

Information Officer
Embassy of the U.S.S.R
16 Above K St., NW
Washington, D.C.

7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Md. 21702
7/22/91

Dear Sir,

Today's Washington Post review of the John Costello book on the Rudolph Hess flight, assisted by the KGB, prompts this letter and my hope that there may be more such cooperation in bringing more of what is historically important to light.

I am the author of the first book on the Warren Commission, "Whitewash: the Report on the Warren Report," of five additional books on the JFK assassination and its official investigations and of one book on the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Unlike all the other books on these tragedies, mine do not theorize "solutions" but are entirely factual. Based on official records they leave it beyond question that these assassinations were the end product of conspiracies. But they do not mislead and misinform readers by presenting conjectures as fact about who was responsible for these crimes.

These crimes were never really investigated officially and were never intended to be investigated officially. I have an abundance of official documentation and there is no conjecture at all in this.

Under the Freedom of Information Act I filed about a dozen lawsuits against various government agencies. As a result I have about a third of a million pages of records that had been withheld officially. Congress amended this Act in 1974, making an explicit legislative history of the fact that the investigatory files exemption was amended over one of my earliest such suits. This is what opened FBI, CIA and other agency files to us.

Because I believe that this Act makes me surrogate for the people, to the degree my age, 78, and my impaired health makes possible, I permit access to these records to others who have a serious interest in them.

When I die all these records will be a permanent public archive at local Hood College.

Because the crimes were never really investigated officially there are no viable leads to be followed by others in an effort to determine who was behind these crimes.

This also results in lingering mysteries. Of these what is of special interest to me is what is not known about Lee Harvey Oswald, the officially-designated lone JFK assassin. I have learned more and other about him that is officially represented from the official records I have obtained some of which were alleged not to exist. In his private writings he was both anti-USSR and anti-American Communist Party. And although it is not reflected on his Marines service record he without question had high security clearances.

This leads to the information I hope your government can make available to me.

Yuri Nosenko defected to the CIA in Switzerland in February, 1964. I have a considerable volume of records, far, far from all, that reflect a series of spurious "reasons" for not permitting him to defect. You are, of course, welcome to all such information I

have on this, including copies of them. After he was able to defect he was interviewed by the FBI several times. The copies of these FBI reports I have quote Nosenko, among other things, as saying that the KGB records he examined at the time of the JFK assassination indicate that the KGB suspected that he was an American "agent in place" or "sleeper Agent" and that he was overtly anti-Soviet when he lived at Minsk. Nosenko also told the FBI that Oswald was there under some surveillance.

My interest is in having access to these records if only to leave a more complete record for history.

Your government may have wondered at the time why our government did not request all of its records relating to Oswald. I have some records that to me provide the answer and suggest the reasons: they were not wanted.

Coinciding in time with the CIA's receipt of copies of the FBI's reports on these Nosenko interviews including what I state above about the KGB's suspicions and Oswald's political expressions, Nosenko's treatment was radically changed from princely to sub-human, as you probably know, for about three years.

The current Tom Mangold book, "Cold Warrior," on the late James Angleton, says the opposite and is knowingly incorrect in this. Why he is incorrect on this I believe is apparent on reading the book.

If you would like me to expand on any of this or to document it, to the degree of my physical capabilities I will do so.

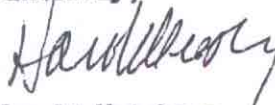
I do hope your government will look with favor on my request.

However, I read only English.

I thank you for any help you may provide.

Should you or any of your associates want to examine my records, we are not much more than a half-hour past Rockville.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg

Book World

The Hess Story, With KGB Help

TEN DAYS TO DESTINY

By John Costello *Book 7/22/91*
William Morrow. 600 pp. \$23

By Peter Masley

Even with the advent of *glasnost*, the KGB is still rewriting history, but is doing it openly now and with the cooperation of Western authors. "Ten Days to Destiny" by John Costello relies heavily on the contribution of the Soviet Committee on State Security. What once would have been condemned as propaganda now is a major selling point: "Including First-Time Publication of KGB Files," the book's jacket shouts.

The Soviet files blow a cover story of a World War II event, challenging a version the British have officially clung to since May 10, 1941, when Adolf Hitler's deputy, Rudolf Hess, made a sensational flight in a warplane from Nazi Germany to Scotland, to lay out a peace plan for Winston Churchill. Hess's trip was futile—a flight, Costello calls it, "into oblivion." Hess was arrested when he arrived in Scotland, "disowned by Germany and accused of insanity by Britain," and never set free. He died in Spandau prison in 1987 at age 93.

The outcome of a Hess peace mission was vital to Joseph Stalin. An Anglo-German rapprochement could have meant a neutralized Britain while Germany turned its military on an isolated Soviet Russia, Hitler's ally at the time. Costello says he turned to the KGB for evidence denied in England, not expecting a response.

"In an unprecedented move," Costello writes, "the first archival documents the KGB has ever made available to Western historians were produced . . ." He describes

one Soviet espionage file as No. 20566 ("Black Bertha," a nickname for Hess), cryptonyms such as SONNCHEN for Soviet spy Kim Philby and SAKULOK for the British Foreign Office. It cites agents GIT, FRANKFURTER and EXTERN. There are numbered cryptograms, 376 of May 14, 1941, and 338 of May 18, 1941.

The KGB agent reports cast the Hess flight in light different from the prevailing British view. For one thing, Hess was expected, Soviet spies said. One agent reported that "The disseminated story [by the British] that Hess arrived in England unexpectedly is not correct. Long before his flight Hess had corresponded about his mission with the Duke of Hamilton. In this correspondence was discussed, in detail, all the questions to do with the organization of his flight. . . . All Hess's letters to Hamilton did not reach him but were intercepted by the intelligence services where the answers to Hess in the name of Hamilton were manufactured. In this way the British had managed to trick Hess into coming to England."

Concludes Costello: "What is now indisputable is that the Hess mission was very far from being the 'brainstorm' of Hitler's deluded deputy that it is still being portrayed as by distinguished British historians." Hess's flight gave the Nazis a black eye.

But the bulk of the book is not crypto—it's cryptic. The 10 days of the title start running a year before the Hess flight, and they are not consecutive. To cover them, Costello has written more than 400 pages of thoroughly researched but tediously laid out minutiae of His Majesty's Government in war crisis; the 10 days become the tip of an iceberg of glacial fact.

Even as "Ten Days" hits the bookstores, the KGB is reported to be gearing up another foray into historical revisionism via the West. Costello's KGB collaborator, Oleg Tsarev, told a recent news conference here that he is helping on a book about Alexander Orlov, an operative and spy controller who defected from the Soviets in Spain in 1938 and lived underground in the United States until he surfaced in 1953, just after Stalin died. But by the time Orlov went public (the FBI didn't know he was in the country), most of his revelations were dated. And, if



Author John Costello, left, and an unidentified man at KGB headquarters in Moscow.

the KGB can be believed, Orlov kept the most sensitive information—disclosures most useful to the West—to himself.

In a footnote to "Ten Days," Costello reveals the thrust of the KGB's new spin on Orlov. Not until a Tsarev article published last year in the Soviet magazine *Trud* "was it generally known . . . that Orlov did not betray all the secrets he took with him to the United States." Orlov did not reveal "the names of some 60 agents, including Philby and the Cambridge ring in Britain, which he [Orlov] had controlled before being posted to Spain."

The reviewer is an editor on the National staff of The Washington Post.