

Dear Paul,

3/28/78

I had hardly written you to tell you what I plan doing with Epsteinker/Nosenko when events starting taking control and then Jim in effect laid down some law about what I must do and by when. So I'm not going to be able to dictate comments on either your excellent notes of various kinds or the book itself. I did annotate the book as I read it and I've read all but some of the appendix.

Your notes are so more than adequate as a general and specific criticism they serve most purposes. They are not angled, of course, for use in FOIA litigation or in the depositions Jim hopes to take. But I did make FOI notes as I read and when the time comes can pick these up by flipping the book's pages.

In your draft of questions for Epstein, which you can always send by mail and then report he refused to answer, I suggest that in any reformulation you might want to include more on the assistance and support he had, including finances and direction.

You might also want to seek to get his opinion on the professionalism of the so-called legends of Nosenko and Oswald. Was the KGB no more professional than he represents? Like it could not send a fake telegram? Nosenko could not remember what he knew he'd be asked, or have a good story prepared?

I'd also be specific on what he obtained under FOIA and from whom. He fudges on this in more ways than you indicate (you can't indicate everything, of course). And from what agency, in response to requests of what dates?

The conflicts in the various accounts is not limited to "the sequence of these key events," your G. It extends to so-called fact, as when LHO departed England.

(You'll have a great time with the "factual" appendix, which is not an appendix but it more text selected out for notes not called notes to dignify them.)

I had a long talk with George Lardner this morning. I did not intend it but it happened when I told him I'd forgotten to mail him a letter of caution I'd written and mislaid. In the course of it he referred to your notes and his appreciation of them. What I did not immediately realize is that you had not sent him notes like these. He asked for them. I told him I was willing to save him time by providing them but that you had an article you had written and I preferred that he phone and ask your okay.

If you have no conflict I think you would do well to continue to send them to him. He is being pushed to complete the review and the book is acceptable to the prejudiced and the non subject-expert. George is both, despite his recent and past reportings.

If on the other hand you do not want him and/or other reporters to know about any of the notes, as distinguished from the article or review, please let me know this. I have my own observations and can limit myself to them. But your citation of the diary check for example is something for which I did not take time. I just assume that Epstein lies, a sage assumption and true on everything I've checked.

You refer to and quote various promos, ads and other sources, besides the book, RD and NY mag. These Jim should have for the litigation and it would be better if I also do. I can copy for him but if you send to him please let me know. Because we want to have Howard in a position to help Jim him also. Either way, your preference, but please let me know.

Please also let me know if you want copies of the records I'm expecting to get re all of this under new FOIA requests. These would be for you, not to use I regard as irresponsible. If they are voluminous I'll have to have the copying done in Washington, which is cheaper than using my own machine. And faster. I've been promised some compliance by the FBI!

Despite your datings of 3/21 and 23 not received until today. Original cancellation Oakland, xtra one Baltimore, yesterday. Did you mail at Oakland? Envelope enclosed.

Hastily,

[DRAFT - Not in final form or final order. Refer also to my notes on the book.]

ORIGIN OF BOOK - CHRONOLOGY:

(1) Please put the following events in order, with dates:

- (A) Your decision to do a book on Oswald
- (B) Your interest in the question of the reason for Oswald's defection as central
- (C) Your interest in Oswald's time in Japan
- (D) Your first contact with the Reader's Digest
[RD, 3/78 p. 14, says that Epstein agreed to do their project in October 1975]
- (E) Your first review of the documents in the Archives
- (F) Your first contact with Nosenko, and your first interest in him
- (G) Your first interest in, and contact with, Angleton
[See my notes on the apparent conflicts between the Digest and NY and the book on the sequence of these key events. The Digest says that after EJE started in on the documents, he began to make contact with former intelligence people. The book says he started his research with Nosenko. NY says the CIA put him on to Nosenko, presumably because they heard he was doing a book on Oswald, and that JJA talked to him because he had gotten the 'false' story from Nosenko.]

[Other possibly useful dates:]

January 1976: Barron recommends he talk to Thomas Fox, DIA (AOF, p. 318)

Feb. 16 & 25, 1976: EJE in Southern California; researcher calls PLH; interest in Russian "or even American" intelligence.

December 1976: RD editor assigned to find Oswald's fellow Marines (RD 14-5)

Spring 1976: First interview with DeMohrenschildt

Comment: there's more here than meets the eye.

SOURCES:

NOSENKO:

(2) What did Nosenko say during your 4-hour interview?

(3) At that time, were you aware of Dan Schorr's report (CBS News, approx. 5/11/75; Wash. Post/S.F. Chronicle, 5/12/75) that McCone had told him "that his counterintelligence officers suspected Nosenko might be a plant to exonerate the Soviets of conspiracy" but that McCone "now says that Nosenko's bona fides 'subsequently were proven'."? If not, when did you learn that doubts about Nosenko had been made public?

(4) Your book reports that Hoover initially refused to ask Nosenko the 44 questions. When were those questions first asked? When did the CIA take control of Nosenko (i.e., so that they did not have to clear the questions with Hoover)? Did non-Angleton people in the CIA at any time refuse to ask him those questions? [The book is quite sneaky on this; the 44 questions are brought up only to prove Hoover's reluctance to 'break' Nosenko, and then more or less forgotten, as if Nosenko had not returned to CIA custody rather soon.]

(5) What were Nosenko's answers to the 44 questions the first time the CIA asked them? The last time? When you asked them, if you did? (If you didn't, why not? Were you aware of them at the time?)

(6) Were the 44 questions ever given to the Warren Commission? Was the Commission ever asked to overrule Hoover on that matter?

(7) In what document do the 44 questions appear? [They looked sort of familiar to me, but I haven't found them in the CIA's LHO file. Obviously Epstein did get some Nosenko documents not in that file.]

OTHER:

(8) Did Angleton, Helms, Sullivan, and other former government people place any restrictions on your use of what they told you?

(9) Did any individual or agency have the right to review your book before

publication? (If so, were any changes required?)

(10) Besides the U-2, Nosenko's defection, and the Helms-Warren meeting, what did Helms tell you that might be relevant to the assassination? Specifically, did you ask him about "the whole Bay of Pigs thing"? If not, why not?

* (11) In "Agency of Fear" (p. 9), you persuasively explained why you felt that you had to reveal your sources, and comment critically on them. What is different about "Legend"?

(12) Specifically, why did you provide non-specific references to the 26 volumes (e.g., volume number alone), and in many cases omit references completely?

* (13) Are you concerned about the possibility that you were used by Angleton and others to present a one-sided picture of a complex story?

* (14) What or who gave you the idea of a graphological analysis of some of Oswald's writings? Did anyone evaluate the scientific validity of such methods for you? Are you aware of CIA document 1013-406, which reveals that an unnamed CIA staff employee suggested (on or around December 23, 1966) a graphological assessment of Oswald's handwriting. Do you know who made that suggestion (which was rejected at the time)?

* (15) What is the source for your statement that Hoover deliberately played down the possibility of a KGB connection for the purpose of avoiding additional criticism of his bureau? Did you talk to Sullivan about this?

(16) Are you aware of any documents in the recent FBI release which substantiate this view?

(17) Are you aware the the FBI's Summary Report not only explained that the FBI's investigation of Oswald on his return was for the purpose of learning if he had been recruited by the KGB, but that Hoover volunteered information that Oswald considered the money he had received from the Russian government as payment for his denunciation of the U.S.?

(18) Do you ever intend to make your interview transcripts available?

* (19) Have you appeared, or do you expect to appear, before the House Select Committee on Assassinations and/or the Senate Intelligence Committee?

(20) Why did you take credit for many documents released under the FOIA when in fact they were previously obtained as a result of the requests of other researchers?

(21) For example, how did you learn of the Coleman-Slawson memo? Did you ever file a FOIA request for it? If so, when?

(22) What documents on Oswald or the JFK case (as opposed to Nosenko) were released as a result of your FOIA requests?

(23) Did you really expect the CIA to answer the questions in your Appendix D, since it is obvious that they are not requests for records, as required by the FOIA?

(24) Specifically, why were not some of those questions rephrased in the form of requests for records (e.g., all records relating to comments by Moore on Oswald, or all records relating to intercepted mail)? [I have a request for the mail-interception records pending (since June 1976).]

(25) How did you learn what the CIA told the Rockefeller Commission about their Mexico City cameras? [Page 327, note 8. I think the testimony, and some of the details in this note, have not been made public.]

* (26) What is your source for the claim that Angleton's people had intercepted Oswald's 11/26/59 letter to his brother (p. 103), a later letter mentioning that Powers has been seen in Moscow (~~xxx169~~), and that they had the return address of a letter to Marina from Ella Sobleva (p. 169)? [The source on the Powers letter is New York, 2/27/78, p. 30.] How come nobody knew about these interceptions before?

(27) Where did you get the [readily disprovable] idea that JFK's car was accelerating sharply at frame 313? [P. 332]

(28) At the time you sent question 17 to the CIA (asking if they had intercepted any letters from Oswald), were you aware that (as you have stated; see #26) that Angleton's people had intercepted such letters? If so, why did you ask that question?

(29) Are you aware that the CIA has at least once denied intercepting any

of the letters Oswald wrote? What do you make of this lack of candor?

(30) Incidentally, are you aware of the Hoch memo on the CIA and the Warren Commission?

(31) You referred to getting various CIA traces. Do you mean they were done for you, or that they were in the general release of documents which you got?

(32) Did you actually see the Oswald photo DeMohrenschildt gave you permission to see? [Sylvia Meagher says the photo is published in Oltmans' Dutch book.] Who did the handwriting analysis you referred to?

(33) Where is Voloshin in Oswald's address book? [I can't find it! CD 680 includes a trace on Voloshin because he signed the Lumumba letter, CE 72, but there is no reference to an address book entry.]

THE LEGEND:

(34) Is it plausible to you that someone living a KGB legend would be allowed to take back photos of his high life in Minsk, that he would write "microdots" in his notebook, etc?

* (35) Why do you refer to Oswald's diary reference to McVickar as an anachronism, implying that you had discovered a flaw in the "legend," when it is quite obvious from the language of the diary itself that it was being written after the events described - that is, evidently no attempt was made to pass the diary off as contemporaneous? [P. 109-10; NY 3/6 p. 56; cf. CE 24 (16H96)]

(36) Why didn't you give citations to that evidence, or reproduce that diary entry?

(37) Do you consider questions like these part of a CIA campaign to make your research appear slipshod? (NY 2/27, p. 37)

(38) If you were concerned about such a campaign, why didn't you take greater pains to clean up your book? Are you now aware, for example, that Marina's alleged statement, as discussed on p. 13, was discussed in the Warren Commission session of 1/21/64, not 1/27, and that the transcript as released refers to a suggestion that "he" [LHO] rather than "she" [Marina] might have been a Soviet agent?

(39) If Voloshin was sinister, why would he sign what is essentially a form letter to Oswald, over someone else's typed name? Anyhow, why didn't you give a citation to that letter [CE 72]?

OSWALD AND U.S. INTELLIGENCE:

* (40) Do you have any suspicions in this area which were left out of the book? [If so, why?]

(41) Why do you overemphasize the CIA connections of Richard Snyder, and the government connections of Priscilla Johnson (who tends to get upset at such charges), while minimizing the intelligence angles in the cases of Dr. Davison & Spas T. Raikin?

(42) How do you interpret the evident lack of concern shown by the Angleton people about the intercepted letters? Did you ask Angleton if that information was passed on to the FBI? Was he concerned about the reference to Powers at the time?

* (43) What do you really think of the missing investigation after Oswald's defection?

(44) You wonder about the possible debriefing of Webster. Are you aware that there are references in the CIA Oswald traces to information apparently obtained from Webster, which seems to establish that he was debriefed?

(45) Did Angleton and Helms get concerned about the U-2 angle in 1963-4? Was the Warren Commission told?

(46) What justifies putting 'from the Soviets' at the end of the quote from the Gale memo? [See my notes on p. 14, on p. 7 supra.]

(47) Did you find out anything about the CIA sending Oswald to the Monterey Language School? [This was reported, pre-publication, in New Times.]

(48) Do you now suspect that Oswald was ever a U.S. intelligence agent?

THE WAR OF THE MOLES:

(49) As far as you know, does Angleton have a specific suspect in mind as the KGB's CIA mole?

(50) Do you know who that suspect is?

(51) Why did you focus on the role of Desmond Fitzgerald in the Cubela matter? Why, for example, did you imply that it was just his decision to present himself as an emissary of Robert Kennedy? Did you ask Helms about his part in that decision (as documented in the Schweiker Report)? Overall, how do you evaluate Fitzgerald's role?

* (52) Honestly now, isn't Angleton a bit odd?

(53) Are you aware of Angleton's recent charges (e.g., against the Church Committee) made in his role as chairman of the Intelligence and Security Fund?

(54) You suggest that the Angleton faction would have wanted drastic action against Nosenko, such as deporting him back to the Soviet Bloc. Don't you think something a little more drastic would have been done? [I think Epstein was playing games here. If Nosenko was genuine, returning him would have been equivalent to a death sentence. My recollection of the Copeland book is that double agents like that frequently come up with heart attacks.]

ODDS AND ENDS:

* (55) "What did a high intelligence official learn, soon after Oswald arrived in the Soviet Union, that caused him to tell Epstein: 'It blew me out of my chair!'" [This is from a pre-publication blurb, and I don't recall seeing it in the book.]

(56) Is David Frost still doing a four-part TV docudrama? [Also from the publisher's blurb.]

(57) What experience does Jones Harris have that you found of enormous benefit concerning Oswald in Japan? [P. xv]

* (58) Were you the source of the third article in New York on the War of the Moles? [3/13, about the recent capture of a top US spy in Russia.]

[These questions are pretty much off the top of my head; refer also to my notes and the review Russ Statler and I have done.]

[Obviously there are many more questions that could be asked. Not yet having seen Epstein on TV, I have no idea how he actually responds to questions. It might be useful for us to have a concise and pointed list of questions to share. I'm willing to accept the risk that Epstein will consider me a CIA agent.]