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Select Committee on Assassinations

U.S. House of Representatives

3341 HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING, ANNEX 2

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

(202) 225-4624

December 13, 1976

Kevin

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Sprague
FROM: Al Lewis (with Kevin Walsh)
SUBJECT: Kennedy

The subject of this memorandum deals with our effort to obtain information concerning the so-called "secret" hearings of the Senate Judiciary Committee chaired by Senator Eastland of Mississippi which supposedly occurred in 1971 at which the evidence was adduced concerning their investigation of the two Kennedy assassinations. The first inkling of the fact that such hearings were held is found in a book by Peter Noyes entitled: Legacy of Doubt on page 17. on page 16 of the same book there is a collateral reference to a contact with Senator Murphy who evidently corroborated the fact that there were such hearings.

Approximately, two to three weeks ago, Kevin Walsh of our Research staff, in an effort to track down the basis for this suggestion, called Peter Noyes in California. Noyes was cooperative and indicated that the facts in his book had been substantiated. Kevin traced former Senator Murphy to his present office in Washington, and suggested that Kevin talk to him and arrange a time when we might confer further. On December 8, Kevin talked to Murphy who was somewhat vague and did not verify the facts of Noyes' book.

Subsequently, on December 8, Walsh and I together called Noyes at his studio in San Diego, California (KFMB: 714-233-3044) at approximately 3:00 in the afternoon. Noyes is currently news director of this station.

At the outset, Noyes maintained that the remarks of Murphy occurred during his campaign for reelection against Senator Tunney in 1970 and were carried by the Los Angeles Times Wire Services. He believed that the press notices were in his files, but in any event, we could secure them from the Times.

Moreover, he indicated that John Howard who prosecuted Sirhan Sirhan for the assassination of Robert Kennedy was present when one of Murphy's aides told Noyes of the secret hearings.

In the course of the conversation, Noyes rambled a bit making several points. He mentioned that a French television crew had recently contacted him to discuss the case (presumably both Kennedy assassinations) and that he had declined to do so. Throughout the conversation he indicated some hesitation and nervousness about the book and our returning to the assassination investigation. Nevertheless, he did agree to cooperate.

Moreover, he made some sketchy reference to Nelson Bunker Hunt, the son, of H.L. Hunt, spreading around a lot of money on the West Coast through a San Marino real estate broker whom he identified as a Mr. Cies. He indicated that we could get more specific information on this from a newspaper reporter for the Dallas Morning News named Earl Golz who is extremely knowledgeable and is apparently investigating the connection with James Braden. There was some passing reference to Mike Maddigan (counsel to the Senate Committee on Intelligence and an aide to Senator Baker) who might have had some information about the Bunker-Hunt connection.

Noyes also talked about receiving a threatening letter from someone, several years ago after publication of his book which was typed on the stationery of Senator Eastland. He indicated that he had written to Eastland who told him that he would look into the matter, but never heard anything further.

One interesting note is that Noyes said that he received a "social call" from a CIA contact who stopped to see him to discuss the (Braden) situation and indicated that the latter had been a runner for the Bank of Finance in Geneva. It is ironic that the contact of the CIA agent apparently occurred immediately after Kevin Walsh had talked to Noyes the first time since Noyes refused to reveal the name of the CIA agent, but I think I can press him on this in the future.

He was most concerned about establishing his credibility with us and indicated that he had recently received the Peabody award for investigative reporting on a Los Angeles story. Unfortunately, he believed that the notoriety which his book attained cost him his job as news director of the Los Angeles station; however, he is now news director for the CBS affiliate in San Diego.

We concluded the call on the note that we would get back to Noyes at a subsequent time and appreciated his cooperation. He told us that he would review his records and attempt to contact John Howard to verify the information he had given us.

After the conversation, I asked Kevin Walsh to review his notes as to his prior conversation with Noyes. Walsh advised that he called Noyes in San Diego at the same number on 11-3-76 at 9:30 p.m.. The facts were consistent with our telephone call of yesterday, and in addition, Noyes stated: 1) Braden is confirmed now to be a runner for the Bank of Finance in Geneva; 2) He was recently ousted from the La Costa country club as a result of the bad reputation he had earned; 3) He is now likely residing on Peachtree Street in Atlanta. For the sake of completeness of this report, we attach the Braden documentation from the Warren Commission.

In addition Walsh and Donovan Gay wish to bring your attention to some inconsistencies concerning the peculiar story of the intercepted telephone call in the Oxnard-Camarillo area near Los Angeles immediately prior to the assassination of President Kennedy. I attach their memos and documentation.

Later, On December 8, Noyes called the office and spoke with Kevin. He indicated that he had reached John Howard who is now "down and out" and has been drinking heavily. Noyes indicates that he has lost his memory and cannot verify the conversation that was reported in the book. He again spoke of Nelson Bunker Hunt and informed Kevin of the latter's ties to the American Volunteers Group, which has ties to the CIA in Europe. Supplementing the earlier call he added that Maddigan had claimed knowledge of an IRS investigation of the Hunt/West Coast expenditures through Cies (who he said was a Bircher). He emphasized that Earl Golz has been working on this and has much information.

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In addition to Murphy, we intend to contact several others in an effort to acquire additional information concerning the possibility of secret hearings. They are Francis Rosenburg, who was the Chief Counsel for the Senate Judiciary Committee at 224-5225, J. Sourwine, who worked for Eastland as Chief Counsel and now is with the Senate Appropriations Committee and Bud Fensterwald at 223-8440. Further, I have been talking with an old friend, Dave Newhall, who is Senator Schweiker's Administrative Assistant, who has promised complete cooperation and I intend to talk to him about what knowledge he might have of the situation. We intend to contact John Howard who's office according to the telephone directory is in Burbank at 213-846-0113.

*NO, now in Nevada
 Reno, 2-1977
 Three to two
 Sourwin.*

At 1:45 today Kevin received another call from Peter Noyes who indicated that he had found his notes and letters and that he indicated the dates of the secret hearings were either Tuesday, September 22, 1970 or Wednesday, September 23, 1970. His recollection was that on September 19 or 20 of 1970 while at the D.A.'s office at Los Angeles, a press aide to Senator Murphy (who's name he does not recall) indicated that hearings were to be held. (this was said in the presence of John Howard) Noyes said that he had confirmed this and fixed the date with Larry Speaks who was an aide to Senator Eastland. He asks that we protect his cover if and when we talk to Larry Speaks.

Noyes made mention of having received a threatening note on the stationary of Senator Eastland. A copy of this was supplied, with some reluctance on his part, and contrary to his description, it is a rambling, non-threatening note on U.S. Senate Stationary. (Copy attached).

Finally, Noyes advised that Playboy Magazine has approached himself, Earl Golz and Dick Russell in an effort to assemble an investigative team to go after Nelson Bunker Hunt. He said he declined the offer, as did Golz and Russell.