

## MEMORANDUM

To: File  
cc: David G. Marwell, T. Jeremy Gunn  
From: Michelle Combs  
Date: January 23, 1997  
Re: Interviews with Russell B. Holmes

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Russell Holmes was interviewed by T. Jeremy Gunn in the presence of Michelle Combs, Manuel Legaspi, and Irene Marr on December 13 and 20, 1996.

Russell Holmes indicated that he was a career CIA Directorate of Operations (DO) officer from Dec. 3, 1951 to Jan. 12, 1979. From 1979 to 1992 he worked for the CIA as a contractor. During his Agency career, he spent 20 years on the Counterintelligence Staff and in Nov. 1963 was working for CI/R&A. Mr. Holmes indicated that he had nothing at all to do with JFK until 1976 when he became part of a task force, under Scott Breckinridge, formed to answer questions raised in Book 5 of the Church Committee. At the end of the task force, Mr. Holmes became the person responsible for processing DO requests from the House Select Committee on Assassinations. From 1976/77 until 1992, Mr. Holmes was the primary person responsible for material related to the JFK assassination, including the Lee Harvey Oswald 201 file.

Mr. Holmes began creating his own auxiliary files on the JFK assassination in 1976 when he first started reading the LHO 201 file. He said he found so many subsidiary subjects contained in the 201 file. The auxiliary files were a means of gathering subject information, which was scattered through the 201 file, together in one spot to be able to answer and questions put by Mr. Breckinridge and later by the HSCA.

Mr. Holmes noted that at the time he took over the material relating to the JFK assassination, there existed a CI staff collection of soft files (CI did not have responsibility for the LHO 201). The soft files contained carbons of CS/CI (Clandestine Service/ Counterintelligence) reports written on LHO. Mr. Holmes copied any material that was not in the LHO 201 for his auxiliary files and kept the soft files separate. He believed the files (approximately 1 foot) were included in the JFK Collection. Mr. Holmes said he thought that prior to the assassination, there were maybe 3 inches of files on LHO in the CI Staff. He thought that LHO was of peripheral CI interest because of his defector status.

A request from the Department of State on the number of defectors to the Soviet Union sparked the opening of the LHO 201 and the beginning of the CI soft files according to Mr. Holmes. He said that the CI staff did not really get involved until LHO identified himself on the telephone taps

in Mexico City.

Mr. Gunn asked Mr. Holmes about the LHO HTLINGUAL file. Mr. Holmes responded that HTLINGUAL was not used as a means of communication with agents inside the U.S.S.R or the Bloc.