

Memorandum

Re: Information received from DAVID Shoenbrun

Date: Spring, 1969, Minneapolis

From: Gary Schoener

Previous information: Dr. Charles Fisher and his wife LaVonne, who are close friends of mine and also friends of Shoenbrun had previously told me that Shoenbrun had told them that on Nov. 1, 1963, JFK had told him that he was getting out of Vietnam. They are quite reliable and are very politically active. They were present during my conversation with Mr. Shoenbrun and came to the same conclusion that I did--that he did not want to discuss any Nov. 1 meeting with JFK. Even after hearing him indicate that he had no such meeting with JFK, they were still convinced as to what he had told them. All of us noted that he was quite well aware that I might publish something or use it on the air. He had previously told them that he would never use this information publicly and that he were ever quoted on it publicly, he would deny it. His reason for this was that everyone would say he made it up.

Information: My. Shoenbrun indicated that Roger Hilsman and Richard Goodman were not very reliable for many of the details of the Kennedy administration since they were busy with self-justification. He said, however, that Goodman's accounts of the conferences with the military in Triumph or Trajedy were probably OK, because if they weren't the other Kennedy people would have jumped on him. He characterized the wire services, CBS, and NBC as "totally corrupt." He said that NBC was a bunch of thugs but that CBS was a smoothly operating network with much more subtle management of the news. He said that Salant, the director of CBS, is straight out of the military-industrial complex.

After Walter Cronkite's interview with JFK on Sept. 15, 1963, Shoenbrun had an opportunity to confront JFK about his ambiguity concerning Vietnam in that interview. At one point it had sounded like he was getting out, while at another it sounded like we were staying in. Shoenbrun said that he was quite audacious with JFK, but that JFK did not seem to take offense and said that the speech was ambiguous for a very simple reason--he was unsure what to do in Vietnam.

In what Shoenbrun told me was his last meeting with JFK, in the middle of October, 1963, JFK clearly implied that he was getting out of Vietnam. He expressed great concern about the many pressures on him. He mentioned the problems of the upcoming election and also the military-industrial complex who would not like it one bit. Shoenbrun was left with the definite impression that he was thinking of getting out.

When I asked Shoenbrun why he had not answered the letter I had written him so long ago on this subject, he pleaded ignorance.