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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

HSCA

SUBJECT: (Optional)
Meeting with House Select Committee on Assassinations Staffer Ken Kline, 10 May 1978

FROM:	EXTENSION	NO.
03 [Edmund L. Andrews] Chief, SE/OR/I	9259	DATE 12 May 1978

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE RECEIVED	DATE FORWARDED	OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
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OLC #78-1641/2

12 May 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

FROM : Edmund O3 L. Andrews
Chief, SE/OR/I

SUBJECT: Meeting with House Select Committee on Assassinations Staffer Ken Kline, 10 May 1978

1. This meeting was in response to Mr. Kline's request to Ben Pepper on 26 April 1978 for a briefing on KGB Second Chief Directorate Operations against Americans to give him a context in which to place both Nosenko's reporting and Oswald's sojourn in the Soviet Union. The meeting lasted approximately one hour. No one other than Mr. Kline and I was present.

2. At the outset, I gave Mr. Kline a brief presentation on the functions and organization of the KGB, showing where Nosenko fit in and identifying the various operational elements of both the First and Second Chief Directorates which are involved in operations against the United States. I also explained the relationship of the various Republic and Regional KGB's, e.g., the Belorussian KGB in Minsk, to the All-Union KGB and gave a short rundown on KGB m.o. against foreign tourists. I emphasized that most of this information came from Nosenko, but that bits and pieces acquired from subsequent sources by and large confirmed his information.

3. Mr. Kline asked my comments on a number of points:

a. He asked if the KGB "talked to" all American tourists and I replied they did not, but that any American expressing a desire to remain permanently in the USSR would most definitely be interviewed, both to determine the individual's bona fides and to ascertain whether he was of any operational or positive intelligence interest. I said I could provide no detailed

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information on KGB handling of American defectors, referring him to CI Staff, which I understood was assembling files for him on American re-defectors, and the FBI, which would most certainly have interviewed any re-defectors.

b. Mr. Kline asked how the KGB, if it wanted to convince us, truthfully or not, that Oswald was not a Soviet agent would prepare an operation to do this. I said that any answer on my part would be pure speculation, since we have no data base in this regard. I noted that, although much has been said and written about KGB disinformation operations, there was no documented case in the past 20 years or so in which the KGB was known to have used a controlled agent for the purpose of passing information designed to deceive us on a substantive issue, as opposed to simply convincing us of the bona fides of a false defector dispatched for espionage purposes. He asked if there had been many such false defectors, to which I replied there had been some who had the mission of attaching themselves in some fashion to the U.S. Intelligence Services, but none of these was or claimed to be a KGB officer. The purpose of these operations, all of which took place quite a number of years ago, was penetration of U.S. Intelligence, not strategic or political deception.

c. He inquired as to whether anyone other than Nosenko, or someone in roughly the same position, would have been in a position effectively to convince us that Oswald was not a Soviet agent. I conceded that it would take a KGB officer to make a credible negative statement along these lines and that Nosenko, whose position put him in a position to review Oswald's KGB file, was obviously one of the very few who could make an authoritative statement based on first hand knowledge. I also noted, however, that if Oswald had been recruited and trained for so sensitive a mission as assassinating the president of the United States, such an operation would have been authorized at highest levels of the Soviet government, would have been kept compartmented to the most extreme degree, and would not have been run by the Foreign Tourist Department. Nosenko almost certainly would have had no knowledge of it.

d. Mr. Kline asked me how I would go about setting up an operation designed to convince the U.S. that

Oswald was not a Soviet agent. I said that this, again, was highly speculative and would not necessarily have any relation to what the KGB would do. I did say, however, that one of the things I would take into consideration was keeping the cost of the operation, in terms of the counterintelligence information which would have to be divulged to establish the agent's credibility, within reasonable bounds. Although it might be necessary to use an intelligence officer who could have plausible access to such information, I would not use an intelligence officer who acknowledged having been deeply involved in operations against the American target over a period of ten years. Neither would I have such an officer defect. It would be much simpler and less costly in the long run to have an officer stationed abroad volunteer his services, work in place for a short time during which he could pass the desired disinformation, and then return on plausible grounds to the USSR, never to be seen abroad again. While an officer stationed abroad probably could not claim, as Nosenko did, to have personally seen Oswald's file, it would not be difficult to construct a plausible story as to how he obtained this information (from friends in SCD, etc.) as to make his information convincing.

e. As to whether the KGB would be likely to recruit an individual like Oswald, I said I rather doubted it. Any re-defector is automatically suspect to scrutiny by his own counterintelligence service and most certainly will never be allowed in a position involving access to sensitive information. Recruitment of a man like Oswald to assassinate the president seemed even more implausible, given the man's obvious personal weaknesses and instability and the fact that, as a re-defector, he would certainly (I would have assumed) be on the list of persons to be watched by those with responsibility for the President's security. The fact that this did not occur in Oswald's case does not alter the fact that, if the KGB were looking for someone to perform this task, it would probably seek someone with the lowest profile possible rather than an individual who could be expected to attract security attention. I noted that the KGB had conducted some assassinations in the post-war years, but these had all been carried out by Soviet, not foreign, agents, and had been directed against former Soviet citizens.

f. With regard to KGB training facilities in Minsk, I stated that the KGB has schools for training internal counterintelligence officers in a number of provincial cities, including Minsk, but these are for staff officers assigned to duty in these areas and not for agents being dispatched abroad. Such agent training is conducted on a tutorial basis in safehouses and no foreign KGB agent would ever be allowed to enter a KGB official installation. Mr. Kline suggested that Oswald was sent to Minsk so that he could be trained by the experts available there, even though his own training was carried out in a safehouse. I said that the type of training given at a basic school for staff internal counterintelligence officers is of a totally different nature from that given to an agent for dispatch abroad and this connection seemed unlikely. Oswald could have been trained in Minsk, or, for that matter, anywhere in the Soviet Union, but I did not believe that the presence of a KGB training facility in Minsk relates to this one way or the other.

g. Mr. Kline raised a number of questions relative to the general question of KGB competence, e.g., whether Nosenko, if dispatched, would have been sufficiently drilled on questions he would be asked as to establish a false legend concerning himself and not be tripped up by questions from persons such as Deryabin. I said that although KGB competence varies widely, their counterintelligence capabilities are formidable and, in an important case, they are capable of a very high degree of sophistication. I could not comment on how well they would prepare a man to live a false legend corresponding to Nosenko's story, but pointed out that clairvoyance as to what questions will be put, etc., exists only in fiction. The KGB would, however, carefully study damage assessments from previous defections, etc., to ensure that information supplied would fit in with what earlier defectors are assumed to have reported.

3. At the conclusion of our meeting, Mr. Kline said that some of my comments had been helpful. He made no specific requests for further information, but said he might contact me if any should occur to him later.

03

Edmund L. Andrews

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(Memo for the Record, 12 May 1978, subj: Meeting with House Select Committee on Assassinations Staffer Ken Kline, 10 May 1978, continued)

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