

MEMORANDUM

June 14, 2017

To: Michelle Combs
From: Peter Voth
Subject: Walter Elder - Research

A review of the available literature suggests that Walt Elder, executive assistant to DCI John McCone, does not have a great deal of personal knowledge about topics related to the JFK assassination. His contributions to the public record have instead centered around his knowledge of McCone's activities and opinions during the 1960s. However, he may be able to assist the Board in identifying additional records that may have been overlooked by the review process thus far.

Elder did not testify before either the HSCA or the Warren Commission. The bulk of his comments came in his testimony before the Church Committee in 1975, where he was questioned extensively on the extent of McCone's knowledge of and involvement in Castro assassination plots. Elder's testimony does not indicate that he has any personal knowledge of plans to assassinate Castro. Instead, he testified that McCone did not learn of the plots until August 1963, and noted McCone's vehement opposition the assassination plans once he was made aware of them.

Elder also testified that he briefed McCone every morning on the important events of the day, and that McCone and Allen Dulles conferred extensively before McCone took over as DCI. Many of these briefings would surely be assassination-related, and Elder may be able to provide clues as to the existence of written records of them. In addition, as McCone's executive assistant, Elder also would have been in a position to know if McCone regularly made tape recordings of conversations in his office, and if McCone, like Angleton, maintained any files which were not part of the CIA's main filing system.

In addition, Elder discussed the CIA's involvement with Phillippe DeVosjoli in Tom Mangold's *Cold Warrior*, outlining some of DeVosjoli's activities on behalf of the CIA. It may also be useful to find out how much contact Elder had with Angleton and the Counterintelligence Staff to see if he may have any more information about project HTLINGUAL or the interrogation of Nosenko.