

Memorandum

September 14, 1995

To: Jeremy Gunn

From: Joe Freeman

Subject: Visit to the National Security Archive

For basic background on the Archive, its rules and regulations, see attached "Overview" and "Guide for Researchers" (Attachments 1 and 2). Open to the public from Monday through Friday, 9:30-5:30, the Archive has a reading room with a make-shift but large conference table around which researchers work. The table is cluttered with piles of boxes, documents, etc., so the actual available working space is relatively limited. I was alone in the reading room for about half the seven-plus hours I spent at the Archive yesterday. Under these circumstances, the room seemed commodious. In the mid-afternoon, several other researchers arrived and the room shrank dramatically. Theoretically, researchers are supposed to make appointments 48 hours in advance so as to prevent congestion -- in practice, things seem more lax and spontaneous visits appear commonplace. Copies of documents run 15 cents a page (10 cents if one becomes a "Friend of the Archive"; this costs \$10/student, \$50/non-student and I forgot to ask if there was a separate fee for organizations) and we will be billed for the attached copies I made yesterday.

The Archive's records collection can be divided into two categories or databases: 1) a series of published collections of documents on specific foreign policy/national security issues and, 2) an unpublished collection of records on various topics (oftentime the papers of researchers, donated to the Archive). I will review each of these in turn.

Published Collections

The published collections are those that were listed in your book (and on the attached overview). Of these, the two that would seem to be most relevant to us are: *The U.S. Intelligence Community, 1947-1989* and *The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962*. All of the documents in these and the other published collections are on microfiche at the Archive. In addition, there are hardcopy and CD-ROM finding guides to all of these series, also available at the Archive. There are separate hardcopy finding guides for each collection, and within a collection's finding guide volume documents are indexed by both name and subject. On the CD-ROM version of the finding guide, searches can be conducted on *all* the collections simultaneously. The finding guides also include

things

like acronym glossaries, chronologies, etc. The chronologies for *The U.S. Intelligence Community* and *Cuban Missile Crisis* seem quite good -- except for time and cost constraints, I might have copied them for my own use here in the office. The *Missile Crisis* chronology is good because it is detailed, covers an extended time period and includes all aspects of Cuban-U.S. relations (ie, Operation Mongoose), not just the missile crisis, per se.

I have attached selected pages from both the *The U.S. Intelligence Community* (3) and *Missile Crisis* (4) finding guide volumes. These include information from their introductions, re: number and types of documents in each collection, as well as sample pages from the name and subject indices on topics of possible interest to us. The *Missile Crisis* collection is by far the larger of the two (with two thick finding guide volumes).

There are two microfiche viewers in the reading room, one with copying capability. I've attached copies of various documents (or at least title pages of longer documents) from the *Missile Crisis* collection (5). These include several Lansdale reports on Operation Mongoose, Raymond Rocca's response to David Belin (Rockefeller Commission hat) on what the CIA knew/failed to tell the Warren Commission about Oswald/Castro assassination attempts, a CIA memo, re: Maheu, Roselli and Castro assassination plots, McCone's denial of same, etc. I'm sure you've seen all this before, but I wanted to give you some flavor for the kinds of things in the National Security Archive collections. Often, of course, these documents are redacted.

Unpublished Collections

Perhaps even more interesting than the published collections -- if only because it's less clear what's in them -- are the unpublished collections. There are no CD-ROM or published hardback volume finding guides for these. There is a general subject index -- available to researchers in the form of a hardcopy loose-leaf binder -- which also provides overview information about each collection's size, time-frame, etc. Some of these collections are located "on-site" in the reading room itself. Others are housed "off-site", at the Washington Research Libraries Consortium (WRLC) facility. If a researcher wants to look at documents from the off-site collections, he/she places a request order and the relevant boxes (maximum of 5 boxes/researcher per day) are retrieved from the WRLC within 1 to 2 days.

I've attached the index listings for unpublished collections which may be of interest to us and highlighted relevant items. (6)

One unpublished collection I actually perused was from the LBJ Library. It's index (not attached) referenced a 'Kennedy, John F. - Assassination' folder. There were four documents in the folder, three of which I've attached: 1) a note from McCone to McGeorge Bundy, re: LBJ and

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Oswald/Mexico City; 2) a “Chronological Summary of Information on Lee Harvey Oswald Culled From State Department Files” and, 3) a two page DOS memo to the file on Marina’s visa application.
(7)

I hope this proves helpful in terms of giving you a sense of what the National Security Archive has to offer.

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