

Penkovsky

Hoch memo 10/21/69 on Dr. Alexis H. Davison 10/30/69

CD87:569- Do we have Kelley's MT 12/9/63. If not, should we assume it contains nothing but the words from the notebook?

Wrong address- so typical of LHO. He'd put down what would be close should he go there, sometimes non-existing addresses, sometimes the wrong one, but close.

p. 1, last par: I wonder how typical it is of US embassies that the military supply the doctor who had the "duty to examine all persons coming to the USA", especially a doctor subsequently involved in an espionage scandal? The State Dept is not without funds for the normal operation of the embassies. Medical should qualify as normal.

p. 2, par 2: It is simply beyond belief that anyone in the US Moscow Embassy examined either a defector or that rarity, the wife he was getting out of the USSR, without recollection of it. It is even less likely that Davison gave his mother's address to those he did not recall, especially an elderly, widowed mother. Security-conscious as everyone in the US government was in those days, the last thing anyone in the USEmb Moscow would be expected to do is fraternize with a genuine defector. His doing this marks him the biggest fool in the military or a man who knew what was not public. How could he expect a man so destitute the government was advancing the cost of his travel home, a man entirely without skill or trade, to be in Atlanta? It was not on any path to Texas, therefore, unless a fool, he must have had reason to expect Oswald might, on some occasion, be in the area, or this is a misrepresentation of what he said.

Nowhere in this report is Davison's address given, nor is the place of interview or manner (could it have been by phone, for example, as in other cases, where the realities had to be avoided, it was done?).

Rather interesting that Davison springs from people both of whom were part of what the USSR regards as invasions of its territory. This, together with his assignment and the absence of any suggestion of his/his mother's political beliefs, suggests he would have little difficulty with the security check. But does it suggest the type of upbringing that would lead him to send to his mother a Russian his own files showed was a member of Komsomol and whose uncle was an NKD official?

The mother's illness qualifies as one of the more convenient ones.

CD235:2 Because she saw the FBI in a very few days. For what purpose? To write another On-The-Ball*Wall report, a repetitious nothing, that her son had been embassy doctor and did examine those coming to the US. Harding is a surrogate Wall, as those of you who have done your own analysis of his reports or remember some of my writings may know. Example: interview with Bob Brown and other NSRP stuff, False Oswald materials; Cuban stuff. Only he uses more words than Wall.

CD337:4 is really exciting! And magical. If the FBI was, as Paul notes, trying to "locate and interview" Davison in New York, having already interviewed him in Atlanta, it either had reason to believe he was in New York or really had other purposes that it hides. This report does not say Davison was temporarily available at 431 Riverside Drive; it gives that as his address. What a fascinating address, of "students attending Columbia University"! A doctor not taking an advance degree but regularly employed a thousand miles away? Som the FBI had as Davison's address what could not have been his address. Paul's are all possible explanations, but another is the typical FBI non-taking of notes in which the passing of information, verbally, through too many minds, got it switched, the possibility most likely being that he could be reached ^{this address or the school}

It is also possible to speculate that this address has some significance that got lost in the FBI shuffling. Looking for Davison at 431 Riverside is something like the non-reason for speaking to Guy Banister, 531 Lafayette, about the people with whom he presumably had no connection at what is presented as a different address, 544 Camp St. It makes sense only if there is an invisible connection.

The two Captain Davisons, both at the same "advance" school, after their educations are completed, that is, their professional educations, bracketed with the politics of their background, likewise is fascinating as it is confusing. Whichever one of the brothers (the language permits arguing either) went to the Russian Institute after he became a captain, is this also not fascinating? Why should a doctor, if only one was, go to a political institute and then accept a "medical" assignment in the USSR? This is like asking Bartsch if the Cuban organization created by the CIA was anti-Castro.... Do not forget, there is no such thing as any military attache in any embassy, of any country, in any country, who does not have recognized intelligence functions. It is for this reason he exists. That is strange is the medical assignment of Alexis in Moscow.

If I were to make a guess, it would be that the FBI went to Columbia to get a rundown on what was really involved, not to "locate and interview" Alexis. But they did not dare make a record of their real purposes. They had to use a cover for their own records and from the Commission, whose lawyers should have seen through this transparency with no difficulty, if they had wanted to. This makes much more important and ever so much more likely to have significance that there was such an entry in LHO's notebook.

CD409:3 (they are carefully consigned to separate files by the over-thoughtful FBI) focuses more attention on the two previous FBI utilities. Is it possible they didn't think to ask the mother where her son was? No. They didn't want to interview him. When they had to, they did, like they interviewed Sam Newman, not to report what he told them, that Banister, personally, arranged with him for the CRC space. Paul's observations are sound. To them may be added the existence of a medical bureau in every city, had the FBI any reason not to ask the mother or the Secret Service. The two children cannot be an accidental error in this report. Harding knew better, and so did Davison. It is entirely unlikely that Oswald said he didn't know where he was going but it would be in the south. The State Department even alerted the Texas HEW of Oswald's rights should he fail to recall or invoke them-before he left or at least before he arrived. It is unlikely that Davison knew nothing about the case, as it is unlikely that Harding or his associate Rose didn't know what the School Brigade, Ft. Benning, Ga., was really doing-or what Brown was and had been-or that he didn't ask Brown why he had been silent to the government and talkative to others. With Alexis permanently located in Atlanta, employed there, either he has a wife and family (and a phone) or he hasn't. His report avoids that, as it avoids his address which is anything but normal FBI practice. There must be a reason. I have already suggested the possibility he is a bachelor and may, in fact, live with the widowed mother. I suggest if Jim can he check the Atlanta phone books and city directories for the past and present. Can it be believed that he would remember this rare thing, that for the one and only time he gave his mother's address to strangers, but recall no real reason and nothing about them, not even what they looked like, when both were so exceptional, a defecting defector who had told that some embassy he was going to give away military secrets and then bargained over the (no prosecution) conditions of his return, and a Russian woman her government was permitting to leave the country? None of this is credible, particularly in a man whose assigned was intelligence, as all military attaches are, most of all in the USSR. I find the out-of-character editorializing at Paul's opening modest; more than ~~reasonable~~ justified, and believe this should be followed carefully and thoroughly. I have met Wise (the letter) and offer to be the one to speak to him. He is, I believe, in Washington. I also suggest that we first get all we think we will be able to.... And I wonder why they waited two months to go back to Davison for

Gary, Paul The Davison entry in LHO's notebook 10/31/69

After writing you last night I took a look at this entry on 16H50. Then I got out the FBI transcription in which, in the past, I'd found interesting errors of various sorts (Like Cardes for Oswald's way of spelling Bartes), 2D205:685-b. There are interesting omissions and changes.

First of all, the identification of the name was added at a different time, with a different pen or pencil. The differences in shading and intensity are very clear.

Next, where the Commission has so thoughtfully put both the English and the alleged translation from the Russian, where Russian appears, in type, with each entry, here they have not. For the adjacent Russian there is Gomen Demka, followed by a ?. Where in the book the number 20244 follows, with three Russian characters, the translation follows it with "Business (phone?)."

Now, I have no idea whether Oswald organized the entries in this book in any way, with any significance, or whether in every case the entries are entirely haphazard. But I cannot fail to note that Mrs. Hal Davison is with his notations of the Dallas White Russians, and anti-Soviets all of a later period. He added them, of all the blank pages, facing Mrs. D.

The FBI's arrangement of this, on page 14 of its transcription (CD205:685) is conveniently extended (unnecessarily, but by the judicious use of extra spaces) to a second page. The Commission takes the last line of the first page and the entry on the second for its printed caption, from which it eliminated one set of parens. The transcription of one of the lines is "Gomen Demka (?) 20244 (Business (phone?))"

From the printed version, it would appear that a pair of blank pages follow. But from the FBI numbering, there are 5¹/₂, because their numbering goes from 35 to 41, where the left-hand pair of pages called one page is blank.

Somehow, there seemed to be something familiar about this. On a hunch I got out my file on the "Martello slip" and there I found that Oswald had prepared himself for the New Orleans arrest with notations including one very similar to one of these. The number 202440 is on that slip. It follows the very suggestive word "pouch" and something else I believe I could not make out (WWII:62). Paul has a copy of this slip, in Martello's transcription, in the appendix to O in NO, here, as I recall, it was part of CE1553.

There is another strange thing. The FBI transcription of Mrs. Davison's address is 404 F Tuxedo Rd, something the FBI reporting did not believe. For some reason the European manner of making a "7", with the horizontal line through it, is the manner used in the original. Oswald did not make his 7s this way, ordinarily.

If I cannot attribute any specific meaning to the above, I also think it just a little too much coincidental. I also believe it would be unwise to assume this is only coincidence, that of the many number in his book he could have taken 20244 off to have on him when arrested, where it seems to have no special meaning, and where the FBI's linguists make no effort to translate the adjacent Russian. I hope one of you knows someone who reads Russian and can learn the meaning of the original and whether the anglicized version is faithful.

10/25/69, Bernabei, CC Hoch, Schoener

Today I sent both others a brief memo saying I now have copies of the London Times stories on Wynne/Penkovsky (filed under Penkovsky) in the event they want to borrow for copying. This also applies to you.

I also suggested that the time has come for this subject to be limited to those with a need to know, to those who are actively working on it and can be expected to make a contribution to the entire story and its development.

Any or all of you may disagree. However, I think there is a sufficient probability of significance here, real meaningfulness, in an area of greatest federal sensitivity, with a sufficient case of federal withholding from the Commission of what cannot be justified except as valid intelligence secrets, to warrant more than average care.

I also argued there is more than enough reason for me to have misgivings others may not share about some working on the general subject. I have not and believe I should not share with everyone all of my reasons and what I regard as adequate evidence of undependability.

While I do not know with whom the others of you have been in correspondence on Davison/Penkovsky, if any of you has reason to believe any other may make worthwhile contributions to this, I'd like to know of it. Also, if you have any good reasons for disagreeing this has developed to the point where some security is justified.

There is the possibility I will be able to get a little help from some bright college students. If there is any aspect of the public information that any of you would like researched further, let me know and I'll see if I can get one of these to undertake it. They need not know why and will not. Our interest in Davison is already flagged.

10/25/69

Gary, Paul, re: Penkovsky-Davison

I now have the London Times stories referred to in Paul's memo on this. In addition, there was the typical pro forma editorial I did not bother to get.

If either of you wants these for copying, please let me know and I'll lend them. Several are rather large and will have to be pieced together. I have not yet had time to read them.

I am filing these under "Penkovsky", so if you ask, please remind me where I've put them.

I expect to see Bud again next week, before he goes to England. I shall then ask him to seek the English book.

At the risk of sounding paranoid, unless there is compelling reason to the contrary, such as other doing constructive, meaningful work on this aspect, I would suggest distribution be limited. My reasons are dual: there are those of us in whom I, for what I regard as sufficient reason, regard as undependable, and there seems to be no prospect they may add anything; and from my experience, this has a meaningful ring. I think it may well have deep significance, and I think the less known about it the better the prospect of further developments.

Other things to which I shall allude in other memos will, at least indirectly, relate to this.