

File: JFK Dallas Trip

## MEMORANDUM

RG 541

FYI

Box 10

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To: Jeremy Gunn  
 cc: Chris Barger; Doug Horne; David Marwell; Tom Samoluk  
 From: Tim Wray  
 Subject: Army Intelligence in Dallas

Here's what we know so far about Army intelligence in Dallas.

General Background:

- In the Army's 1963 organizational scheme, the 48 contiguous states were divided into six military regions, each of which was controlled by a "numbered army" headquarters. (These are also called the "U.S. armies" or the "continental U.S. armies," and are often abbreviated with the acronym "CONUSA's.") The states of Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico fell under 4th Army at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. Fourth Army, like the other CONUSA's, was a peacetime, administrative headquarters that supervised only those units and activities in its assigned area that were not immediately deployable for combat. For example, 4th Army supervised reserve units, but generally had no authority over the 2d Armored Division—a high-readiness combat unit stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. (Combat-ready units like the 2d Armored Division came under the authority of Strike Command, which controlled all such units throughout the U.S. regardless of their geographic location.) The Army uses essentially the same system today, though the titles are somewhat different.
- Each CONUSA had a military intelligence "group" directly assigned to it. The principal peacetime mission of these intelligence groups was security—70-85% of their man-hours were expended doing background investigations for personnel security clearances and making physical security inspections of defense plants. In addition, during the 1950's and 1960's the intelligence groups also performed domestic surveillance of "radical" or "subversive" groups from all parts of the political spectrum, from communists to civil rights organizations to the American Nazi Party. Though the whole issue of domestic surveillance by military intelligence agencies later caused a big uproar when Congress investigated it in the early 1970's (and ordered the armed forces to cease and desist), until the Vietnam War protests got going in earnest this had been a fairly minor activity in terms of resources and manpower. In fact, the few surviving records from the early '60's suggest that most of the domestic "intelligence" garnered by the CONUSA intelligence groups in this era came from TV and newspaper reports, or from information passed along by various law enforcement agencies, rather than

actual surveillance by military intelligence personnel.

- The 112th Intelligence Corps Group (generally written as the 112th INTC Group) was directly subordinate to 4th Army, and in fact its headquarters was co-located with 4th Army headquarters at Ft. Sam Houston. Until July, 1962, the 112th worked under the cover name "4th U.S. Army Operations Group."
- The 112th INTC Group had approximately 300 military personnel and 25 civilians assigned. In addition to the Group headquarters, these personnel manned seven regional offices: Region I (Fort Sam Houston), Region II (Dallas), Region III (El Paso), Region IV (Houston), Region V (New Orleans), Region VI (Little Rock), and Region VII (Oklahoma City). These regional offices frequently had smaller (often temporary) "resident" sub-offices in outlying areas as well. For example, the Dallas Regional Office supervised offices in Abilene, Amarillo, Texarkana, and Tyler, while the New Orleans Regional Office had residents in Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Leesville, and Shreveport.
- The 112th's personnel total does not include members of the smaller 316th INTC Detachment, which was transferred from Fort Jackson, South Carolina to Fort Sam Houston and attached to the 112th INTC Group in December, 1962. This transfer and attachment was essentially a paper transaction: when the 316th was switched to Fort Sam Houston, no people or equipment moved with it. Rather, on the date its transfer became effective it was created from scratch at Fort Sam Houston by the simple expedient of officially designating some of the troops from the 112th's Region I office as members of the 316th INTC Detachment. (The 112th's Region I commander was temporarily made the commander of the 316th INTC Detachment as an additional duty.) While this may seem silly on the surface, the longterm beneficial effect of this transfer/attachment was that it boosted the pool of "authorized" military intelligence personnel spaces at Fort Sam Houston, eventually easing the workload there as new replacements arrived to fill the vacancies. Unit records also indicate that officers were freely shifted back and forth between the 112th INTC Group and the 316th INTC Detachment to fill essential positions, suggesting that the two units were really a single functional entity. *[The actual division of labor between the 112th INTC Group's headquarters, the 112th's Region I office, and the attached 316th INTC Detachment—all of which were located together at Fort Sam Houston—is unclear. Personnel from the 316th Detachment apparently shouldered part of Region I's workload, and 316th actions are reported in Region I's section in the 112th INTC Group's unit history; on the other hand, personnel from the 316th are not listed on the roster of individuals assigned to the 112th appended to the unit history. Thus, the extent to which the 316th INTC Detachment had missions or projects separate from those carried out by Region I remains unclear at present, as is whether or not personnel from the 316th ever undertook tasks in the 112th's other regions.]*
- Like the intelligence groups of the other CONUSA's, the 112th INTC Group engaged in domestic surveillance in the early 1960's. Region V (Louisiana) was the most heavily involved, though the unit history for 1962-3 says that Region II (Dallas) also carried out



"activities in the field of CONUS intelligence includ[ing] coverage of anti-Castro activities, minor racial problems and Right Wing groups through public media and close liaison with other agencies." *[This unit history, now declassified by DOD, was part of the HSCA security-classified files. I found a duplicate in the classified military records holdings at NARA.] This is presumably how Lee Harvey Oswald's actions in New Orleans brought him to the attention of the 112th INTC Group.*

- Due to their domestic surveillance activities, each of the CONUSA intelligence groups maintained a close working relationship with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. *[We have so far located several documents in the microfilm files that document this cooperation. Most are "spot reports" of actual or impending civil rights disturbances sent in to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence in Washington during 1963 by various CONUSA's that cite information developed by their assigned INTC group or received by INTC agents from law enforcement agencies, including the FBI. We have thus far been unable to find any other domestic surveillance records; this is not surprising, as the military services were ordered in the early 1970's to destroy all their domestic surveillance records when Congress made them stop doing it. This wholesale destruction of records is reportedly what caused Oswald's file to be destroyed.]* In particular, spot reports from 4th Army G2 document a regular, close working relationship between the 112th INTC Group and local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, ATF and INS. These records, however, show no regular collaboration with the Secret Service.

#### Assassination Issues.

- Colonel Robert E. Jones, who joined the 112th INTC Group's headquarters in the summer of 1963, told the HSCA that the Group was involved in presidential security activities on November 22, 1963, and that it had "between eight and twelve" plainclothes agents in Dealey Plaza. Jones, however, cites no firsthand knowledge of the planning or execution of this, and implies throughout his testimony that his memory is based primarily on various records and reports that he saw at the time. *[Jones told the HSCA that he had been "operations officer for the 112 MI Group and. . . served as the operations officer from June, 1963 until 1 January 1965." The 112th's unit history for 1962-3 says that then-Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Jones became the Group S2 (intelligence staff officer) in August, 1963, and that the Group S3 (operations officer) at that time was actually Lieutenant Colonel Stanley W. Greer. This disparity is potentially significant because it bears on whether Jones knew what he was talking about: the S3, who oversaw Group plans, operations and training, would be much more knowledgeable of the 112th's activities than the S2, whose principal function was to read and file the intelligence reports submitted by the regional offices and to prepare summary reports for higher headquarters.]*

- The 112th's unit history for 1962-3 says nothing about it providing security for the President in Dallas or anywhere else, and in fact mentions the assassination only to note that the Dallas Regional commander told the members of his office that "although



personnel of Region II had no official role to play in the investigation [which presumably was still ongoing at the time the report was prepared at the end of 1963], they would support any reasonable request within the Region's capability."

*note*

- Dennis Quinn searched Secret Service trip surveys [after action reports] to ascertain the extent to which military personnel were ever used to provide presidential security. Though the Secret Service made extensive use of local law enforcement agencies wherever the President went, it appears that military personnel provided security only when Air Force One was landing at a military base or when the President was visiting a base or installation. In such cases, military personnel were included in Secret Service security arrangements while he was on military property. *[As near as we can determine, there was only one occasion where military personnel were used when the President was not on a military base or property. During a 1962 visit to Pueblo, Colorado, military police from Fort Carson and some personnel from the Colorado Air National Guard augmented local law enforcement officers and the Colorado State Highway Patrol. All were apparently in uniform and not in plain clothes.]* In an ARRB interview, the former director of protective research for the Secret Service, Robert Bouck, stated that the only time he recalled military personnel being used for presidential security was in World War II.

*Shrum Prouty's claims*

- In his book JFK: The CIA, Vietnam and the Plot to Assassinate John F. Kennedy, L. Fletcher Prouty claims that, while stationed at the Pentagon in the early 1960's, he "worked with military presidential protection units." (Prouty does not specify what these units are, but the subsequent passages suggest that he is talking about military intelligence units.) He goes on to suggest that such units were "specially trained in protection" duties, and cites a personal phone call he later made to "a member of that army unit" who told him that the commander of the "316th Field Detachment of the 112th Military Intelligence Group" was mysteriously told to "stand down" and not provide any assistance to the Secret Service in Dallas even after that commander volunteered his unit's services because it "had records on Lee Harvey Oswald before November 22" and "knew Dallas was dangerous." (This incident is also portrayed in Oliver Stone's film JFK.) The commander of the 316th INTC Group in November, 1963, was Lieutenant Colonel Rudolph M. Reich, who had assumed that position in July, 1963 after previously serving as the 112th INTC Group's S3. *[It's difficult to check the factual basis for Prouty's story. As explained above—and Prouty's assertions to the contrary notwithstanding—it appears that military collaboration with the Secret Service was, in fact, extremely limited, and that there certainly were no such things as "military presidential protection units" per se. While Prouty says that he personally received his information from an unidentified unit member (and has, according to Oliver Stone, saved his notes from that conversation), Prouty also cites an "associate" as a source for his statement that Reich's offer of assistance was turned down. Our best bet is that interviews with former members of the 112th and 316th will shed some light on this. We should probably interview Prouty as well although, because his version seems to be based mostly on hearsay, I don't attach as much importance to this as I do the firsthand recollections of actual witnesses.]*



- James Powell, who was a Sergeant (E5) assigned to the 112th's Dallas Regional office in 1963, told me in an interview that, individually, military intelligence agents generally had no training in protective security and that he recalls no mention whatsoever of the 112th having any kind of protective mission on November 22, 1963. Powell says that, to the best of his knowledge, he was the only member of the 112th in the vicinity of Dealey Plaza on that date, and he was there only because he'd asked for the day off in order to see the motorcade. Other elements of Powell's story seem to substantiate this: he photographed the President's plane landing at Love Field, and later hurried downtown where he watched (and photographed) the motorcade from a vantage point approximately one block from Dealey Plaza. (Powell's celebrated photo of the upper floors of the School Book Depository was taken after he heard the shots, ran to Dealey Plaza to see what was going on, and observed several people on the street pointing up at the TBSD.) Powell's subsequent phone call to the Dallas Regional office (located in the Rio Grande building) from inside the TBSD was apparently the first information the 112th had of the shooting; and, when he was later detained inside the TBSD, he had to again call the Regional office to get someone to come down and verify his identity in order to be released. *At a minimum, these actions indicate that Powell himself was not "stationed" in Dealey Plaza, and further suggest that the 112th was not wired-in to what was going on in Dealey either before or after the shooting.*

- FBI agent James Hosty says that he met with Warrant Officer (WO1) Edward J. Coyle, another agent from the 112th, at the office of ATF agent Jack Ellsworth just before the assassination on November 22, 1963. Hosty remembers that he, Coyle and Ellsworth all remarked over the fact that neither the FBI, the ATF, nor the 112th INTC Group was assisting the Secret Service with presidential security, and recalls Coyle as saying, "You know, it's a damn shame, but by federal law the Army can't provide any assistance to the Secret Service." According to a roster given us by Powell, Coyle was the resident agent in the Abilene sub-office and therefore apparently did not work out of the Rio Grande Building in Dallas. Nevertheless, in their book Oswald Talked, Ray and Mary LaFontaine assert that Coyle was "the army's liaison for presidential protection" on November 22, citing Col. Jones' testimony to the HSCA. A careful review of Jones' HSCA transcript shows that the LaFontaine citation is incorrect: Jones, in describing Coyle's regular duties, said they involved "contacts and liaisons" with various agencies in the Dallas area, but said nothing about Coyle being responsible for presidential security or liaison with the Secret Service. This is, however, entirely consistent with Hosty's account, which says the purpose of the meeting between Hosty, Ellsworth and Coyle was to discuss a case involving the theft of some Army weapons possibly involving a rightwing organization. *[We have been unable to locate Coyle or any of his records, though we're still trying. To my knowledge, no researcher has ever found or interviewed Coyle either.]*

- While it has no apparent connection to the assassination, in late 1963 a few members of the 112th INTC Group apparently were detailed to do polygraph tests and interviews of some Cubans who were former members of the 2506th Brigade trained for the Bay of



Pigs. These individuals had been commissioned in the U.S. armed forces under the "Cuban Volunteer Inductee Training Program" and were receiving English language training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

- Also anecdotal: in 1956 or 1957, more than a dozen members of the 112th were sent to Little Rock when President Eisenhower sent in federal troops to assure the integration of its public schools. While there, these individuals came under the command of Major General Edwin Walker.

#### What We're Doing:

- The key questions to be answered about Army intelligence in Dallas are:

1. Did either the 112th INTC Group or the 316th INTC Detachment have on-duty plainclothes agents in Dealey Plaza (as Jones says) and, if so, when/why/how was this arranged? What reports or records were prepared from this? *[Except for the report written by Powell describing his experiences on November 22, 1963, there are no other known reports from Army intelligence agents concerning the assassination; similarly, Secret Service and FBI records show no interviews with "eyewitness" Army intelligence personnel after the assassination except for Powell.]*

2. If not, did any responsible officers from the 112th INTC Group, including the attached 316th INTC Detachment, volunteer to provide protection? If so, was this offer (as Prouty says) specifically refused by the Secret Service?

3. Were members of the 112th or the 316th trained to perform protective tasks, and did they ever provide protection during any other presidential visits to 4th Army's area of responsibility? *[We will look for similar information regarding other INTC groups as well.]*

4. To what extent, if any, did personnel from the 112th or the 316th assist in investigating the assassination?

5. Were the 112th INTC Group or the 316th INTC Detachment engaged in any other activities that might be related to the assassination or its aftermath?

6. What was Colonel Robert E. Jones' duty assignment in November 1963?

7. What was the actual, day-to-day division of labor between the 112th INTC Group and the attached 316th INTC Detachment?

- I've given the 112th INTC Group Special Project to Chris Barger with the expectation that we'll be able to develop information on all these questions. While we're still looking for additional files or documents, I think our most promising line of inquiry



from this point on will be to locate and interview former members of the 112th INTC Group, especially those from the Dallas and New Orleans offices, plus individuals from the 316th INTC Detachment. We've given a big list of names to Dave Montague, and he's already gotten a couple of minor hits and sent out letters. We likewise highlighted our desire to talk to former members of the 112th, as well as those from the Navy ONI and Air Force OSI offices, in our interview with reporter Linda Kozaryn last week. (We hope her story will run in various military papers and magazines, encouraging people to contact us.)

- I have arranged to see James Powell again in California on Friday, and I intend to clear up a few loose ends from my previous interview with him. More importantly, he has told me on the phone he "has no problem" with turning over his original photo slides to me for placement at NARA. I hope to come back from California with slides in hand.
- What more can we do? Frankly, I can't think of much except possibly for Dave Montague, Chris Barger and I to go to St. Louis to try to locate service records from 112th/316th members, etc. (So far St. Louis hasn't sent us much.) We've tentatively discussed the desirability of doing this sometime in July.