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28 August 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Executive Director/Comptroller

SUBJECT: Oswald: Assassin Or Fall Guy? by Joachim Joesten

1. This memorandum is for information only to call your attention to a new book entitled Oswald: Assassin Or Fall Guy? by Joachim Joesten. This is one of a group of several recent books which "prove" that Lee Harvey Oswald could not, and did not, assassinate President Kennedy. While the author states that he does not know who did kill the President, he feels certain that it was a deep conspiracy in which CIA, the FBI, the Dallas police and extreme right-wing circles were involved. Considerable emphasis is paid to the CIA role in Chapters 13 and 14, the latter entitled Oswald and the CIA.

2. There are several interesting factors concerning this book. First, it is published (1964) by the New York firm of Marzani and Munsell, a firm which puts heavy emphasis on Communist or extreme left-wing authors. Carl Marzani worked for COI, OSS and subsequently the Department of State. He was convicted in 1947 for making false official statements to the Department in denying his membership in the Communist Party and was sentenced to one to three years in prison. Following his release, Marzani established this publishing firm whose publications include one entitled Cuba Versus CIA (1961), of which he was also the co-author. The dust jacket of the Joesten book announces the publication of a book entitled The Oswald Case by Carl Marzani, and states that his wartime U.S. intelligence and State Department experience qualifies him well "to analyze the hidden aspects of the Oswald case, particularly as related to the CIA." We are advised that Marzani's book on the Oswald case will not be published until after the publication of the Warren Commission's report.

3. Joachim Joesten was born in Germany in 1907, and throughout his career he has been a free-lance writer and news correspondent in Europe and the U.S. Joesten is now a naturalized U.S. citizen, living in New York. He edits his own mimeographed publication, entitled New Germany Reports, which he describes as a "series of exclusive monographs."

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4. Joesten was considered for OSS employment in 1943; he was not employed because he was considered neither tempermentally suited nor physically qualified for intelligence work. During the investigation for his employment, several associates alleged that Joesten was a member of the German Communist Party, and that the Swedish police had a dossier on him. These allegations could not be substantiated.

5. In 1958, Joesten published a book in Munich entitled C. I. A. Written in journalistic style, Part I of this book purports to describe the Agency's activities from public sources, containing the usual mixture of fact, extravagances, and misinformation. The second part of the book is devoted almost entirely to the case of Colonel Abel and the Soviet spy ring around Jack Soble. One of Joesten's main themes is that the necessary secrecy of intelligence operations creates an unchecked center of power in the U. S. Government which poses a potential threat to Western democracy.

6. In 1963, Joesten wrote a book entitled They Call It Intelligence, which the reviewer in CIA's Studies in Intelligence describes as a "sleazy potboiler," a characterization which could also probably be applied to his 1964 book, Im Dienste des Misstrauens, which includes a section devoted to CIA and another devoted to the Bay of Pigs.

7. In 1963, Joesten published, as the September/October issue of New Germany Reports, a monograph entitled The Frame-up of Captain Kauffman: How a Guileless American Officer Was Trapped by a Scheming Red. In this piece he comes to the defense of Captain Kauffman, an Air Force officer convicted by court martial of espionage and failure to report contacts with enemy personnel. Joesten severely attacks the important testimony of the East German defector, Guenter Maennel. Captain Kauffman's conviction for espionage was subsequently reversed but the rest of the conviction stood.

8. Joesten dedicates his book on the Oswald case to Mark Lane, (the attorney who originally represented Oswald's mother), whom he describes as "brilliant and courageous." In his dedication, Joesten states that Lane's brief "will go down in history as one of the great libertarian documents" and characterizes the work of the FBI (Federal Bungled Investigations) as "police state tactics," a theme which runs throughout the book. In his acknowledgment, Joesten characterizes Carl Marzani as "a shrewd and hard-hitting editor and publisher in the finest American tradition . . ."; for Mr. Hoover he suggests dismissal.

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9. Joesten states his belief (p. 41) that Oswald "was picked as a fall guy precisely because, as a petty, and perhaps discarded, agent of the CIA, and later of the FBI, he was an ideal scapegoat . . .".

10. In Chapter 16 of this book, Joesten again states his belief that some officials of the CIA and the FBI, as well as figures such as General Walker and H. L. Hunt, were involved in the conspiracy, and states that many readers would resist the suggestion that the CIA and the FBI could participate. "The very idea seems unpatriotic." (p. 146) Joesten states. But to support his contention, he cites "a conservative newspaperman, Mr. Richard Starnes," and Starnes' statement that he questioned "whether President Kennedy himself has any effective control over this monstrous bureaucracy." (p. 146). Joesten wonders whether Starnes' Far Eastern informant of this view of CIA might not have been Ambassador Lodge.

11. Joesten also cites another Starnes piece attacking the FBI and states further that "there are men both in the FBI and the CIA who are capable of anything, given the proper motive. And one of the most powerful of bureaucratic motives was operating: survival." (p. 147). Another of Joesten's conclusions is that CIA disliked Kennedy's attempts to ease the Cold War because this would mean the dismantling of part of CIA and bringing the Agency under Presidential control. "I am sure there are men in CIA, just as there are General Walkers in the army, who simply couldn't accept this situation and who thought of Kennedy as a traitor. And traitors are executed." (p. 152). Neither does it escape Joesten's notice that Allen Dulles is a member of the Warren Commission.

Walter Pforzheimer

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