

MEMORANDUM

December 29, 1997

To: Michelle Combs
Irene Marr

cc: T. Jeremy Gunn

From: Ronald G. Haron

Subject: State Department Records
Recently Transferred to NARA

As we discussed previously, the State Department recently transferred to NARA several categories of records that may contain assassination related materials. At our request, these records were identified in Nina Noring's August 7 and August 20, 1997 letters. According to the State Department, these records have been reviewed for assassination related materials and any assassination records would have been identified and placed in the JFK Collection. More specifically, Nina Noring advised me in a phone conversation on September 24, 1997 that these records were part of a general declassification review separate from any review under the JFK Act. However, the officials conducting the general review were advised to identify any materials relating to President Kennedy's assassination.

Nonetheless, the Review Board staff discussed the possibility of our inspecting, first-hand, some of the more important categories of records to be assured that the State Department has identified all pertinent assassination records. I have recently reviewed the manifests for these records, as submitted by the State Department, and recommend that we consider reviewing the following files *provided that they are not otherwise open to the public*:¹

1. **Thomas Mann's 1964 "ARA Country Files."** Lot No. 66 D 65 was sent to NARA in July 1997. (*Note:* Do these encompass his files as Ambassador to Mexico in 1963? The State Department also recommended searching the Central Files at NARA under PER Mann, Thomas for the period from February 1963.). According to the State Department's proposed

¹ Irene has also been reviewing the manifests and may have additional recommendations regarding records to be inspected by the Review Board staff. We should try to arrive at an internal consensus as to what should be reviewed.

Final Compliance Statement, a Mexico City Post File (Lot No. 69 F 197) also was reviewed and, from that file, 28 documents relating to Oswald's Mexico City visit were processed and placed into the JFK Collection.

2. **Llewellyn E. Thompson records.** Lot Nos. 67 D 2 and 76 D 435 were sent to NARA in June 1997 and November 1996, respectively. (*Note:* Copies of certain documents from Lot 67D 2 are in the JFK Collection). These manifests identify records from Thompson's tenure as Ambassador to the Soviet Union (*e.g.*, "Amb. Thompson's Moscow files 1957 to 1962"), as well as "conversations with USSR on variety of subjects for year[] 1964."

3. **Foy Kohler records.** Lot No. 71 D 460 is still at the State Department. Kohler succeeded Thompson as Ambassador to the Soviet Union. The manifest identifies 1962-66 telegrams.

4. **Secretary Dean Rusk Files.** Lot No. 72 D 192 was sent to NARA in July 1997. In particular, the manifest identified chron and telephone files from 1963-64. (*Note:* The JFK Collection contained, from this Lot File, selected memoranda of 1963 Rusk phone calls relating to the assassination, but nothing from 1964; I would like to check the 1964 phone call records for any additional assassination records.) In addition, the *FRUS* Volume X identifies Lot No. 65 D 330 as containing the Secretary's Memoranda of Conversations for 1961-64 and Lot No. 66 D 147 as containing records of the Secretary's staff meetings for 1961-63. I am uncertain who has custody of the Lot Files identified in the *FRUS* volume, but they may be at NARA.

5. **UnderSecretary George Ball Files.** Lot No. 74 D 272 was sent to NARA in July 1997. The manifest identifies a file on Cuba, as well as 1963 and 1964 files (perhaps chron files) for George Ball.

6. **U. Alexis Johnson Files.** Lot No. 90 D 410 is still at the State Department. This manifest identifies chron and telephone files for 1963 and 1964.

7. **Cuba Files.** According to *FRUS* Volume X, Lot No. 66 D 501 consists of the the files for the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs for 1964. This material includes top secret material from 1961-63. It is my understanding that we were in the process of reviewing this Lot File, and that it was transferred to NARA in July 1997. CIA, DOD, and FBI have to review certain materials within the file. The *FRUS* Volume X also identifies Lot No. 65 D 438 as the "master file on the Cuban missile crisis" and includes "documentation on

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Operation Mongoose.” Lot No. 65 D 256 is identified as the files for the Officer in Charge of Cuba Affairs for 1962. I am uncertain as to who has custody of these latter two Lot Files, but they may be at NARA.

8. **Other *FRUS* Sources.** The State Department identified two Lot Files, referenced as *FRUS* sources, which remain in the custody of the State Department. They are INR/EAP, Lot No. 90 D 110, and Vietnam Working Group Files, Lot No. 66 D 193. We should accept the State Department’s offer to provide copies of the manifests (or “693 finding aids”) for these lot files.

With respect to the files sent to NARA, the NARA contact person is Marvin Russell (301-713-6924). It is my understanding that many of these files are being processed and that other agencies must approve declassification of particular documents that are interspersed in these State Department records. We should determine which of these records remain classified and which are open to the public. If the records are publicly available, then we need not review them for assassination materials. To the extent still classified, however, I recommend that we review these records for assassination related material. We should discuss with NARA (Mr. Russell) which of these documents remain classified and arrange any necessary review with him. Except where noted (Thompson Lot No. 67 D 2 and Rusk Lot No. 72 D 92), the Lot Files identified in this memorandum do not appear to have been a source for any assassination records in the State Department’s JFK Collection at NARA.²

In the meantime, I will draft a letter to the Department of State requesting that they begin to prepare their Final Compliance Statement and that we will report to them shortly on whether our further review discloses the existence of any additional assassination records.

² With respect to files still at the State Department, they presumably remain non-public, and we therefore should review them. We can contact Nina Noring to have them made available.