

Memorandum

To: *Members of the Assassination Records Review Board*

From: *Tom Samoluk*

Date: *March 22, 1995*

Re: *Review Board Public Meeting in Boston; Friday, March 24, 1995*

I. Introduction

A copy of the Review Board's schedule in Boston for Thursday, March 23rd and Friday, March 24th is attached.

The Review Board is scheduled to conduct a public meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 24, 1995. The meeting will be held in Room A-1, a legislative committee hearing room, on the first floor of the Massachusetts State House on Beacon Hill. A map of the first floor of the State House is attached for your convenience.

Review Board members are asked to arrive in Room A-1 at 9:30 a.m. for media availability prior to the public meeting. We expect to conclude the meeting by 1:00 p.m.

It is important that the public meeting begin promptly at 10:00 a.m., as it is being taped for re-broadcast on WGBH, the public

broadcasting station which usually covers the Massachusetts House of Representatives and Senate as part of their "Gavel to Gavel" program. The public meeting is scheduled to be broadcast starting at 1:00 p.m.

II. Public Meeting Agenda

The agenda for the meeting is likely to follow this order:

1. Opening statement and review of Board's work to date by the Chair, and opening statements by members of the Board who choose to make one.

2. Update by Steve Tilley on the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection. David and I have been working with Steve and the FBI on the timing of a new release of FBI documents. We hope to have Steve announce the release during his report to the Board, tell a little about the most interesting records, and actually have copies of some of the records available for distribution. Additional information will be provided to you as it becomes available.

3. Testimony on the identification and location of assassination records by the following experts:

Philip H. Melanson

Priscilla Johnson McMillan

Richard Trask

Dick Russell

Additional information on the witnesses and their testimony is provided below. (Carl Oglesby who was originally scheduled to testify has cancelled.)

4. Board discussion on finalizing the "assassination record" definition guidance.

A copy of the official meeting notice, as published in the Federal Register, is attached for your information. As noted above, the order of presentations is likely to vary from the notice.

III. Witnesses

The witnesses from whom the Board will hear were chosen because all of them have: published at least one book on the assassination, are from the greater Boston area, and are able to testify on different aspects of the assassination. Copies of the witnesses' written testimony are attached.

Philip H. Melanson; Political Science Professor at the University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth and the author of Spy Saga: Lee Harvey Oswald and U.S. Intelligence, published in 1990. Melanson concluded in Spy Saga that Oswald was an agent of U.S. intelligence and the assassination was organized by U.S. intelligence agents. He will offer suggestions on where to find additional records on Oswald.

Professor Melanson has also investigated and written books on the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King. He uses this experience in his testimony to "offer the Review Board some suggestions concerning files on Oswald and some of the problems, pitfalls and opportunities in pursuing records held by various agencies."

Priscilla Johnson McMillan; History Professor at the Harvard Russian Research Center. She is the author of Marina and Lee, published in 1977. Following the assassination, McMillan interviewed Marina Oswald over a period of eight months. It was this nearly uninterrupted access to Marina which later led to her biography of Marina and Lee.

As a young journalist, McMillan interviewed Oswald in the Soviet Union in 1959. She had also worked briefly with John Kennedy in the 1950's as a member of Kennedy's Senate staff. McMillan is believed to be the only person who personally knew both Kennedy and Oswald.

The House Select Committee on Assassinations report addressed critic allegations that McMillan had worked for the CIA. The Committee concluded that she had not worked for the Agency. Some critics claim that recently released CIA documents indicate, at a minimum, a closer relationship between the Agency and McMillan than has previously been acknowledged.

McMillan points to several different potential locations for records relative to Oswald in her written testimony, in both the United States and the Soviet archives. She has indicated that in her oral testimony she will focus primarily on Russian records.

Professor McMillan has always been a firm believer that Oswald acted alone in killing President Kennedy.

Richard Trask; Author of Pictures of the Pain: Photography and the Assassination of President Kennedy, published in 1994. Trask has done an

exhaustive study on the history of the photographic record surrounding the assassination. He will discuss photographs and records that may be in the possession of the federal government, as well as important photographs possessed by private parties which he believes should become part of the collection.

Trask believes that there is no evidence of a conspiracy in the photographic record of the assassination.

Dick Russell; Author of the 1992 book The Man Who Knew Too Much. The book focuses on an alleged intelligence agent named Richard Case Nagell and his alleged knowledge of the assassination of President Kennedy.

Russell spent 17 years researching his book. Nagell claims to have been both a CIA operative and a KGB operative who came in contact with Oswald prior to the assassination. In perhaps the most startling claim in the book, Nagell told Russell that he was assigned by the Soviets to prevent the assassination of President Kennedy by killing Lee Harvey Oswald. Nagell claimed that Oswald was involved in a plot with Cuban exiles to kill Kennedy, with the hope that Castro would be blamed and the U.S. would invade Cuba in retaliation.

In his written testimony, Russell offers suggestions on where the Board could find records on Nagell in various federal governmental offices, as well as advice on locating other intelligence community records that he says should be part of the collection. He also asserts in his testimony that Nagell is still alive, living in the Los Angeles area, and probably willing to testify before the Board if subpoenaed.

Russell concludes his written testimony by stating that it was a "coup d'etat that overthrew JFK."

IV. Other Potential Witnesses

Two additional witnesses have requested that they be given an opportunity to testify at the public meeting. They have been advised that the Board's practice is to allow additional witnesses to testify if time permits. Because Oglesby has cancelled, there it is more likely that at least one of these witnesses will testify. The potential witnesses are:

George Michael Evica; Author of *And We Are All Mortal: New Evidence and Analysis in the Assassination of John F. Kennedy*, published in 1978.

Edgar Tatro; Assassination researcher who has assisted many authors. Tatro has taught a course on the assassination at Quincy College since 1976. He has provided us with his biography and a copy of the testimony he would present, if given the opportunity to testify.

Evica and Tatro are well-known in the research community and believe that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

V. Suggested Questions for Witnesses

Attached are some suggested questions for witnesses (prepared by Jeremy Gunn).

Philip Melanson

1. *In your testimony, you request that we search the files of several government agencies -- and that we include field office files as well as headquarters. This we intend to do. Can you, however, give us any more specific leads? For example: particular file numbers or particular cryptonyms?*

2. *We are finding that in some instances people now working for the agencies may be unaware of compartments, components, or task forces set up within the agencies more than thirty years ago. Do you know of any names of such compartments --*

other than the obvious ones -- where we might direct our search?

3. *In your testimony, you suggest that Army intelligence may have relevant files. Other than the file from the 112th at Fort Sam Houston, do you have any specific leads as to where relevant files are located?*
4. *Have you made FOIA requests to DIA, ONI, ACSI (G-2)? Do you have any leads?*
5. *In your testimony, you refer to a source who told you that there was CIA surveillance of Dr. Martin Luther King and that documents were filed in the Western Hemisphere Division. Do you have any comparable leads for assassination documents?*
6. *Many people have made suggestions about obtaining records such as the CIA recordings in Mexico City during the time of Oswald's visit. Do you have any specific leads that might help us find such records?*
7. *Have you had the opportunity to review files release by the CIA since your book was written? What further information or changes would you make based upon that review?*
8. *In your FOIA requests, did you come across any documents that may in fact help explain the circumstances surrounding the assassination although the documents may not -- at first glance*

-- look as if they have anything to do with the assassination?
Can you give examples?

Priscilla Johnson McMillan

Relationship with the CIA.

1. *As you are probably better aware than most, many assertions have been made with respect to your alleged connections with the Central Intelligence Agency. As you also know, the CIA has been releasing some documents that discuss your relationship with the Agency. Would you please describe the nature and circumstances of your contacts and affiliation with the CIA?¹*

¹Note: *McMillan submitted an affidavit to the HSCA in 1978 about her relationship with the Agency. In that affidavit she acknowledges that she had two knowing interviews with CIA employees: one [undated, but circa 1959] had to do with "pressures" she was receiving from the KGB. The second, in November, 1962, was "confined to my impressions of the Soviet literary and cultural climate." [CIA documents released under the JFK act, however, describe her as a "witting" informant and state that she "was granted a Covert Security Approval on 3 May 1963 to permit [DELETED -- APPX FOUR LETTERS] debriefing concerning her contacts*

2. After speaking with U.S. Embassy officials in 1959, did you ever again discuss Lee Harvey Oswald with anyone in the U.S. government? Did you talk with the CIA in 1963 or 1964 about Oswald? [If so, why did you not explain this earlier?] Did you ever talk to anyone in the CIA about Oswald and Cuba?

Oswald and Cuba

3. After Oswald announced that he wished to live in the Soviet Union on October 31, 1959 -- some of his intimates said that they were surprised by his decision to go to the USSR. They said that they thought he had had more of an interest in Cuba than in the USSR. [Note: Castro came to power in Havana on January 1, 1959.] Do you have any information on any interest that Oswald may have had in Cuba prior to the time he first contacted the Fair Play for Cuba Committee after his return?

Soviet/Russian/Byelorussian Records

4. In your experience, how forthcoming will the Russians and Byelorussians be with respect to Oswald records? Do you know individuals who might be able to facilitate the process?
5. What do you know about which KGB records were shown to

while in the USSR." [See also HSCA Report at 214.]

Norman Mailer? Do you know what records he was not shown? How did he obtain access to the records?

6. *In your written testimony you offered to provide the Board with the names of persons having experience with the Soviet archives. We would be very appreciative of your supplying those names.*

Marina Oswald Porter

7. *Does Marina Oswald Porter have any records that should be added to the JFK Collection?*

Priscilla McMillan's files

8. *Do you have any records that you believe should be added to the JFK Collection?*

Richard Trask

1. *Do you think that the Board has any responsibilities with respect to determining whether any photographs or films are forgeries?*
2. *If so, what photographs need to be studied/evaluated? Which films or photographs, if any, do you personally suspect might be forgeries?*
3. *How much would such testing cost?*

4. *Do you believe that the FBI seized any photographs or films that it has not made public? What is your evidence that there were such seizures? Other than asking the FBI the obvious questions about their possession of such photographs, what more can we do?*
5. *With regard to extant photographs, is it your sense that the search for such photos is more likely to be fruitful if we concentrate on private collections rather than governmental agencies?*
6. *What priorities do you recommend for us in terms of searching out additional photographs?*
7. *Whom do you know who would be helpful to us in searching for additional photographs?*

Dick Russell

Thank you for your suggestions about searching Mr. Nagell's government files under his surname and under his pseudonyms. We will look into those matters. We would like to focus now on some additional issues:

- 1. What records does Richard Case Nagell now have in his personal possession?*
- 2. To whom has he given copies of his records (for safekeeping)?*
- 3. Why did Nagell write to Hoover addressing him as Mr. John E. Hoover"? Isn't that a little odd?*
- 4. Did you ever attempt to obtain records from the Japanese National Police Agency? Any other Japanese sources?*
- 5. What American intelligence operations were in effect in Okinawa in the late 1950s and early 1960s? What do you know about them?*

6. Would Nagell testify only if he were granted immunity?
7. What records, if any, are you aware of that point to any MKULTRA (i.e., drug-related) testing or operations by the CIA outside of the United States (e.g., Mexico City and Japan)?
8. Do you know of any specific MKULTRA files that have not yet been released by the CIA?
9. Do you know if the FBI has any files pertaining to the CIA's MKULTRA program? Does the Army (ACSI, G-2, CIC) or Navy (ONI) have any files on MKULTRA? Did the CIA ever inform the military about MKULTRA?

To all witnesses:

1. Are you able to identify any *specific file numbers* for the agency

documents that you think we should pursue?

2. *Do you have any files yourself that you believe should be added to the JFK collection?*
3. *Do you know of any government officials who possess assassination records.*
4. *The Board will frequently be confronted with the case where someone says, for example, "the FBI has certain photographs [or documents]." We then can ask the FBI, which will say no, they do not have them and never had them. What *specific suggestions* do you have for the Board when such a response is made?*