of course, the Review Board staff will review and negotiate all other pages in the Pittman files according to the Review Board's standards for review of the Segregated Collections.