

MEMORANDUM

November 13, 1997

To: Jeremy Gunn
Executive Director

cc: Tom Samoluk
Deputy Director

Bob Skwirot
CIA Coordinator

From: Michelle Combs
Special Assistant for Research and Review

Subject: "Not Believed Relevant" Memoranda from the CIA Sequestered Collection
Microfilm--Version I

At your request, this memorandum updates the status and future of anticipated NBR issues based on four months of examination of the feasibility of the NBR process. It is important to remember that the Microfilm Collection is far larger than the Sequestered Collection. While the Sequestered Collection represents the scope of HSCA requests, the Microfilm represents the entire universe of files--even if the HSCA only examined a small portion of the file in question. It is also important to recall that the breadth of the HSCA investigation was substantially broader than the focus of the JFK Act.

The declaration of some blocks of records as NBR will save valuable time and resources both for the ARRB staff and the CIA to the extent that the Board abides by its original stated intent. The NBR designation as conceived allows the ARRB staff to remove blocs of records or individual documents from processing and allows the Agency to delay the review of these records until 2017. In each case, the Board has been and will be provided with a descriptive memorandum and examples of the documents in question. To the extent that the Board wishes to change the designated parameters of the NBR agreement, additional time and resources will be expended.

To date, there appear to be two types of potential NBR memoranda: those which deal with a specific block or series of records and those which deal with a specific issue. For Example the Nosenko NBR memorandum examines 2400 pages of records--a specific block of records. In contrast, the

Collins Radio NBR memorandum, which the Board voted to accept at the October meeting, dealt with only a small number of documents within a file which was being processed for review.

The larger "series of records" NBR memoranda are easier to anticipate. We currently anticipate four large NBR issues.

1. Nosenko -- The approximately 2,400 pages on Nosenko relate to interrogations conducted over a five year period and a variety of studies, reports, and documents dealing with the issue of establishing his bona fides. The Board is scheduled to reconsider the issue of the Nosenko documents at the November meeting.
2. CRC -- The approximately 5,400 pages are financial and monthly accounting records of the CRC. The Agency will release the monthly general statements, to the extent which they can be located. The Board is scheduled to consider the CRC files at the November meeting.
3. Office of Personnel Files -- The HSCA was provided with the official Office of Personnel (OP) files for every agency employee connected in any possible way with the assassination or any investigation of the assassination. These files contain performance appraisal reports, salary and promotion data, and other personnel material. They have been examined by three members of the ARRB staff. Any potentially relevant documents were flagged and are being matched with portions of OP files which are already part of the Sequestered Collection. To date, all flagged documents have been found to have been already included in the Sequestered Collection. This work is still in progress. I hope to have this issue ready for the Board's consideration in December or January.
4. The Monster NBR -- In August, the entire CIA team spent several days reviewing all of the files in the microfilm collection which the Agency reviewers had marked as non-relevant in 1993-94. If we agreed the file was NBR, we wrote a brief description of the file in anticipation of a large NBR memo. If we disagreed, the file was marked for review. I would estimate 25-30,000 pages were marked NBR. They range from OSS files to files clearly related to the Martin Luther King investigation. I have a 1-2 inch stack of file descriptions which Bob and I are planning to use to put together one large memo tentatively scheduled for the December or January Board meeting.

Smaller NBR issues such as Collins Radio cannot really be anticipated but will arise as the CIA moves through the microfilm collection. For example, at the November meeting, the Board will be asked to consider the Ramparts magazine damage assessment. The ARRB staff found only one of the more than 100 organizations listed in the Ramparts articles to be of any relevance to the assassination. The CIA will release the paragraphs on this organization. Any attempt to process the remainder of the CIA memorandum would consume large amounts of time and resources.

Thus, the ability to designate a series of documents or individual documents “NBR” is a valuable tool for conserving precious resources for both the ARRB Staff and the Agency and for moving through the Collection with the processing of all relevant documents for public use.