

S E C R E T

20 June 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: KRONTHAL, James Speyer
[redacted]

(b)(3)

1. On 20 June 1989, the undersigned interviewed Mr Richard Helms, former DCI and C/Ops at the time of Subject's suicide. Mr Helms was met at his office at 1627 "K" Street, Suite 402, NW, WDC.

2. Mr Helms mentioned that he met Subject about 1942 when both men were serving in the OSS. He and Subject served in the various organizations that eventually became the CIA.

3. Mr Helms was not aware of the 1951 State Department investigation into homosexual activity at [redacted] but (b)(1) did remember that a "GI" alleged instances of HA with Subject (b)(3) while [redacted] He also recalled an "endless stream" of cases (b)(1) involving homosexual activity and allegations of communist (b)(3) sympathies while he was C/Ops.

4. On 31 March 1953, Helms recalls instructing [redacted] (b)(3) to call the police and give them information pertaining to Subject, upon the discovery of Subject's suicide. He did not call anyone in the DC Metro Police concerning the case and noted that there were no established procedures on discovering the death of an Agency employee.

5. Helms said he did not recall ever receiving the suicide note Subject addressed to him. It was, however, read to him, possibly by the police, but he does not remember. He said the note did not go into why Subject committed suicide, but recalled it said he was distressed by work. Helms believes he left the note so that it would not be thought he was murdered.

6. Upon being questioned about the possibility that the Soviets co-opted Subject or that Subject was a Soviet mole in the Agency, Helms noted that it was highly unlikely that Subject was a co-optee and it was never an issue during the 1953 investigation. Helms noted that while Subject was in the OSS [redacted] he (b)(1) was an analyst, and was involved with paper in the office and had (b)(3) nothing to do with the Soviets. He further remarked that Subject had no motive for working for the Soviets; he was an American Jew, well-to-do, and not aligned politically with communists.

WARNING NOTICE
INTELLIGENCE SOURCES
OR METHODS INVOLVED

(b)(1)

(b)(3)

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Even if Subject had been blackmailed by the Soviets for being a homosexual, suicide would not have solved the problem, but probably brought it to light.

7. Mr Helms severely criticized William Corson and remarked that Corson was never an Agency employee, never affiliated with the Agency, or never worked with the Agency. As concerns the allegation that Corson was an "unofficial" Dulles aide and lived with Mr Dulles, Mr Helms remarked that he knew Allen Dulles very well, had known him since the OSS days, and regularly saw Dulles at work and socially. Helms never saw Corson or heard of him during the Dulles tenure. He termed this allegation "nonsense."

8. Helms also volunteered that Subject was not the close friend of Dulles as Widows alleges. Subject had worked for Dulles [redacted] Subject was certain (b)(1) not close enough to Dulles to have dinner with him as the book (b)(3) contends. Helms also noted that Subject was not in line for a high position in the Agency. He said these allegations are definitely "not true." He also asserted that he doubted Corson had the Dulles dairy.

9. Helms remarked that following a NEW YORK TIMES article on Subject and the book Widows, Subject's sister, [redacted] telephoned him and was very upset that the book made so many unfavorable comments about her brother being an agent for the Soviets. (b)(6)

10. Mr Helms recommended that SAD may wish to talk to William J. Hood, a close friend of Subject and Cordelia Dodson Hood, also a close friend and William's ex-wife. [redacted]

(b)(3)

(b)(6)

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