

Administrative - Internal Use Only

OIM 98-0036

3 April 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Executive Director

VIA: Director of Information Management/DA

FROM: Lee S. Strickland
Chief, Information Review Group, OIM/DA

SUBJECT: Release of Oswald Security File Pursuant To
Request of Assassination Records Review Board

1. Action Required: None; this brief is for information only regarding a required release pursuant to the request of the Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB or JFK Board). This release has been coordinated with the DO JFK Focal Point Officer, the DA Information Review Officer, the Office of General Counsel, and required external bodies; it is scheduled for transfer to the ARRB for release to the National Archives on or about 17 April.

2. Background: The Oswald Security File, maintained by the then-Office of Security, surfaced in February 1997 as our JFK records review personnel were responding to the ARRB's "Request for Additional Information and Records No. CIA-16 (Oswald Pre-Assassination Files)", dated 28 January 1997. Before this, the file had been reviewed in 1978 by the House Special Committee on Assassination (HSCA). Unfortunately, and probably by oversight, the file was not included in the so-called JFK sequestered collection¹ and thus had not been included to date in our releases to the ARRB. In any event, however, approximately 92% of the documents therein are duplicative of documents previously released elsewhere in the JFK collection by CIA.

¹ At the conclusion of its investigation, the House Select Committee on Assassination (HSCA) sequestered all of the files that the HSCA staff had requested or been granted access. This "sequestered collection" includes 63 boxes of hardcopy records and notes and 72 reels of microfilm.

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3. The Office of Security subject file on Lee Harvey Oswald was established circa 1960. It appears this file was created as a separate repository for the numerous press clippings and reports from other government agencies on Oswald's defection to the USSR and his activities following his return to the United States. Initially, references to Oswald had been placed in a so-called "Defectors' File". Both the Oswald security file and the Defectors File were maintained by the Security Research Staff -- the CI arm of the Office of Security at that time.²

4. Information to be Released: The Office of Personnel Security in its response to the ARRB request of 28 January 1997 advised it had located six volumes of the Oswald Security file, numbered 1-4 and 6-7; a search failed to locate a volume 5. The six volumes include over 400 documents and about 2,000 pages of which 1,000 pages are newspaper clippings. All of these documents are to be released in full or with minor redactions; more specifically, the fully coordinated documents ready for release include:³

- Volume 1: Pre-assassination documents relative to Oswald's defection
- Volume 2: Miscellaneous memoranda on Oswald and copies of cables between Mexico City and Headquarters
- Volume 3: Partial Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) file on Marina Oswald
- Volume 4: Newspaper clippings
- Volume 6: Newspaper clippings and memoranda (many related to the Garrison Investigation)

² This may explain why this Oswald file was not included in the sequestered collection with several other security files which had been maintained normally (i.e., with most other security records) by the Security Records Division.

³ Representative samples of the documents to be released are attached for your information; please note that the "blackened" areas are not deletions but are the result of red highlighting used in the original review by the then-Office of Security.

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- Volume 7: A third agency (FBI) report and some HSCA related documents.

5. Potential Media Reaction: There is potential for media criticism on two counts: the unexplained missing volume 5 and the delay in releasing the security file.

- The Office Of Security has been unable to locate a Volume 5. It is possible that volumes were combined without changing numbers (note the predominance of newspaper clippings in Volumes 4 and 6), or that the filer simply skipped a number. The file was primarily a repository for externally generated documents, and there do not appear to be significant time gaps.
- The delay in releasing the file is somewhat alleviated by the fact that about 92% of the documents have been previously released in the sequestered JFK Collection. Of the remaining 8% (35 documents) all but six (6) documents will be released in full. The file contains nothing of a controversial or politically sensitive nature.

6. As indicated by the signatures below, the Directorate of Administration, the Directorate of Operations, and the Office of General Counsel concur in this release. In addition, all necessary external coordinations (i.e., FBI, INS, and the House of Representatives) have been effected.




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CONCUR:

for 
DO JFK Focal Point Officer

2 Apr 1998
Date


DA Information Review Officer

2 April 1998
Date

 (telecon + fax)
Office of General Counsel

2 Apr 98
Date

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OIM/IRG/LSS: blo/31287 (2 April 1998)

Distribution:

- 1 - EXDIR/CIA w/atts 1-7
- 1 - D/EXDIR w/atts 1-7
- 1 - DDA w/o atts
- 1 - D/OIM w/o atts
- 1 - DD/OIM w/o atts
- 1 - OIM (Oliver) w/o atts
- 1 - OIM (Harrelson) w/atts
- 1 - C/IRG
- 1 - C/L&SSD
- 1 - Subject
- 1 - DO/IRO
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