

CALL REPORT: PUBLIC

Document's Author: Douglas Horne/ARRB

Date Created: 09/05/97

The Players**Who called whom?** Douglas Horne called Roger E. Boyajian of Witnesses/Consultants**Description of the Call****Date:** 09/05/97**Subject:** Doug Horne and Joan Zimmerman Called Roger Boyajian**Summary of the Call:**

Following up on ARRB's contact letter dated August 11, 1997, I called Mr. Boyajian today and confirmed that he was indeed the USMC Sergeant who was the NCO in charge of the Marine Barracks security detail that guarded the Bethesda morgue during President Kennedy's autopsy. He said that he was "double-hatted" at the time: he was assigned to both the Marine Corps Institute (a correspondence school run out of Marine Barracks at 8th and I in Washington, D.C.), and to the ceremonial guard company at Marine Barracks.

He confirmed that he had submitted a written report to his C.O. within 1 or 2 days following the President's autopsy; he has an onionskin carbon copy of it today. He said he would be happy to send us a good photocopy of the document, but was unwilling to part with the original.

He said the report contains the last names of the people in his security detail on November 22-23, but that he was going to find it difficult today to try to remember their first names (as I had requested), since people who were not from his regular platoon were literally "yanked" from all over the Marine Barracks compound at the last minute to form this Bethesda security detail.

He said he remembered very little about the events in question, except that their principal task was to keep media reporters away from the morgue. He said he never received any orders from the Secret Service that day--that a member of the Marine Corps ordered him to go to Bethesda, and that he was ordered to report to Admiral Galloway, the Admiral in charge of Bethesda. Once he got there, his working point-of-contact was a Navy LT or LCDR who was the Security Officer.

He said that things were quite hectic that evening, with a lot of senior military officers and federal agents in suits entering the morgue, whom he assumes were Secret Service or FBI. He could not remember any of the names of the senior officers or the agents; he said none of his people checked anyone's I.D. that night, and no one volunteered their names to the Marines.

I asked him if he remembered the arrival of the President's casket, and after some thought, he said "no." [Reportedly, according to Kathleen Cunningham, his report states that the casket arrived at about 1835 (6:35 P.M.)--we will have to check this when we receive the photocopy of his report.]

Although he could not remember much at all about the events of November 22-23, 1963, except general impressions, he was cordial, and agreed to give us a tape-recorded interview (after we review his report) if we desire one in the future. END

-ARRB MD 236001783

CONTACT PROFILE



Document's Author: Douglas Horne/ARRB

Date Created: 09/05/97

Contact Description

Contact Name: Roger E. Boyajian
Company: (Pronounced "BOY-JUN")
Title:
Category: Witnesses/Consultants
Street Address: [REDACTED]

Phone Number: [REDACTED]

FAX Number:

E-mail Address:

HSCA Letter Sent:

Additional Information

Researcher Kathleen Cunningham gave us this lead via e-mail on 8/08/97. Mr. Boyajian was the USMC Sergeant who was the NCO in charge of the Marine Security Detail at JFK's autopsy.

001784

RECEIVED

16 1997

10 Sep 97

Dear Mr. Horne:

Enclosed is the brief after action memo regarding the security detail at Bethesda Naval Hospital Morgue during the time President Kennedy's body was there. I was unable to put any first names to the other men on the detail as you had requested. As I had mentioned in our telephone conversation, the detail was formed from a skeleton crew at Marine Barracks and none of them were from my platoon or people that I would have had daily contact with.

I really regret not having made a more detailed report but I suppose because of the hectic schedule of rehearsals and other pre-funeral preparations I just kept it brief. I think also at the time we were all so numbed by the incident that we functioned on auto-pilot. One thing bothering me is that I can't recall seeing the casket arrive, yet I state in the report that it arrived at 1835 hours. I think I split the detail initially, sending seven men to meet the ambulance and taking the remainder with me to set up security posts within the corridors.

I wish I could be of more help but it just isn't in the memory data bank.

Sincerely



R.E. Boyajian

001786

26 November 1963

From: Sergeant R. E. Boyajian
To: Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Institute Company
Subj: Security detail, Bethesda Naval Hospital, 22 November 1963

1. At approximately 1700 hours, 22 Nov., a detail of 10 men was sent to Bethesda Naval Hospital with orders to report to Admiral Galloway.
2. The detail arrived at the hospital at approximately 1800 and after reporting as ordered several members of the detail were posted at entrances to prevent unauthorized persons from entering the prescribed area. The remainder of the detail was to have been used as a cordon around the ambulance to keep newsmen from interfering with the movement of the casket. The ward was changed several times as to which entrance the ambulance was going to utilize and as a result a cordon detail of seven men was seen several times double-timing through the hospital on the heels of the Security Officer.
3. At approximately 1835 the casket was received at the morgue entrance and taken inside.
4. For the remainder of the evening, members of the detail were posted at various places throughout the corridors and morgue entrances. Their primary duty was to prevent anyone from taking photographs of any activity that took place therein. This resulted in some light body contact with reporters armed with cameras. After some persuasion, the cameramen contented themselves with pictures of "Marines".
5. The remainder of the night was relatively quiet except for a few minor encounters with newsmen. All hands were given coffee and chow breaks at frequent intervals as the evening wore on.
6. At approximately 0345, 23 Nov., the casket was removed from the morgue and at 0350 Mrs. Kennedy came downstairs and departed with the casket.
7. Shortly after that the detail was secured and at approximately 0500 arrived back at the Barracks.

S. E. R. E. BOYAJIAN
Sgt USMC

001787

26 November 1963

Listed below are the personnel who were involved in the detail:

NCOIC: Sgt Boyajian
Cpl O'Neil
Cpl Brown
Cpl Duke
LCpl Halloran

LCpl Evangelista
LCpl Busfield
LCpl Pinkas
LCpl Yount
LCpl Nugent

Duty Driver was also utilized.

R. E. BOYAJIAN

001788

To: Douglas Horne/ARRB
cc:
From: Jeremy Gunn/ARRB
Date: 08/11/97 08:06:48 AM
Subject: Roger E. Boyajian

I think this may provide some good leads. Let me know what you think.

To: Jeremy_Gunn @ jfk-arrb.gov
cc: (bcc: Jeremy Gunn/ARRB)
From: kathy @ ns1.praxis.net @ INTERNET@WORLDCOM
Date: 08/08/97 06:57:11 PM
Subject: Roger E. Boyajian

Dear Jeremy,

I have been reviewing my personal files attempting to discover materials that I might hold that are not in the public domain. Following this note is one of several I've found that I will be passing to you. This communique includes my notes on an April 1996 telephone interview with Roger E. Boyajian, the USMC guard who was the NCO in charge of the protecting the morgue during the President's autopsy. The interview was tape recorded and I will be forwarding you a copy of the audio tape of that interview in the very near future. It also includes a retyped copy of the two page report he wrote following the autopsy which he provided to me. I have not seen his report elsewhere in the record.

For the little that it is worth - soon after this interview I did a lengthy one with Dr. Robert Karnei and it was his recollection that it WAS him who offered coffee to Boyajian and his men . . . one tiny footnote in history.

More will follow during the remainder of the month.

Best wishes,

Kathy Cunningham

INTERVIEW NOTES OF:

[REDACTED]
(pronounced boy - ian)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

001789

According to page 8 of the MDW's awards recommendation list obtained from the Ford Library, BOYAJIAN was a Sergeant, USMC, whose duty on the weekend of the assassination was NCO in charge of Bethesda Security Detail assigned to guard the morgue. Boyajian filed a contemporaneous report with the MWD on those activities which does NOT appear to be part of the record - he supplied a copy and the full report (retyped by me) follows my notes on his tape recorded interview.

March 27, 1996 11:11 AM

Spoke to his wife. He's out laying tile, home sometime after 5 PM.
Call any time after that.

5:30 PM Reached Mr. Boyajian --

Provided morgue security -- met body with detail of about 8 men. Told "around 3:30 to 4:00 in the afternoon" that he should report to Bethesda for duty.

Tried to keep press out of morgue and the corridor outside of morgue. His detail was "rag-tag," made up of men from different units. Things were very confused.

Recalls that a pathologist offered them coffee. (Dr. Karnei told me he offered coffee to the Marine guard - Boyajian does not recall Karnei's name, nor cannot Boyajian recall any name in conjunction with the identity of the coffee offering pathologist.)

Boyajian was at morgue from 5:30 to 6:00 pm on Nov. 22nd 1963 until 3:30 pm the following morning. He saw Jackie come down at end of autopsy.

Heard no comments from inside the morgue. Only familiar face he saw was Jackie -- at end of autopsy only.

Didn't ever use the phone in the ante-room.

No log was kept by him or his men as to who entered the morgue. They let in anyone who was escorted in by staff.

Got the award he was nominated for by MDW.

Made contemporaneous notes -- brief two page after-action-report -- which covered who was involved with this duty and what transpired. Is sending a copy to me. (retyped copy will follow these notes)

I should send him a copy of his nomination paper. (SENT)

Doesn't remember the name O'Malley.

Only contact he had was a Lt. or Lt. Cmd at hospital -- can't remember his name -- the name Karnei means nothing.

Atmosphere at Bethesda: Everyone in a daze -- "is this really happening?" -- the press was climbing all over the place -- left him with bitter taste for the press. All persons of rank who had some kind of responsibility were all shook up they didn't want to "screw anything up." He felt that this is like a bad dream -- kept asking if this was really happening. He feels everything was organized chaos.

Doesn't remember anyone named Donald Payne from the MDW.

Didn't know any of the people at Bethesda.

Saw lots of "high-powered people." Lots of brass. Lot of people were there before he and his men arrived. He and his men actually arrived as the body arrived.

Saw the body briefly from a distance when he was asked to deliver a message in the morgue. This was in the first hour and a half -- doesn't remember that body was eviscerated, thinks it wasn't.

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Got the clear impression that the upper echelon was in crisis.
End of interview.

[Retyped copy of his 2 page report -- he sent to me, received on April 6, 1996]

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To: Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Institute Company

Subj: Security detail, Bethesda Naval Hospital, 22 November 1963

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R. E. Boyajian
Sgt. USMC

[end of page one of two page report]

[beginning of page two of two page report]

26 November 1963

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NCOIC: Sgt Boyajian	LCpl Evangelista
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Cpl Brown	LCpl Pinkas
Cpl Duke	LCpl Yount
LCpl Halloran	LCpl Nugent

Duty Driver was also utilized.

R. E. Boyajian

[end of document]

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