

Memorandum

10/15/68

Re: Interview with William Proek, Dept. of Psychology (Graduate Student),
University of Minnesota

From: Gary Richard Schoener

Background: Bill Proek is a fellow graduate student in Psychology at the University of Minnesota. He is a gun enthusiast who has won a number of medals for trapshooting. He is a graduate of the University of Miami and was formerly a member of J. Edgar Hoover's old fraternity which boasts as its members many right wingers and asserted psychopaths. He and several others went on two missions for Alpha 66. He said that they went for both the adventure and the pay which was quite good. They got no real training but were briefed in the use of their weapons which were stens and schmeissers. The missions consisted of quick jaunts into Havana harbor in fast, small boats, and lobbing a few mortar shells at the hotels. He said that they were armed to the teeth and prepared for trouble with machine guns mounted on the boat, but that they never met any opposition. This may have been due to the fact that the missions were little more than a joke since they were too far out to hit anything.

In response to my request for any names he remembered, Bill provided the following:

1. Clayton Slaughter Scott III: Scott is a former roommate of Proek's. In 1966 the U.S. Marshall asked Proek whether or not Proek had resided at 6379 SW 74th St. He replied "Yes." They asked if he knew several names, none of which he knew, and the only one of which he could remember was "Hilda." They asked him whether he knew anything about the art business and he said "no." Apparently his address was being used as a maildrop for an art fraud. Finally, the U.S. Marshall asked about whether he knew anything about an allegation that Scott possessed machine guns. Proek said "no," although Proek himself still had his Alpha 66 weapons. (He claimed that they had been allowed to keep them.)
2. John Cody: Friend of Scott who said that he was an ex-Green beret. He has red hair and is from Panama. His home is currently in Syracuse or Rochester, N.Y.
3. Paul Back, aka. Os Back from the "Our Gang" singing group: He threatened Johnson. In 1965 the U.S. Marshall flew Proek down to Miami and paid all expenses for Proek to testify at his trial as a prosecution witness.

Proek claimed to know little of Alpha 66 or the people involved in it in Miami because he had so little contact with it. He said that there was little secrecy about it around the U. of Miami.

According to Proek, he had heard about the use of No Name Key for the training of both Cuban exiles and at one time, for the training of Castro agents.

Proek claimed that some time after the Bay of Pigs the CIA made a movie re-instatement of the battles near Perino, Florida, and that some of the veterans of the Bay of Pigs plus employees of CIA fronts took part. He said that the mockup battles were not too realistic but that the films might be useful for getting pictures of CIA employees.

I showed Bill Larry Howard's photos of the "guerilla instructors";

1. He made a big deal about the fact that the guys had Thompson machine guns. When he was with Alpha 66 all they got were foreign weapons like stens and Schmeissers. He was amazed to see American weapons such as Thompsons which are so easy to identify.
2. The only photo which looked familiar was that of Wilson. Proek said that he didn't think that he had seen Wilson specifically, but someone who looked very much like him but who had longer sideburns and longer, unkempt hair, which fell down over his forehead. He did not know him from Alpha 66 but from one of the other places he had been to:
 - a. American Legion in Perine, Florida
 - b. A bar such as the Tiger Tail
 - c. Student Union at the U. of Miami (this seemed the most likely)
 - d. Haners Custom Automotive (S. Dixie Hwy & Douglas Rd--37th Ave.)

On thinking it over, Proek was under the impression that a guy who looked like Wilson had spent some time hanging around the U. of Miami student union.

A lengthy list of names of those involved in the case who may have been to the Miami area at one time was read to Bill and then given to him for examination, but no names were recognized, although a few of the common Cuban ones naturally seemed somewhat familiar.

Conclusion: The reliability of Proek is unknown, despite the fact that I have known him for some time and served on a few committees with him as a graduate student. He seems to be a liberal and claims to have extensive files on right wing groups which he put together when he was with the Peace movement. These he promised to show me. He had mentioned the Alpha 66 activities to people other than me on previous occasions, although none of them were aware that Alpha 66 was a CIA front when he told them. The subject came up during a meeting in my house when I was discussing right wing groups and CIA fronts with him and happened to mention Alpha 66. (The discussion began when one of my roommates kidded me about getting letters from Billy Hargis.) The introduction of this subject into the conversation was not in any way unusual. Proek's explanation for why he went on missions with Alpha 66 matches that of other college students who I have spoken with. But I am not convinced that Proek is reliable or that he is not still connected with the Company.

Proek's statement that Wilson looked familiar is interesting since Rose, who looks like Wilson, spent a good deal of time in Miami, and presumably, therefore, was at some time around the U. of Miami in Coral Gables.

Proek's comments on the use of American weapons, if corroborated, could be important, since it would provide commentary on the arrogance and openness of CIA activities by 1963. This could give some indication of the seriousness of the clash between the intelligence-military establishment and the executive branch of the government.