

MEMORANDUM

October 25, 1996

To: Jeremy Gunn, Irene Marr, Michelle Combs, Bob Skwirot, Christopher Barger,
Douglas Horne, Brian Rosen, Joan Zimmerman, Laura Denk, Tim Wray

cc: David Marwell

From: Manuel E. Legaspi

Subject: Meeting with former HSCA staffers

This represents the final draft of the discussion topics/interview questions for the meeting with Gaeton Fonzi, Dan Hardway, and Edwin Lopez (former researchers/investigators with the HSCA), which will take place at 0900 in the Board Room on Monday, 28 October 1996.

A summary version of this outline will be provided to the interviewees at the time of our meeting.

Thanks to everyone for your input and assistance.

TENTATIVE LIST OF DISCUSSION TOPICS
MEETING WITH HSCA RESEARCHERS/INVESTIGATORS AND ARRB STAFF

OCTOBER 28 1996
Washington, D.C.

The purpose of this meeting is to bring together some individuals who have a specialized knowledge of the Congressional investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy to assist the ARRB in developing leads for acquiring records related to the assassination.

The ARRB hopes that their expertise will not only enable us to acquire additional documents, but also help us utilize our time and resources efficiently and assist us in completing the historical record on this subject.

This list of topics is only intended as a general guideline for discussions. Participants are encouraged to discuss any topic related to the assassination or the HSCA investigation that they feel would be relevant to the ARRB mission.

GENERAL SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

Introductory statement: T. Jeremy Gunn, Associate Director for Research and Analysis

A. INTRODUCTIONS

- Backgrounds of principals
- Responsibilities as HSCA staff members

[It has been recommended that Messrs. Fonzi, Hardway and Lopez should at this point outline their responsibilities (generally) with the House Select Committee on Assassinations. This would serve to familiarize ARRB staff members with their work and may also allow for a good start to our discussions.]

B. OSWALD IN MEXICO CITY

Lead ARRB Staff Member: Irene F. Marr

CIA OPERATIONS IN MEXICO CITY

- additional operational files that should be requested by ARRB
 - Information deemed relevant but never requested/reviewed by HSCA staff

[Did the HSCA ever have access to original testimony/interview transcripts from their interrogation of Sylvia Tirado de Duran by officials? Were any inquiries made to determine the disposition of these records?] Mexican

- insights on sources and methods
 - Clarification on surveillance methods utilized by the CIA

[Is there any clarification of references to "methods of communication available that were not incorporated into the CIA record keeping system?" p. 115, Lopez Report]

[Why were production logs from one of the photo surveillance bases aimed at the Soviet Embassy not made available for review by the HSCA? (This base covered AM hours: 0900-1400/1500). What efforts were made to gain access to this material? Were there other instances where material was requested but where access was not granted?]

[In The Last Investigation p. 282 Fonzi states that the CIA sources of information included telephone taps, wall bugs, and inside informants. Where was the reference to or evidence of wall bugs first obtained?]

- [How was it determined that intercepted conversations were obtained by wiretaps as opposed to telephone taps? (CIA claims to have only had telephone taps at that time.)]

- Suggestions for possible interviews of CIA personnel and others affiliated with Mexico City

- Relevant players who were not interviewed or who failed to cooperate with the HSCA

[Regarding Oswald's personal activities during his Mexico City episode, were there any any potential witnesses or relevant characters identified by HSCA who were not interviewed who should have been, or who failed to cooperate?]

- the existence of possible gaps in testimonies

- Leads on whereabouts of possible "missing" files, photos, etc.
 - Are you aware of information on the existence of other US Government documents pertaining to Oswald's visit to the Cuban and Soviet embassies?

OTHER POSSIBLE RECORDS OF OSWALD'S STAY IN MEXICO CITY

- other surveillance in Mexico City
- other documentation (local records, etc.) of Oswald's stay in Mexico
 - [What conclusions were reached regarding an additional (missing?) transcript marked urgent in which Lee Harvey

Oswald reportedly identified himself and indicated that he was
aid? (Lopez Report, pp. 83, 175)]

seeking

C. ALLEGED CUBAN LINKS TO THE ASSASSINATION

Lead ARRB Staff Members: Christopher M. Barger, Manuel E. Legaspi

ANTI-CASTRO CUBAN EXILE RECORDS

- Insights into Exile Community relations
 - approachability of exile members/organizations by ARRB for interviews and/or records requests
 - historical documentation of the assassination (exile groups' internal records, donations, and academic holdings, especially in South Florida)

[Do you have any knowledge of documents currently in private hands which may link private American sponsors to anti-Castro activity for the time period surrounding the assassination of Kennedy? E.g. Private holdings of Clare Booth Luce, William Pawley, etc.] President

[Do you have any knowledge of publications produced by U.S.-based anti-Castro groups in the immediate aftermath of the Kennedy assassination? E.g. The D.R.E. newsletter "Trinchera" which linked Castro to the JFK assassination]

[Do you know anything about the recent donation of documents by DRE president Manuel Salvat to the University of Miami library's special collections division?]

- Antonio Veciana
 - determination of the truthfulness of his testimony
 - Availability of individuals associated with Veciana

[Documentation of contacts with these individuals, both HSCA-related and as part of your private research] [Much of The Last Investigation details Fonzi's efforts to determine the true identity of Maurice Bishop. Other than the people indicated in your book, can you think of any other individuals who could possibly be Bishop, or have intelligence connections to Bishop that could reasonably be investigated by ARRB? (Also see JMWAVE below)] the

JMWAVE (CIA STATION IN MIAMI)

- CIA personnel/possible interviews/records
 - Relevant players not interviewed by the HSCA

- HSCA access to files and records of relevant individuals

[Can you outline the difficulties you encountered in attempting to investigate this aspect of the case? What can ARRB do?]

- JMWAVE/CIA associated individuals

-i.e., Contract agents, individuals "on loan" from other USG agencies, assets, etc. not contacted or "under investigated"

by the HSCA that could provide information or documents related to the assassination

[Examples of individuals not contacted or investigated by the HSCA: Cesar Diosdato (former US Customs agent in Miami, suspected by some to be working for the CIA)]

OTHER U.S. GOVERNMENT ANTI-CASTRO ACTIVITY

- Military Intelligence links to anti-Castro activities

- HSCA access to military intelligence records

[What military intelligence sources did you utilize in your research? With all of the government-sponsored anti-Castro activity going on in South Florida and the

Caribbean, do you think this angle (mil. intel., as opposed to primarily CIA-sponsored activity) had been adequately explored by the HSCA?]

- Leads on relevant individuals not contacted by HSCA

-were Antonio Veciana's military intelligence links explored adequately?

[see The Last Investigation, pp. 148-149. Fonzi states that the HSCA was more inclined to believe that Veciana's links were with military intelligence rather than with the CIA. Fonzi does not share this belief. In his book, he seems to indicate that he based his analysis on Veciana's statements to him and an overall review of Veciana's case.]

We would like to find out just what kind of investigation was conducted into AV's military intelligence links.]

ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS ON CASTRO

- non-US government records on the assassination attempts on Castro

[Obviously, these documents probably do not exist, but are you aware of any private documentation of events that may, in some way, be related to the assassination attempts on Fidel Castro?]

EVIDENCE OF CUBAN GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

- Information gleaned from Castro interview/trip to Cuba

- Cuban government documents (Castro, Escalante

agreements)

[What is your opinion of the utility of the two trips taken by the HSCA to Cuba?]

[What do you know about recent Cuban efforts to release documents related to the assassination and other historical

events?]

- Evidence of Cuban intelligence penetration of anti-Castro groups in US

[What is your evaluation of the allegations that certain anti-

Castro groups in the U.S. had been penetrated by Castro's intelligence service? (We know that Castro had successfully penetrated many exile groups operations inside of Cuba)]

D. OSWALD IN USSR

Lead ARRB Staff Member: Michelle Combs

- What investigative leads on Oswald in the USSR were pursued by the HSCA?
- Any leads on HSCA records related to Oswald's stay in the USSR?

E. MISCELLANEOUS

- Organized Crime
- Secret Service, FBI

(Lead ARRB staff member: Joan Zimmerman)

- In general: CIA files requested but were not provided or reviewed

(Lead ARRB Staff Member: Michelle Combs)

[What was your access to the Russ Holmes Working Papers?

How did you find out about its existence?]

[Can you detail the "mechanics" of the file access process at the

CIA? E.g. how were requests made, how did you know of the existence or availability of certain documents, negotiations over

access,

etc.]

[Can any of you further describe any other leads that you feel were not adequately followed up by the HSCA?]

- George DeMoreschildt suicide

(Lead ARRB Staff Member: Christopher M. Barger)

[Edward Epstein, in his interview with law enforcement officials

in Palm Beach, FL, has made references to an additional Oswald

backyard photo in the possession of DeM's lawyer in Dallas

which

contained the Russian inscription, "Long Live the

Assassins," as opposed to

"Hunter of Fascists." Did the HSCA

(or anyone else) ever take possession of that

photo and verify

what was written on it?]

[DeM indicated in his discussions with Epstein that he was troubled by something which had occurred in his interview with

Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans, which took place prior to his meetings with Epstein in Florida. Fonzi states in his book that Oltmans subsequently "went public" and was doing interviews and testified to the Committee regarding his talks with DeM. DeM reportedly had a nervous breakdown as a result of these discussions. **Issue:** Did the HSCA ever review Oltman's materials? Do you have any theories as to why DeM would "confess," and then suffer a nervous breakdown as a result of his confessions immediately thereafter? Why would he leave Holland in such a rushed manner (given that his statements were entirely voluntary)? If he had something to hide about the assassination, or was troubled by recent revelations, how does that fit in with DeM's newfound desire to negotiate book and interview deals about his relationship with Oswald?]

[Did anyone from the HSCA examine Oltman's notes or recordings of his discussions with DeM?]
 [Did the HSCA ever request Epstein's notes of interviews he conducted of DeM? (Epstein also makes references to an earlier interview of DeM which took place in April of 1976.)]
 [Epstein has said that DeM's Dallas attorney, Patrick Russell, that DeM had some audio tapes that he was willing to sell -- tapes that George and Jeanne DeM supposedly made immediately following JFK's assassination and Oswald's death detailing their relationship with the Oswalds. Do you have any knowledge of a) Epstein (or any other private individual) taking possession of these tapes or b) HSCA ever obtaining the tapes (or transcripts)?]
 [Do you think it would be worthwhile for the ARRB to contact the following individuals with some connection to DeM: Edward EPSTEIN; Pam BUTLER (Epstein's research aide in NYC); Patrick RUSSELL (DeM's attorney in Dallas, TX) and J. Walton MOORE (former CIA employee who allegedly was a connection between Oswald and the DeMs)?]

F. HSCA RECORDS/RECORDS IN PERSONAL HANDS

- HSCA procedures for document handling
 - destruction/access to/compartimentation of files
- William Sullivan papers
 [Our former staff investigator (Anne Buttimer) spoke to Cliff Fenton and asked him about the HSCA's efforts to obtain the papers of the late William Sullivan. Fenton indicated that Sullivan's widow was in possession of many documents but that they were arranged in a very unorganized manner. Were you aware of his efforts? Can you tell us anything about the Sullivan papers? Do you have any strategies for obtaining and organizing them?]
- HSCA Staffers who may have records in their possession
 [Do you know if Al Gonzales has HSCA-related investigative

records in his possession?]

- Private records

[Do you still have your interview notes and records from your discussions with Arlen Specter for the article which was published in *Philadelphia Magazine*?]

[Are you in possession of any documents involving work (e.g. verification and background on Veciana) that was initiated while you were a member of the HSCA staff but which was completed as a private researcher?]