

THE INVESTIGATION OF THE
ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY: PERFORMANCE
OF THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

BOOK V

FINAL REPORT
OF THE
SELECT COMMITTEE
TO STUDY GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS
WITH RESPECT TO
INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES
UNITED STATES SENATE



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SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE TO STUDY GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS
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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

On behalf of the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, and pursuant to the mandate of Senate Resolution 21, I am transmitting herewith to the Senate the volume of the Committee's Final Report entitled, "The Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: Performance of the Intelligence Agencies."

I want to express the deep appreciation of the Committee to Senator Richard S. Schweiker and Senator Gary Hart for their excellent work on this phase of the Select Committee's investigation.

FRANK CHURCH,
Chairman.

(III)

NOTE

On May 26, 1976, the Select Committee voted to release the section of its final Report entitled, "The Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: Performance of the Intelligence Agencies." Senators Church, Baker, Philip Hart, Mondale, Huddleston, Morgan, Gary Hart, Mathias, and Schweiker voted to release this Report. Senators Tower, and Goldwater voted against the release of this report.

This Report has been reviewed and declassified by the appropriate executive agencies. After the Committee's original draft of this report was completed, copies of it were made available to the executive agencies. These agencies submitted comments to the Committee on security and factual aspects of the draft report. On the basis of these comments, the Committee and staff conferred with representatives of the agencies to determine which sections of the Report should be re-drafted to protect sensitive intelligence sources and methods. These sections of the original draft were then revised to reflect the agencies' concerns while retaining the original thrust of the Report.

Names of individuals were deleted when, in the Committee's judgment, disclosure of their identities would either endanger their safety or constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. Consequently, footnote citations to testimony and documents occasionally contain only descriptions of an individual's position.

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I. SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

The Select Committee's investigation of alleged assassination attempts against foreign leaders raised questions of possible connections between these plots and the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Questions were later raised about whether the agencies adequately investigated these possible connections and whether information about these plots was provided the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy (the Warren Commission). As a result, pursuant to its general mandate to review the performance of the intelligence agencies, the Select Committee reviewed their specific performance with respect to their investigation of the assassination of the President.

A. The Scope of the Committee's Investigation

The Committee did not attempt to duplicate the work of the Warren Commission. It did not review the findings and conclusions of the Warren Commission. It did not re-examine the physical evidence which the Warren Commission had. It did not review one of the principal questions facing the Commission: whether Lee Harvey Oswald was in fact the assassin of President Kennedy.

Instead, building upon the Select Committee's earlier work, and utilizing its access to the agencies and its expertise in their functions, the Committee examined the performance of the intelligence agencies in conducting their investigation of the assassination and their relationships to the Warren Commission.

In the course of this investigation, more than 50 witnesses were either interviewed or deposed. Literally tens of thousands of pages of documentary evidence were reviewed at the agencies and more than 5,000 pages were acquired. In addition, the Committee relied a great deal on testimony taken during the course of its investigation of alleged plots to assassinate foreign leaders, especially testimony relating to knowledge of those plots.

The Committee has been impressed with the ability and dedication of most of those in the intelligence community. Most officials of the FBI, the CIA, and other agencies performed their assigned tasks thoroughly, competently, and professionally. Supervisors at agency headquarters similarly met their responsibilities and are deserving of the highest praise. Yet, as this Report documents, these individuals did not have access to all of the information held by the most senior officials in their own agencies. Nor did they control, or even influence, many of the decisions made by those senior officials, decisions which shaped the investigation and the process by which information was provided to the Warren Commission. Thus, it cannot be too strongly emphasized that this Report examines the performance of the senior agency officials in light of the information available to them.

Many potential witnesses could not be called because of limitations of time and resources. For this reason the Committee has relied a great deal on the documentary record of events. The Committee's Report distinguishes information obtained from documents from information it obtained through sworn testimony through citations, since the documentary records may not accurately reflect the true events. On the other hand, the Committee has on many occasions noted that witnesses may have no recollection of the events described in documents which they either prepared or in which they were mentioned.

The following Report details the evidence developed to date. The Report is intended to be descriptive of the facts the Committee has developed. The Committee believes the investigation should continue, in certain areas, and for that reason does not reach any final conclusions. Instead, the Select Committee has recommended that the Senate Committee on Intelligence continue this investigation in those areas where the Select Committee's investigation could not be completed.

B. Summary

In the days following the assassination of President Kennedy, nothing was more important to this country than to determine the facts of his death; no one single event has shaken the country more. Yet the evidence the Committee has developed suggests that, for different reasons, both the CIA and the FBI failed in, or avoided carrying out, certain of their responsibilities in this matter.

The Committee emphasizes that this Report's discussion of investigative deficiencies and the failure of American intelligence agencies to inform the Warren Commission of certain information does not lead to the conclusion that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

Instead, this Report details the evidence the Committee developed concerning the investigation those agencies conducted into the President's assassination, their relationship with each other and with the Warren Commission, and the effect their own operations may have had on the course of the investigation. It places particular emphasis on the effect their Cuban operations seemed to have on the investigation.

However, the Committee cautions that it has seen no evidence that Fidel Castro or others in the Cuban government plotted President Kennedy's assassination in retaliation for U.S. operations against Cuba. The Report details these operations to illustrate why they were relevant to the investigation. Thus, the CIA operation involving a high level Cuban official, code-named AMLASH, is described in order to illustrate why that operation, and its possible ramifications, should have been examined as part of the assassination investigation. Similarly, although Cuban exile groups opposed to Castro may have been upset with Kennedy administration actions which restricted their activities, the Committee has no evidence that such groups plotted the assassination.

Almost from the day Castro took power in Cuba, the United States became the center of attempts to depose him. Cuban exiles, anti-communists, business interests, underworld figures, and the United States Government all had their own reasons for seeking to overthrow the Castro government. These interests generally operated independently of the others; but on occasion, a few from each group would join forces in a combined effort.

In April 1961, a force of Cuban exiles and soldiers of fortune backed by the CIA, attempted an invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. In November of that year, the United States Government decided that further such overt paramilitary operations were no longer feasible, and embarked on Operation MONGOOSE. This operation attempted to use Cuban exiles and dissidents inside Cuba to overthrow Castro.

When the United States faced a major confrontation with the Soviet Union during the October 1962 Cuban missile crisis, it terminated MONGOOSE; the CIA's covert operations against Cuba were reduced; and the FBI and other agencies of government began to restrict the paramilitary operations of exile groups. This rather sudden shift against paramilitary activity of Cuban exile groups generated hostility. Supporters of some of these groups were angered by the change in government policy. They viewed this as a weakening of the U.S. will to oppose Castro.

Throughout this period, the CIA had been plotting the assassination of Castro as another method of achieving a change in the Cuban government. Between 1960 and early 1963 the CIA attempted to use underworld figures for this assassination. By May 1962, the FBI knew of such plots, and in June 1963 learned of their termination.

Following a June 1963 decision by a "Special Group" of the National Security Council to increase covert operations against Cuba, the CIA renewed contact with a high-level Cuban government official, code-named AMLASH. At his first meeting with the CIA in over a year, AMLASH proposed Castro's overthrow through an "inside job," with U.S. support. AMLASH considered the assassination of Castro a necessary part of this "inside job." Shortly after this meeting with AMLASH, Castro issued a public warning reported prominently in the U.S. press about the United States' meeting with terrorists who wished to eliminate Cuban leaders. He threatened that Cuba would answer in kind.

Five days after Castro issued this threat, the Coordinating Committee for Cuban affairs, an interagency planning committee subordinate to the National Security Council's Special Group, met to endorse or modify then existing contingency plans for possible retaliation by the Cuban Government. Representatives of the CIA, and of the State, Defense and Justice Departments were on this Committee. The CIA representatives on this Committee were from its Special Affairs Staff (SAS), the staff responsible for Cuban matters generally and the AMLASH operation. Those attending the meeting on September 12 agreed unanimously that there was a strong likelihood Castro would retaliate in some way against the rash of covert activity in Cuba.

At this September 12 meeting this Committee concluded Castro would not risk major confrontation with the United States. It therefore rejected the possibility that Cuba would retaliate by attacking American officials within the United States; it assigned no agency the responsibility for consideration of this contingency.

Within weeks of this meeting the CIA escalated the level of its covert operations, informing AMLASH the United States supported his coup. Despite warnings from certain CIA staffers that the operation was poorly conceived and insecure, the head of SAS, Desmond Fitzgerald, met AMLASH on October 29, 1963, told him he was the

"personal representative" of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and stated the United States would support a coup. On November 22, at a pre-arranged meeting, a CIA Case Officer told AMLASH he would be provided rifles with telescopic sights, and explosives with which to carry out his plan. He was also offered a poison pen device.

Following the President's death, searches of FBI and CIA files revealed that Lee Harvey Oswald was not unknown to the intelligence agencies. In late 1959, the FBI opened a "security file" on Oswald after his defection to the Soviet Union. After Oswald's return to this country in June 1962, he was interviewed twice by FBI agents; on each occasion he repeatedly lied. He also refused to be polygraphed about his negative answers to questions of ties with Soviet intelligence. Yet the FBI closed the Oswald security case immediately after the second interview. The case was reopened in March 1963, but Oswald was not interviewed by the FBI until August 10, 1963, when he requested an interview after his arrest in New Orleans for disturbing the peace. On the occasion of this third interview, he again repeatedly lied to FBI agents. A month later Oswald visited Mexico City, where he visited both the Cuban and Soviet diplomatic establishments, and contacted a vice consul at the latter who was in fact a KGB agent. Despite receiving this information on Oswald's Mexico City activity, the FBI failed to intensify its investigative efforts. It failed to interview him before the assassination despite receiving a note from him warning the FBI to leave his wife alone.

Immediately after the assassination, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover ordered a complete review of the FBI's handling of the Oswald security case. Within six days he was given a report which detailed serious investigative deficiencies. As a result of these deficiencies seventeen FBI personnel, including one Assistant Director, were disciplined. The fact that the FBI felt there were investigative deficiencies and the disciplinary actions it took were never publicly disclosed by the Bureau or communicated to the Warren Commission.

The evidence suggests that during the Warren Commission investigation top FBI officials were continually concerned with protecting the Bureau's reputation and avoiding any criticism for not fulfilling investigative responsibilities. Within weeks after the assassination, the FBI, at the urging of senior Government officials, issued a report concluding that Oswald was the assassin and that he had acted alone.

The Bureau issued its report on the basis of a narrow investigation focused on Oswald, without conducting a broad investigation of the assassination which would have revealed any conspiracy, foreign or domestic.

Despite knowledge of Oswald's apparent interest in pro-Castro and anti-Castro activities and top level awareness of certain CIA assassination plots, the FBI, according to all agents and supervisory personnel who testified before the Committee, made no special investigative effort into questions of possible Cuban government or Cuban exile involvement in the assassination independent of the Oswald investigation. There is no indication that the FBI or the CIA directed the interviewing of Cuban sources or of sources within the Cuban exile community. The division of the FBI responsible for investigating criminal aspects of the assassination, and not the division responsible for investigating subversive activities (including those of Cuban

groups), was primarily responsible for the investigation and served as liaison to the Warren Commission.

Director Hoover himself perceived the Warren Commission as an adversary. He repeatedly remarked that the Commission, particularly the Chief Justice, was "seeking to criticize" the FBI and merely attempting to "find gaps" in the FBI's investigation. On two separate occasions, the latter immediately upon release of the Commission's Report, Director Hoover asked for all derogatory material on Warren Commission members and staff contained in the FBI files.

Neither the CIA nor the FBI told the Warren Commission about the CIA attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro. Allen Dulles, former Director of Central Intelligence, was a member of the Warren Commission and presumably knew about CIA plots during his tenure with the Agency, although he probably was unaware of the AMLASH operation. FBI Director Hoover and senior FBI officials also knew about these earlier plots. In July 1964, two months before the Warren Commission issued its 26-volume report of its investigation and findings, FBI officials learned that a Cuban official (not known to the Bureau as "AMLASH") was plotting with the CIA to assassinate Castro. However, there is no evidence this knowledge affected the FBI investigation of the President's assassination in any way. The Attorney General and other government officials knew there had been previous assassination plots with the underworld. None of the testimony or documents received by the Warren Commission mentioned the CIA assassination plots. The subordinate officers at the FBI and the CIA who acted as liaisons with the Warren Commission did not know of the CIA assassination attempts.

The AMLASH plot was more relevant to the Warren Commission's work than the early CIA assassination plots with the underworld. Unlike those earlier plots, the AMLASH operation was in progress at the time of the assassination; unlike the earlier plots, the AMLASH operation could clearly be traced to the CIA; and unlike the earlier plots, the CIA had endorsed AMLASH's proposal for a coup, the first step to him being Castro's assassination, despite Castro's threat to retaliate for such plotting. No one directly involved in either agency's investigation was told of the AMLASH operation. No one investigated a connection between the AMLASH operation and President Kennedy's assassination. Although Oswald had been in contact with pro-Castro and anti-Castro groups for many months before the assassination, the CIA did not conduct a thorough investigation of questions of Cuban Government or Cuban exile involvement in the assassination.

CIA officials knowledgeable of the AMLASH plot testified they did not relate it to the President's assassination; however, those at CIA and FBI responsible for their agency's investigation testified that, had they been aware of the plot, they would have considered it relevant to their investigation. The individual who directed the CIA investigation for the first month after the assassination, testified that he felt knowledge of the AMLASH operation would have been a "vital factor" in shaping his investigation. His successor at the CIA also stated that knowledge of the AMLASH plot would have made a difference in his investigation. Individuals on the Warren Commission staff have expressed similar opinions as to all plots against Castro. There is also

evidence that CIA investigators requested name traces which should have made them aware of the AMLASH operation, but for some reason, they did not learn of that operation.

Although the Warren Commission concluded its work in September 1964, the investigation of the assassination was not to end. Both FBI Director Hoover and CIA Deputy Director for Plans Richard Helms pledged to keep the matter as an open case.

In 1965, the FBI and the CIA received information about the AMLASH operation, which indicated the entire operation was insecure, and caused the CIA to terminate it. Despite the fact that the information then received might have raised doubts about the investigation of the President's assassination, neither agency re-examined the assassination.

The assassination of President Kennedy again came to the attention of the intelligence agencies in 1967. President Johnson took a personal interest in allegations that Castro had retaliated. Although the FBI received such allegations, no investigation was conducted.

On the very day President Johnson received the FBI reports of these allegations, he met with CIA Director Richard Helms. The next day, Helms ordered the CIA Inspector General to prepare a report on Agency sponsored assassination plots. Although this report raised the question of a possible connection between the CIA plots against Castro and the assassination of President Kennedy, it was not furnished to CIA investigators who were to review the Kennedy assassination investigation. Once again, although these CIA investigators requested information that should have led them to discover the AMLASH operation, they apparently did not receive that information.

C. Findings

The Committee emphasizes that it has not uncovered any evidence sufficient to justify a conclusion that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy.

The Committee has, however, developed evidence which impeaches the process by which the intelligence agencies arrived at their own conclusions about the assassination, and by which they provided information to the Warren Commission. This evidence indicates that the investigation of the assassination was deficient and that facts which might have substantially affected the course of the investigation were not provided the Warren Commission or those individuals within the FBI and the CIA, as well as other agencies of Government, who were charged with investigating the assassination.

The Committee has found that the FBI, the agency with primary responsibility in the matter, was ordered by Director Hoover and pressured by higher government officials, to conclude its investigation quickly. The FBI conducted its investigation in an atmosphere of concern among senior Bureau officials that it would be criticized and its reputation tarnished. Rather than addressing its investigation to all significant circumstances, including all possibilities of conspiracy, the FBI investigation focused narrowly on Lee Harvey Oswald.

The Committee has found that even with this narrow focus, the FBI investigation, as well as the CIA inquiry, was deficient on the specific question of the significance of Oswald's contacts with pro-Castro and anti-Castro groups for the many months before the assassination.

Those individuals directly responsible for the investigations were not fully conversant with the fluctuations in American policy toward those who opposed Castro, and they lacked a working knowledge of pro-Castro and anti-Castro activity. They did not know the full extent of U.S. operations against Cuba including the CIA efforts to assassinate Castro. The Committee further found that these investigative deficiencies are probably the reason that significant leads received by intelligence agencies were not pursued.

Senior Bureau officials should have realized the FBI efforts were focused too narrowly to allow for a full investigation. They should have realized the significance of Oswald's Cuban contacts could not be fully analyzed without the direct involvement of FBI personnel who had expertise in such matters. Yet these senior officials permitted the investigation to take this course and viewed the Warren Commission investigation in an adversarial light.

Senior CIA officials also should have realized that their agency was not utilizing its full capability to investigate Oswald's pro-Castro and anti-Castro connections. They should have realized that CIA operations against Cuba, particularly operations involving the assassination of Castro, needed to be considered in the investigation. Yet, they directed their subordinates to conduct an investigation without telling them of these vital facts. These officials, whom the Warren Commission relied upon for expertise, advised the Warren Commission that the CIA had no evidence of foreign conspiracy.

Why senior officials of the FBI and the CIA permitted the investigation to go forward, in light of these deficiencies, and why they permitted the Warren Commission to reach its conclusion without all relevant information is still unclear. Certainly, concern with public reputation, problems of coordination between agencies, possible bureaucratic failure and embarrassment, and the extreme compartmentation of knowledge of sensitive operations may have contributed to these shortcomings. But the possibility exists that senior officials in both agencies made conscious decisions not to disclose potentially important information.

Because the Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities ended on May 31, 1976, a final resolution of these questions was impossible. Nevertheless, the Committee decided to make its findings public, because the people have a right to know how these special agencies of the Government fulfill their responsibilities.

The Committee recommends that its successor, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, the permanent Senate Committee overseeing intelligence operations, continue the investigation in an attempt to resolve these questions. To assist its successor, this Committee has forwarded all files pertaining to this investigation.

This phase of the Committee's work will undoubtedly stir controversy. Few events in recent memory have so aroused the emotions of this Nation and the world, as those in Dallas, in November 1963. Conspiracy theories and theorists abound, and the public remains unsatisfied. Regrettably, this Report will not put the matter to rest. Even after additional investigative work, no additional evidence may come to light on the ultimate question of why President Kennedy was assassinated.

II. BACKGROUND FOR THE WARREN COMMISSION INVESTIGATION: CUBA AND THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

In assessing the performance of the intelligence agencies in investigating President John F. Kennedy's assassination, one of the focuses of the Select Committee's investigation was whether the Warren Commission was supplied all the information necessary to conduct the "thorough and independent investigation of the circumstances surrounding the assassination" which President Johnson had ordered. At the outset of its investigation, the Select Committee had evidence that the Warren Commission was not given information about CIA attempts to assassinate foreign leaders. As the Select Committee later discovered, the Warren Commission was also unaware of the full extent of the agencies' involvement in operations directed against Cuba. This section of the report summarizes aspects of those operations relevant to the Warren Commission's investigation.

On New Year's Day, 1959, Fidel Castro's forces overthrew the Batista regime and assumed control of the government of Cuba after a long revolutionary struggle which had received support from many within the United States. The subsequent actions of the Cuban Government, particularly its move toward Communism and alignment with the Soviet Union, gradually produced forces strongly opposed to Castro—forces which wanted his government out of Cuba.

Reports which the Select Committee has obtained from the intelligence agencies document the varying interests outside Cuba which opposed Castro. Perhaps foremost in the opposition to Castro were the thousands of Cubans who had fled Cuba after his takeover. The Cuban exiles in the United States formed a variety of organizations to voice their opposition to Castro. Some of these organizations not only voiced opposition, but also planned and executed paramilitary operations to harass the Castro government.

Many Americans outside the Cuban exile community opposed the Castro regime. To them, the Castro government represented a major move by the Soviet Union to spread Communism into the Western Hemisphere. To these people, halting Castro meant halting Communism.

Other less idealistic interests were also opposed to Castro. His communist government had expropriated the property of foreign businesses and Cubans who had fled Cuba. Removal of the Castro government was one way to regain their lost businesses and property. Other business interests opposed Castro because his control over the Cuban economy had a major effect on their own operations.

Finally, certain underworld interests were opposed to Castro. Before his take over, Cuba had been very important to these interests, but Castro had forced the underworld out. Removal of Castro likely meant these interests could return to Cuba.¹

In addition to this strong anti-Castro sentiment in the private sector, the United States Government was pursuing a policy of opposition to the Castro regime. The precise government policy varied during the early 1960s as did the specific government action implementing that policy. Both planning and implementation of the policy involved almost all major departments of the Federal government, including the intelligence agencies.

The intelligence agencies had two primary responsibilities. All the intelligence agencies collected information on Cuban, pro-Castro, and anti-Castro activity. Their combined efforts resulted in an extensive intelligence network in Cuba, in other Caribbean countries, and in the United States, a network which reported on a wide range of matters. Second, the intelligence agencies, primarily the CIA, undertook covert operations against Cuba. The techniques utilized in these covert operations ranged from propaganda, to paramilitary action, and included the outright invasion at the Bay of Pigs. These operations were conducted not only through individuals directly employed by the agencies, but also through certain of the anti-Castro groups ostensibly independent of the intelligence agencies.

Obviously, it is difficult to discover the details of any intelligence operation, since intelligence operations were designed to prevent such discovery. Except in a few instances, the Select Committee has not attempted to unravel these operations, but has instead focused on the general nature of the operations.

In 1961 the President was forced to admit publicly that the Bay of Pigs invasion was an operation sponsored by the CIA. In November 1961, after a period of reappraisal following the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion, another approach to the Cuba problem, Operation MONGOOSE, was conceived. As described in more detail in the Select Committee's Report, "Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign

¹ Indeed, during the missile crisis, an FBI informant reported that "he believes he could arrange to have Fidel Castro assassinated . . . Underworld figures still have channels inside Cuba through which the assassination of Castro could be successfully arranged."

"He said that in the event the United States Government is interested in having the attempt made, he would raise the necessary money and would want nothing from the Government except the assurance that such an undertaking would in no way adversely affect the national security. He expressed confidence in his ability to accomplish this mission without any additional contact with Government representatives and with a minimum of contacts with private individuals."

The Bureau reported this contact to the Attorney General and concluded :

The informant was told that his offer is outside our jurisdiction, which he acknowledged. No commitments were made to him. At this time, we do not plan to further pursue the matter. Our relationship with him has been most carefully guarded and we would feel obligated to handle any recontact of him concerning this matter if such is desired. (Memorandum from Hoover to the Attorney General, 10/29/62.)

Leaders," MONGOOSE was to use Cuban exiles in operations designed to foment an internal revolution in Cuba.²

The Soviet-U.S. confrontation during the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962, was a factor leading to another reappraisal of American policy toward Cuba. This resulted in Operation MONGOOSE being phased out and the Special Group (Augmented) ordering a halt to all sabotage operations.³

As the Assassination Report has detailed, from 1960 until 1962 the Central Intelligence Agency met regularly with underworld figures plotting the assassination of Fidel Castro. In early 1963, William Harvey, the CIA's contact to these underworld figures, told them the CIA was no longer interested in assassinating Castro.⁴

After the missile crisis, CIA operations against Cuba apparently decreased, while operations by Cuban exile groups on their own continued. On March 18, 1963, there was a reported attack on a Soviet vessel off the northern coast of Cuba by members of two exile groups, Alpha 66, and the Second National Front of Escambray.⁵ There was another reported attack on a Soviet vessel off the northern coast of Cuba on the evening of March 26-27, 1963, by members of another anti-Castro group, Commandos L-66.⁶

This apparently caused considerable concern within the U.S. Government that such activity by Cuban exile groups could produce a confrontation with the Soviets.⁷ One witness stated, "the whole apparatus of government, Coast Guard, Customs, Immigration and Naturalization, FBI, CIA, were working together to try to keep these operations from going to Cuba."⁸

These moves to restrict exile activities had an impact on New Orleans at the time Lee Harvey Oswald was living there. As reported

² "Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders," 11/20/75, pp. 139-148, referred to hereinafter as the Assassination Report.

The Committee has discovered since the issuance of its Assassination Report that, in addition to the CIA and Department of Defense, the FBI was also consulted in MONGOOSE planning. In November 1961, the Bureau submitted its own five-point program of action against Castro, advocating strong support of rebel activity within Cuba. (Memorandum from Belmont to Tolson, 11/9/61.)

³ Memorandum for the record from General Lansdale, 10/30/62.

⁴ The Assassination Report discussed at length who knew of the CIA's assassination plots against Castro. So far as has been determined, knowledge of plots involving the underworld were known by a number of government officials outside the CIA. For example, FBI Director Hoover prepared a memorandum dated May 10, 1962, in which he recounted a private meeting he had with the Attorney General that day. Hoover noted:

Maheu had been hired by CIA to approach Giancana with a proposition of paying \$150,000 to hire some gunman to go into Cuba and kill Castro. He further stated that CIA admitted having assisted Maheu in making the bugging of Las Vegas.

A copy of this memorandum was disseminated to Messrs. Tolson, Belmont, Sullivan, and DeLoach.

⁵ Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 3/29/63.

⁶ Memorandum from J. Edgar Hoover to Director of Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, dated April 1, 1963. Subject: Anti-Castro Activities in the United States—Internal Security—Cuba-Neutrality Matters.

⁷ Section Chief testimony, 5/11/76, pp. 19-22.

⁸ Chief, JM WAVE testimony, 5/16/76, pp. 21, 22.

on page one of the New Orleans Times-Picayune on August 1, 1963, the FBI seized more than a ton of dynamite, 20 bomb casings, napalm material and other devices at a home in the New Orleans area on July 31. Newspaper interest in the seizure continued with prominent articles in the Times-Picayune on August 2 and August 4. The Warren Commission learned that, on August 5, Oswald contacted a Cuban exile in New Orleans, Carlos Bringuer, offering to help in training anti-Castro forces. Then on August 7, Oswald returned and left his Marine Corps training manual for Bringuer. Two days later, Bringuer saw Oswald handing out pro-Castro literature, which resulted in fighting and their arrest. Oswald subsequently appeared on a radio debate with Bringuer, again taking a pro-Castro position.⁹

Additional FBI reports provided to the Warren Commission detailed other facts connected to this anti-Castro activity in New Orleans at the time of Oswald's contact with Bringuer. On July 24, according to FBI reports, ten Cuban exiles arrived in New Orleans from Miami. These ten joined an existing group of exiles at a "training camp" north of New Orleans, which was directed by the same individuals who were involved in procuring the dynamite the FBI seized. By late July, some 28 Cuban exiles were at the training camp, allegedly awaiting transportation to Guatemala where they would work for a lumber company.

Some of those who owned the land on which the Cuban exiles were staying became concerned about the FBI interest in the anti-Castro activities and ordered them to leave. Carlos Bringuer was called upon to assist in getting this group back to Miami.¹⁰

Although this was the extent of the Warren Commission investigation of this incident, at least one FBI report, on the seizure of materials which was not provided the Warren Commission, raises additional questions about the purpose of Oswald's contact with Bringuer. Indeed, Bringuer himself believed Oswald was attempting to infiltrate the anti-Castro movement in order to report its activities to pro-Castro forces.¹¹

A report of the Miami Office of the FBI revealed some of the information the FBI had on this incident:

On June 14, 1963, information was received that a group of Cuban exiles had a plan to bomb the Shell refinery in Cuba.

On June 15, 1963, United States Customs Agents seized a twin Beechcraft airplane on the outskirts of Miami, Florida, along with a quantity of explosives.

[. . .] "A" and . . ., along with American [. . .] were involved and detained, but not arrested, by the United States Customs Agents. It was ascertained that [. . .] supplied the money and explosives for this operation. [He] is well known as a former gambling concession operator in Havana. . . .

On July 19, 1963, [. . .] advised there was another plan to bomb Cuba, using bomb casings and dynamite located on the outskirts of New Orleans, Louisiana.

⁹ Warren Report, pp. 407, 408.

¹⁰ Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 5/15/64.

¹¹ Warren Report, Vol. X, pp. 43-45.

On July 31, 1963, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) at New Orleans, Louisiana, obtained a search warrant and seized 2,400 pounds of dynamite and 20 bomb casings near Lacombe, Louisiana. This material was located on the property of [. . .] brother of [. . .], [of] Miami Beach . . . and former operator of a casino in the Nacional Hotel, Havana, Cuba.

Investigation determined that this dynamite was purchased at Collinsville, Illinois, by ["B"] for "A", who was involved in the June 14, 1963, seizures at Miami. "A" transported the dynamite to New Orleans in a rented trailer. Also involved in this bomb plot were . . .

[. . .] advised on June 14, 1963, "B" of Collinsville, Illinois, recently arrived in Miami, Florida, in a Ford station wagon with a load of arms for sale. American adventurers and mercenaries, [. . .] and [. . .] took "B" around to meet the different Cuban exile leaders in Miami. . . ."¹²

On another occasion, an intelligence agency conducted a sensitive operation which developed information on the location of arms caches and training camps in another country. That information was given to the other country, which then raided the camps and seized the materials. Raids and seizures such as these apparently were commonplace throughout the summer and fall of 1963.¹³ Those individuals apparently sponsoring this activity were angered by these raids and seizures.

Reports in the files of the intelligence agencies in mid-1963, document a series of meetings among major leaders of the anti-Castro movement.¹⁴ These reports indicate that some of these leaders claimed the support of the United States Government.

Whether these were in fact related to decisions by the U.S. Government is not known, but such meetings followed the June 1963 decision of the Special Group to step up various covert operations designed to encourage dissident groups inside Cuba, to worsen economic conditions in the country, and to cause Cubans to doubt the ability of the Castro regime to defend the country.¹⁵

Contemporaneously, the CIA took steps to renew its contact with a high-level Cuban official code named AMLASH. The CIA's previous contact with him had been sporadic; he had not been in direct contact with the CIA since before the missile crisis of October 1962. The exact purpose the CIA had for renewing contact is unknown, but there is no evidence the CIA intended at this time to use AMLASH in an assassination operation.

On August 16, 1963, the Chicago Sun Times carried an article claiming that the CIA had dealings with an underworld figure, Sam Giancana. This prompted Director McCone to ask the Deputy Director for Plans, Richard Helms, for a report about the article. McCone testified that Helms gave him a memorandum on the CIA operation

¹² Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/3/63.

¹³ Intelligence officer's testimony, 5/10/64, pp. 21-24, 26.

¹⁴ For example, memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/18/63, pp. 5-10.

¹⁵ Memorandum for the Special Group, 6/19/63.

involving Giancana and orally informed him that it involved assassination on August 16.¹⁶

Within weeks of Helms' report to the DCI, CIA case officers held their first 1963 meeting with AMLASH. Although before this meeting CIA's interest in AMLASH may have been to gain intelligence and to cultivate him as an asset for covert operations, the case officers learned that AMLASH was interested primarily in getting the United States to invade Cuba, or in attempting an "inside job" against Castro, and that he was awaiting a U.S. plan of action.¹⁷ This was communicated to CIA Headquarters on September 7.

Late in the evening of September 7, Premier Castro held an impromptu, three-hour interview with Associated Press reporter Daniel Harker and in that interview warned against the United States "aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders." He stated, according to Harker, United States leaders would be in danger if they helped in any attempt to do away with leaders of Cuba. "We are prepared to fight them and answer in kind. United States leaders should think that if they are aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders, they themselves will not be safe." He added: "Yet the CIA and other dreamers believe their hopes of an insurrection or a successful guerrilla war. They can go on dreaming forever."¹⁸

Of course, discussions among Cuban exiles regarding the assassination of Castro were common among the more militant Cuban exiles.

... "assassination" was part of the ambience of that time . . . nobody could be involved in Cuban operations without having had some sort of a discussion at some time with some Cuban who said . . . the way to create a revolution is to shoot Fidel and Raul . . . so the fact that somebody would talk about assassination just wasn't anything really out of the ordinary at that time.¹⁹

One FBI report on a Cuban exile organization reported an exile group meeting in August 1963. A military officer from a Latin American country was there:

[He] acted tough, talking about assassinations and left no doubt he is a military man. He offered training camps, military equipment, and military bases from which Cuba could be attacked. He spoke very derogatorily of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and explained that his proposed operations had the sanction and support of top United States military officials.²⁰

¹⁶ Assassination Report, p. 107.

¹⁷ Characterization of this phase of the AMLASH operation is disputed. The Assassination Report concluded this was an assassination operation, but several CIA officials involved do not agree with this conclusion. However, the CIA case officer for this operation agreed that AMLASH himself believed assassination was the first step of any coup in Cuba and the CIA met with him on that basis.

¹⁸ This account of the interview appeared in the Miami Herald, p. 1A, September 9, 1963. While other major newspapers carried the story, some did not include Premier Castro's warning.

¹⁹ Chief, JM/WAVE testimony, 5/6/76, p. 35.

²⁰ Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 8/19/63.

The Committee found no evidence to support such a claim of support by American military officers.

Castro's September 7 statement could have been referring to information he had received relating to such assassination plots hatched by exile leaders. In addition there were paramilitary raids on Cuba by exile groups shortly before Castro's interview. However, Castro's warning about the safety of "U.S. leaders . . . aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders" suggests he was aware of some activity attributable to the U.S. Government.²¹

At this time review and approval of covert operations against Cuba were the responsibility of the National Security Council's Special Group, chaired by McGeorge Bundy. Responsibility for developing covert action proposals was delegated to an Interagency Cuban Coordinating Committee chaired by a Coordinator from the State Department.²²

On September 12, only three days after the Associated Press story about Castro's September 7 warning to U.S. leaders was carried in American newspapers, the Cuban Coordinating Committee met. The purpose of this meeting, was to conduct a broad review of the U.S. Government's Cuban contingency plans and to come up with an endorsement or modification of the existing plans. Specifically the Committee, according to this memorandum, unanimously agreed:

that there was a strong likelihood that Castro would retaliate in some way against the rash of covert activity in Cuba. At the same time, the Coordinator emphasized that it was his view that any Castro retaliation will be at a low level and not along a track which would precipitate a direct confrontation with the United States.²³

The Coordinator, again according to this memorandum, referred to the meeting as a "brainstorming" session. This memorandum listed the possible retaliatory actions Cuba might undertake.

4. Actions against U.S. targets in Latin America employing Castro allied forces.

(c) Increased attempts at kidnaping or attempts at assassination of American officials or citizens. (Likely)

5. Actions against targets in the U.S.

(a) Sabotage or terrorist bombings. (Unlikely)

(b) Attacks against U.S. officials. (Unlikely)

(c) Cuban controlled raids by unmarked boats or aircraft in the Keys. (Unlikely)

(d) Jammings of U.S. radio stations. (Likely)²⁴

²¹ The individual who was the CIA "point of record" for working with the Warren Commission wrote in 1975:

There can be no question from the facts surrounding the Castro appearance, which had not been expected, and his agreement to the interview, that this event represented a more-than-ordinary attempt to get a message on the record in the United States. (CIA memorandum, 5/23/75.) A CIA analyst on Cuban affairs reached a similar conclusion. (Briefing of Select Committee staff, 1/7/76.)

²² Assassination Report, p. 170.

²³ Memorandum for the Record, by DOD representative, 9/13/63. Subject: Minutes of Cuban Coordinating Committee meeting held at Department of State, 1430 hours, 12 September 1963.

The memorandum concluded by noting the Coordinator had stated that the State Department would provide a list of the most significant Castro actions on Friday, September 13, and expect comment by September 17 from the members. The next meeting was scheduled for September 18.

On September 13, 1963, the Coordinator circulated a list of "those possible retaliatory actions by the Cuban Government which we agreed at our meeting of September 12 represent situations which have priority in a review of our contingency planning."²⁵ The list of possible actions included: "Actions against U.S. Targets in Latin America Through Castro-Allied Forces . . . Increased Attempts at Kidnapping or Attempts at Assassination of American Officials or Citizens." It also included a category "Actions Against Targets in the U.S." While the Committee decided at its September 12 meeting that sabotage or terrorist bombing was an unlikely action, that possibility was included in the September 13 list. The possibility of "Attacks Against U.S. Official" was not included in the September 13 list.

On September 27, 1963, the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs prepared a memorandum listing assignments for contingency papers relating to possible retaliatory actions by the Castro regime.²⁶ The Subcommittee on Cuban Subversion was directed to submit papers on the possible increased attempts at kidnapping or attempts at assassination of American officials or citizens by October 4. The memorandum noted: "This exercise will be part of the Subcommittee's study of measures to meet general intensification by Castro regime of subversive efforts in Latin America."²⁷

Possible attacks against U.S. officials in the United States was not considered a likely contingency at the September 12 meeting and so the September 27 memorandum gave no agency responsibility for that contingency. With regard to "sabotage or terroristic bombings against U.S. territory," the assignment was given to the Justice representative to "bring Coordinating Committee's views to the attention of the FBI."²⁸

The available information indicates that the CIA Special Affairs Staff which was responsible for Cuban operations, was, as an organizational entity both plotting with AMLASH and at the very same time participating in this interagency review of contingency plans for possible Cuban retaliation.²⁹ Moreover, SAS as an organizational entity,

²⁴ *Ibid.* (Emphasis added)

²⁵ Memorandum to the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee of Cuban Affairs, from Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, 9/13/63, re: Possible Retaliatory Actions by Castro Government.

²⁶ Memorandum to the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee of Cuban Affairs, from Coordinator of Cuban Affairs, 9/27/63. Subject: Contingency Paper Assignments re Possible Retaliatory Actions by Castro Government.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Because the Select Committee staff only recently discovered the documents discussed above, it has had no opportunity to question the persons who prepared them or who attended these meetings. The Select Committee staff has requested a number of agencies to provide photo copies of all documents on the Cuban Coordinating Committee, including documents on the possibility of retaliation and is awaiting a response from these agencies. The Committee staff has been told informally that the CIA representatives on this Committee were from its Special Affairs Staff.

had knowledge that the interagency committee had concluded "Cuban attack against U.S. officials within the United States" was an unlikely response to the rash of covert activity in Cuba. Nevertheless, either during or shortly after completion of the review of possible retaliatory actions, SAS made the decision to escalate the level of CIA covert activity directed against Cuba.

Meetings between CIA case officers and AMLASH continued after this review.³⁰ At one such meeting, AMLASH was told his proposal (a coup, the first step of which was the assassination of Fidel Castro) was under consideration at the "highest levels". The case officer who made this representation testified he only intended to refer to the highest levels of the CIA.³¹

In response to this representation, AMLASH requested a personal meeting with Robert Kennedy to obtain his assurance of U.S. support. Instead, the CIA sent Desmond Fitzgerald, the senior CIA officer who headed the Special Affairs Staff, which was the CIA section charged with responsibility for Cuban affairs, to meet AMLASH on October 29, 1963.³²

³⁰ The security of the AMLASH operation as of October 1963 was very dubious. CIA files contain several reports in this time period which raise questions about the security of the operation. The Chief of SAS Counterintelligence testified he always doubted the security of the operation.

Moreover, although the CIA did not inform the FBI about the AMLASH operation, and in fact the code-name, AMLASH, was unknown to the FBI, the FBI on October 10, 1963, received a report from an informant that a certain Cuban official was meeting with the CIA. The Cuban official identified by his true name in that report is in fact AMLASH. This report was not passed to the CIA, although the fact the FBI had learned the CIA was meeting with AMLASH might have prompted the CIA to scrutinize the security of the AMLASH operation.

³¹ AMLASH Case Officer, 2/11/76, p. 18.

³² Two CIA officials have testified they advised Fitzgerald not to meet personally with AMLASH. The Chief of JMWAVE Station testified:

My advice to [Fitzgerald] was that it would probably not be a good idea for [Fitzgerald] to meet with [AMLAsh] . . . the only thing I could see coming out of the contact would be that . . . Fitzgerald would get a feel for what makes some of these people tick . . . and that probably was too high a price to pay for the prospect if anything went wrong, an individual as prominent in Washington, both within the Agency and in the social world in Washington [as Fitzgerald] would be exposed in the press. That would create a flap that I thought was not worth what would be gained from the meeting.

(Chief, JMWAVE testimony, 8/19/75, p. 80; see also his testimony, 5/6/76, pp. 45-46.)

The Chief of Counterintelligence for the SAS testified he thought the operation was "nonsense" and "counterproductive" and that AMLASH's "bona fides were subject to question."

I disagreed basically with whole thrust of the AMLASH operation. My disapproval of it was very strong. Des Fitzgerald knew it . . . and preferred not to discuss it anymore with me.

(Chief, SAS/CI testimony, 5/10/76, pp. 21-23.)

However, the Executive Officer for Desmond Fitzgerald dismissed the possibility that Fitzgerald's meeting with AMLASH exposed the CIA to possible embarrassment because Fitzgerald had not used his real name and, therefore, AMLASH would have been unable to identify Fitzgerald as a CIA officer. (Executive officer testimony, 4/22/76, p. 55.)

Fitzgerald used an alias and was introduced to AMLASH as a "personal representative" of Attorney General Kennedy.³³

According to the case officer's report on the October 29 meeting, Fitzgerald told AMLASH that the United States was not prepared to support an isolated uprising. According to this report, Fitzgerald told AMLASH that the United States was prepared to provide support only after a real coup had been effected, and the group involved was in a position to request U.S. recognition and support. The memorandum goes on to say:

Nothing of an operational nature was discussed at the Fitzgerald meeting. After the meeting [AMLASH] stated that he was satisfied with the policy discussion but now desired to know what technical support we could provide him.³⁴

Whether AMLASH interpreted this meeting as CIA endorsement of his proposal to initiate the coup by assassination is not clear. When interviewed by the CIA Inspector General staff in 1967, Fitzgerald, who is now dead, said that AMLASH spoke of the need for an assassination weapon, specifically, a high-powered rifle with telescopic sights or some other weapon which could be used to assassinate Castro from a distance. Fitzgerald said he rejected this request and ordered the case officer, who served as interpreter, to tell AMLASH the United States simply did not do such things.³⁵ Fitzgerald's executive officer, who was not at the meeting but was fully briefed on the AMLASH operation, also told the Inspector General staff that Fitzgerald had rejected AMLASH's request.³⁶

Fitzgerald's recollection of this meeting is supported by a CIA memorandum of a conversation with AMWHIP, a Cuban exile who had talked to AMLASH after this October 29 meeting. According to that memorandum, the meeting satisfied AMLASH as far as policy was concerned:

but he was not at all happy with the fact that he still was not given the technical assistance for the operational plan as he saw it. He could not understand why he was denied certain small pieces of equipment which permitted a final solution to the problem, while, on the other hand, the U.S. Government gave much equipment and money to exile groups for their ineffective excursions.³⁷

Fitzgerald's recollection of the October 29 meeting conflicts with the case officer's sworn testimony before the Select Committee in 1975 and 1976. The case officer, who was also the interpreter for Fitzgerald,

³³ The Committee found no evidence that the Attorney General authorized, or was aware of this representation. Helms testified he did not seek the Attorney General's approval because he thought it was "unnecessary." (Helms, 6/13/75, pp. 117-118.)

³⁴ Case officer's Memorandum for Record, 11/13/63.

³⁵ 1967 Inspector General Report, p. 90.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ CIA Memorandum for the Record, 11/14/63.

testified that Fitzgerald gave assurances that the United States not only would support the government which emerged after a successful coup, but also gave general assurances that the United States would help in bringing about that coup.^{37a} The case officer testified that he recalled no discussion of what specific support the CIA would give and he did not recall Fitzgerald saying the U.S. would have no part of assassination.

Q. Was it also clear that in some way or other Fitzgerald was promising that support would be given for the planning of a coup operation as you have said, which was not contingent on whether the operation was successful or not?

A. That was implied, definitely, that support would be given, and again, I repeat, AMLASH did interpret it that way.^{37b}

The case officer returned to Headquarters sometime in November. By November 19, Fitzgerald had told the case officer that he was authorized to tell AMLASH that the rifles, telescopic sights, and explosives would be provided. The case officer also waited at Headquarters while a ballpoint pen was fashioned with a needle on it which could be used to inject a lethal dose of poison. The pen proved difficult to fashion and it was not ready until a few days before the November 22 meeting. The exact purpose the CIA had for offering AMLASH the pen is discussed in detail in the Assassination Report.³⁸

On November 19, AMLASH told a CIA officer that he planned to return to Cuba immediately.^{38a} On November 20, 1963, a CIA officer telephoned AMLASH and asked him to postpone his return to Cuba in order to attend a meeting on November 22. AMLASH asked if the meeting would be interesting, and the CIA officer responded he did not know whether it would be interesting but it was the meeting AMLASH had requested.^{38b}

At earlier meetings with the CIA, AMLASH had only received general assurances of U.S. support for a coup plan and thus the November 20 telephone call was the first indication that he might receive the specific support he requested. Of course, AMLASH could not have known with certainty what support, i.e., weapons, he would receive until November 22.

The case officer met with AMLASH on November 22, 1963. At that meeting, the case officer referred to the President's November 18 speech in Miami as an indication that the President supported a coup. That speech described the Castro government as a "small band of conspirators" which formed a "barrier" which "once removed" would

^{37a} Case officer's testimony, 7/29/75, pp. 77-80.

^{37b} Case officer testimony, 7/29/75, pp. 79-80.

³⁸ Assassination Report, pp. 88-89.

^{38a} CIA cable to Headquarters, 11/19/63.

^{38b} CIA cable to Headquarters, 11/20/63.

ensure United States support for progressive goals in Cuba.³⁹ The case officer told AMLASH that Fitzgerald had helped write the speech.⁴⁰

The case officer also told AMLASH that explosives and rifles with telescopic sights⁴¹ would be provided. The case officer showed AMLASH the poison pen and suggested he could use the commercial poison, Black Leaf-40 in it.⁴² The case officer cannot recall specifically what happened to the poison pen; he does not believe AMLASH carried it with him when he left the meeting. He does recall that AMLASH was dissatisfied with the device. As AMLASH and the case officer broke up their meeting, they were told the President had been assassinated.

Two other events which occurred in the October-November 1963 time period should be noted in this discussion of U.S.-Cuban relations. The first is that talks between the Cuban delegate to the UN, La Chuga, and a U.S. delegate, William Atwood, were proposed by the Cubans on September 5. Although there were discussions about the location for such talks and Atwood's expressed U.S. interest, no concrete plans for meetings were made. On November 29, La Chuga inquired again of Atwood about U.S. interest in talks.⁴³

³⁹ Washington Post, 11/19/63, p. A-15.

⁴⁰ Case Officer testimony, 2/11/76.

The fact that the CIA intended President Kennedy's speech to serve as a signal to dissident elements in Cuba that the U.S. would support a coup is confirmed by a CIA paper, completed less than two weeks after Kennedy's assassination, which suggested statements the Johnson administration could make which would "stimulate anti-Castro action on the part of dissident elements in the Cuban armed forces." The paper states that Cuban dissidents

must have solemn assurances from high level U.S. spokesmen, especially the President, that the United States will exert its decisive influence during and immediately after the coup....

Citing Kennedy's speech of November 18, 1963, the CIA paper concluded "... it remains for President [Johnson] and other administration spokesmen to instill a genuine sense of U.S. commitment to our efforts." (Memorandum for the DCI, "Considerations for U.S. Policy Toward Cuba and Latin America," 12/9/63.)

"The Chief of JMWAVE testified that although this operation often was tasked to get weapons into Cuba, he could not recall being tasked to get rifles and telescopic sights into Cuba. The documentary record reveals, however, that the JMWAVE station was tasked to supply the explosives, rifles, and telescopic sights to AMLASH. The Chief of the JMWAVE station testified he did not recall seeing the cable containing these instructions.

Q. Was it common to drop caches of rifles or telescopic sights for agents?

A. I would not necessarily have known what was in each cache.

Q. Well, was it common . . . , to your knowledge, to drop rifles with telescopic sights?

A. Well, I think the thing that would be uncommon would be telescopic sights. Many of our caches were weapons caches. . . . I think if I were looking at a cache list and I saw a telescope on it matched up with a Springfield '03 rifle, that probably would have struck me as being unusual. but I did not see the inventories of all the caches.

(Chief, JMWAVE testimony, 5/6/76, pp. 47-48.)

⁴² Assassination Report, p. 89; Case Officer testimony, 2/11/76, p. 46.

⁴³ Assassination Report, pp. 173-174; William Atwood testimony, 7/10/75, p. 9.

Second, the French reporter, Jean Daniel, had a brief interview with President Kennedy on October 24, before setting off on an assignment in Cuba. At that meeting the President expressed his feeling that Castro had betrayed the revolution.⁴⁴

Daniel travelled to Cuba but got no hint of a similar meeting with Castro. Then on November 19, the day after the President's speech in Miami, Castro contacted Daniel and spent six hours talking to him about U.S.-Cuban relations. Daniel again met Castro on November 22, spending most of the day with him. Daniel's report of this meeting, "When Castro Heard the News," describes Castro's reaction to word of the assassination. After word that President Johnson had been sworn in reached Castro, he asked: "What authority does he exercise over the CIA?"⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Daniel, "Unofficial Envoy : A Historic Report from Two Capitals," New Republic, 12/14/63.

⁴⁵ Daniel, "When Castro Heard the News," New Republic, 12/7/63.

III. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE ASSASSINATION: NOVEMBER 22, 1963 TO JAN- UARY 1, 1964

This section of the Report discusses the performance of the FBI and the CIA during the weeks immediately following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The performance of these agencies should not be evaluated in isolation. Senior government officials, both within the agencies and outside them, wanted the investigation completed promptly and all conspiracy rumors dispelled. For example, only three days after the assassination, Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach wrote Presidential Assistant Bill Moyers:

It is important that all of the facts surrounding President Kennedy's assassination be made public in a way which will satisfy people in the United States and abroad that all the facts have been told and that a statement to this effect be made now.

1. The public must be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin; that he did not have confederates who are still at large; and that the evidence was such that he would have been convicted at trial.

2. Speculation about Oswald's motivation ought to be cut off, and we should have some basis for rebutting thought that this was a Communist conspiracy or (as the Iron Curtain press is saying) a right-wing conspiracy to blame it on the Communists.¹

On November 29, 1963, President Johnson told Director Hoover that, although he wanted to "get by" on just the FBI report, the only way to stop the "rash of investigations" was to appoint a high-level committee to evaluate that report.² On December 9, 1963, Deputy Attorney General Katzenbach wrote each member of the Warren Commission recommending that the Commission immediately issue a press release stating that the FBI report clearly showed there was no international conspiracy, and that Oswald was a loner.³

A. The CIA Response

This section deals with the CIA's immediate response in investigating the assassination. It discusses what information the CIA received alleging Cuban involvement in the assassination, and the steps taken by the Agency to investigate those allegations.

¹ Memorandum from Nicholas deB. Katzenbach to Bill Moyers, 11/26/63.

² Memorandum from Hoover to Messrs. Tolson, Belmont, Mohr, Sullivan, DeLoach, and Rosen, 11/29/63.

³ Memorandum from DeLoach to Tolson, 12/12/63. No such release was issued.

Since Oswald had come to the attention of the CIA in October and November 1963, the Agency needed no orders to begin an investigation of the assassination. On November 8, the CIA received an FBI report dated October 31, 1963, discussing the Bureau's investigation of Oswald's activities in New Orleans. On November 15, that report was forwarded to SAS Counterintelligence, the CIA section specializing in Cuban affairs. The routing slip on the report indicates it was sent to the Counterintelligence Division of the CIA on November 22.⁴ The Chief of SAS Counterintelligence recalled that immediately after the assassination, Director McCone requested all Agency material on Oswald. The Chief testified that he probably reported seeing a recent FBI report on Oswald, but he could not remember whether SAS had routed the report to the Counterintelligence Division before or after the assassination.⁵

The CIA Mexico Station also realized that Lee Harvey Oswald had come to its attention in early October and cabled CIA Headquarters at 5:00 p.m. on the afternoon of the assassination.⁶ Other CIA stations and overseas elements of the State Department and Defense Department soon began reporting any information they received which might be relevant to the assassination.

For the first twenty-four hours after the assassination, the CIA's attention focused primarily on Oswald's September 27, 1963, visit to Mexico City. CIA Headquarters wanted all relevant information developed by its Mexico Station in order to begin its analysis of the information. On the morning of November 23, Director McCone met with President Johnson and his national security advisor, McGeorge Bundy, to brief them on the information CIA Headquarters had received from its Mexico Station. McCone's memorandum for the record of that meeting contains the essential information extracted from the Mexico Station's cable which had been received by that time.⁷

According to the 1967 Inspector General Report, CIA Headquarters cabled the AMLASH case officer on the morning of November 23, and ordered him to break contact with AMLASH due to the President's assassination and to return to Headquarters.⁸ Neither those who prepared the I.G. Report, nor current CIA officials could locate a copy of that cable. The case officer testified he recalled receiving such a cable, but could not recall whether it made specific mention of the President's assassination as the reason for breaking contact with AMLASH and returning.⁹ He did connect that cable's instructions with the assassination.¹⁰

⁴ Moreover, on September 16, 1963, the CIA had asked the FBI to obtain information on the Fair Play for Cuba Committee which the Agency could use in a propaganda campaign. In acquiring the information, the FBI obtained a copy of one of Oswald's letters to FPCB headquarters.

⁵ Chief, SAS/CI, 5/10/76, pp. 6-7.

⁶ All times have been converted to Eastern Standard Time. The assassination occurred at 1:30 E.S.T.

⁷ On March 8, 1976, Walter Elder, DCI McCone's executive officer gave the Committee staff access to Mr. McCone's calendar and memoranda from this time period. The following discussion is based, in part, on these records.

⁸ I.G. Report, p. 94.

⁹ Case Officer, 2/11/76, p. 53.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

That same morning, CIA personnel on the Counterintelligence staff who were responsible for Soviet intelligence prepared a memorandum suggesting the possibility that Oswald's contacts in Mexico City with Soviet personnel might have sinister implications.¹¹ The memorandum also stated that the essential information was transmitted to the agency's FBI liaison by telephone at 10:30 a.m. that morning.

Sometime on November 23, Deputy Director for Plans Richard Helms called a meeting to outline responsibility for the CIA investigation of the assassination. At that meeting Helms informed his Deputy, Thomas Karamessines, and Chief of Counterintelligence James Angleton, that a desk officer in the Western Hemisphere Division would be in charge of the CIA investigation. This desk officer had professional expertise in conducting counterintelligence investigations for the Agency. Helms instructed Karamessines and Angleton to provide the desk officer full cooperation and access to all information he requested.¹² Karamessines testified he could not recall the desk officer being assigned responsibility for the investigation.¹³

At 5:00 p.m. CIA Headquarters received a cable from the Mexico Station stating that the Mexican police were going to arrest Sylvia Duran, a Mexican national employed by the Cuban consulate who was believed to have talked to Oswald when he visited the consulate in September.¹⁴ Headquarters personnel telephoned the Mexico Station and asked them to stop the planned arrest.¹⁵ The Mexico Station said that the arrest could not be stopped.¹⁶

After learning the arrest could not be prevented, Karamessines cabled the Mexico Station that the arrest "could jeopardize U.S. freedom of action on the whole question of Cuban responsibility."¹⁷ The desk officer could not recall that cable or explain the reasons for transmitting such a message.¹⁸ Karamessines could not recall preparing the cable or his reasons for issuing such a message. He speculated that the CIA feared the Cubans were responsible, and that Duran might reveal this during an interrogation. He further speculated that if Duran did possess such information, the CIA and the U.S. Government would need time to react before it came to the attention of the public.¹⁹

Later that evening, the AMLASH case officer arrived in Washington. The case officer cannot recall whether he reported to Headquarters that evening but he was in his office the next morning, Sunday, Novem-

¹¹ Memorandum from CI staff to the Director, 11/23/63. The thesis of the memorandum was disproved by later investigation; however, it reflects the fact that at least some officials in the CIA were concerned with the possibility of a conspiracy.

¹² Western Hemisphere Division Desk Officer, 5/7/76, p. 7. (Referred to hereinafter as the Desk Officer.)

¹³ Karamessines, 4/18/76, p. 10.

¹⁴ Memorandum for the Record by Desk Officer, 11/23/63.

¹⁵ Administrative Sheet, Mexico Station Cable, 11/23/63.

¹⁶ Memorandum for the Record by Desk Officer, 11/23/63.

¹⁷ CIA Cable from CIA Headquarters to Mexico Station, 11/23/63.

¹⁸ Desk Officer, 5/7/76, p. 52.

¹⁹ Karamessines, 4/18/76, pp. 26-27.

ber 24.²⁰ Early that morning, the 24th the Mexico Station cabled its response to a Headquarters request for the names of all known contacts of certain Soviet personnel in Mexico City. The purpose of obtaining these names was to determine the significance of Oswald's contact with the Soviets and to assess their activities. AMLASH's real name was included in the list of names on the Mexico Station cable.²¹

Karamessines was asked what would have been done with this cable.

Q. The message reporting back on this gave all contacts, known contacts that these individuals had in Mexico City. And what is the next step in your process?

A. You check these names out to see whether your files give any evidence of suspicious activity. And if they don't, if they simply don't indicate any suspicious activity, that would be the end of it. If it does indicate suspicious activity, then you would follow from there, and you would pass this information on to other interested parties within the Agency or within the Government, and you would carry on from there and investigate further.

Q. That is the point I am getting to . . . Is it routine standard operating procedure to check the CI [counterintelligence] file on that named individual?

A. Yes, unless the desk officer that receives it happens to know who that fellow is and doesn't have to check. And that happens quite frequently.²²

The Executive Officer in the Special Affairs Section was asked what would happen if those at the CIA investigating the assassination had requested a name trace on AMLASH.

A. The name trace would have given whatever we knew about the individual except our operational contacts with him. It would be biographic information.

Q. Well, if the Counterintelligence Division asked for information on AMLASH, even if they were furnished biographical information, it would not contain the fact that he was involved in some assassination plot.

A. That's correct. That would normally go to the case officer concerned, who would be alerted by the name tracers that somebody had asked for AMLASH.

Q. And what would the case officer have done in that case?

A. Well, in this case I'm sure he would have gone and talked to Mr. Fitzgerald about it.

Q. Do you know whether the case officer did?

A. I don't know, no.

Q. So in other words, the fact that the CIA was involved with AMLASH . . . would normally have been kept from the CI, counterintelligence investigators.

A. It would have been held back from the ordinary case officer, yes. Whether it would have been held back from the

²⁰ AMLASH Case Officer, 2/11/76, pp. 54-55. (Referred to hereinafter as the Case Officer.)

²¹ Cable from Mexico Station to CIA Headquarters, 11/24/63.

²² Karamessines, 4/18/76, pp. 24-25.

men in charge, I don't know. That would have been up to the Chief of SAS, in this case, Fitzgerald and the DDP.²³

Thus, early in the morning of November 24, the CIA officials investigating the assassination had come across AMLASH's name. Had routine procedure been followed, that name would have been checked in Agency files.²⁴ Operational information, i.e., details of CIA plots with AMLASH to assassinate Castro, would not have been routinely provided. The decision to provide such information would have been made by Fitzgerald or Helms. The AMLASH Case Officer can recall no discussion about connections between AMLASH and the assassination of President Kennedy.²⁵

CIA files on its investigation of the President's assassination contain no evidence that such information was provided. The Desk Officer who coordinated the CIA investigation of the assassination testified he was not then aware of any assassination plots and certainly was not then aware of the AMLASH plot.

Q. Did you know that on November 22, 1963, about the time Kennedy was assassinated, a CIA case officer was passing a poison pen, offering a poison pen to a high-level Cuban to use to assassinate Castro?

A. No, I did not.

Q. Would you have drawn a link in your mind between that and the Kennedy assassination?

A. I certainly think that that would have become an absolutely vital factor in analyzing the events surrounding the Kennedy assassination.²⁶

On November 24, at 10 a.m., Director McCone met with the President and briefed him about CIA operational plans against Cuba. That briefing could not have included a discussion of AMLASH since McCone testified that he was not aware of the AMLASH assassination effort.²⁷

On November 25 at 12:00 p.m., the Mexico Station dispatched a cable reminding Headquarters of Castro's September 7, 1963, statement threatening U.S. leaders.²⁸

The Case Officer's "contact report" on the November 22 meeting with AMLASH bears the date November 25. He testified it was probably prepared on either November 24 or 25.²⁹ The report does not note that the poison pen was offered to AMLASH although it does state that AMLASH was told he would receive explosives and rifles with telescopic sights. The Case Officer testified the contact report does not discuss the poison pen because Fitzgerald ordered him to omit that matter.³⁰ He probably showed the report to Fitzgerald on the

²³ Executive Officer, 5/10/76, pp. 36-37.

²⁴ No document in the AMLASH file mentioned the poison pen, so even access to his file would not have given a person knowledge of this key fact.

²⁵ Case Officer, 2/11/76, pp. 59, 60.

²⁶ Desk Officer, 5/7/76, pp. 31, 32.

²⁷ McCone testimony, 6/6/76, p. 59.

²⁸ Cable from Mexico Station to CIA Headquarters, 11/25/63.

²⁹ Case Officer, 2/11/76, p. 61.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

same day, but recalls no discussion with Fitzgerald about a possible connection between the AMLASH operation and President Kennedy's assassination.³¹ The Case Officer also stated that there was no reason to make such a connection and he certainly made no such connection in his mind.³² When asked why he did not associate President Kennedy's assassination by a pro-Castro activist with his own involvement in the AMLASH operation, the Case Officer stated he does not know to this day that Oswald had any pro-Castro leanings.³³

The case officer said he was reassigned shortly after returning to Headquarters. He testified that he was never involved in discussions at the CIA about possible connections between his November 22 meeting with AMLASH and President Kennedy's assassination.³⁴

At noon on November 25, "D," a Latin American, appeared at the American Embassy in Mexico City.³⁵ He told Embassy personnel that he was in the Cuban consulate on September 17 and saw Cubans who discussed assassination pay Oswald a sum of money. He later repeated his story to the CIA Mexico Station Chief. The CIA and the Warren Commission later concluded that the story was a fabrication, but the Agency was clearly concerned with "D's" story at the time.³⁶

On the evening of November 25, a senior American Embassy official in Mexico City informed a senior Mexican government official of the known facts about Oswald's visit to Mexico City.³⁷ This memorandum concludes by posing questions designed to determine whether Oswald's visit to Mexico City was part of a pre-conceived plan to assassinate the President and whether the Cubans were involved in such a plan.

On November 26, Director McCone again met with President Johnson, who told him that the FBI had responsibility for investigating the President's death and directed him to make CIA resources available to assist the Bureau. The Desk Officer testified that there was a feeling in the CIA that the Bureau may have been derelict in its handling of Oswald before the assassination, and that the CIA investigative efforts should be as independent as possible of the FBI's.³⁸

Later in that day, the Mexico Station cabled Headquarters on the details of its interrogation of "D".³⁹ It also reported other information from a sensitive and reliable source which tended to confirm "D's" story that Oswald may have been paid by the Cubans to assassinate President Kennedy. This report has never been satisfactorily explained, although it was made available to the Warren Commission

³¹ Case Officer, 7/29/75, pp. 115-116; Case Officer, 2/11/76, pp. 59-60.

³² Case Officer, 7/29/75, pp. 115-116.

³³ Case Officer, 2/11/76, p. 91.

³⁴ Case Officer, 7/29/75, p. 115; Case Officer, 2/11/76, p. 76.

³⁵ This incident is discussed in the Warren Report, pp. 308, 309; Cable from Mexico Station to CIA Headquarters, 11/25/63.

³⁶ "D" later admitted that the story about Oswald had been fabricated. (Cable from Mexico City to CIA Headquarters, 11/30/63.) It had also been determined by the FBI that Oswald probably was in New Orleans on September 17. (Cable from CIA Headquarters to Mexico Station, 11/28/63.)

³⁷ Memorandum, 11/25/63.

³⁸ Desk officer, 5/7/76, pp. 62, 63.

³⁹ Cable from Mexico Station to CIA Headquarters, 11/26/63.

staff. In any event, these reports certainly must have fueled suspicions of Cuban involvement in the assassination. Based on the evidence it reviewed, the Warren Commission later determined that "D's" story was a fabrication.

The American Ambassador in Mexico later sent a cable to the State Department through CIA channels. In that cable he gave his opinion that the Cubans were involved in the assassination, and recommended certain investigative steps which should be taken in Mexico.⁴⁰

On the same day, a cable listing DDP Helms as the releasing officer was dispatched to CIA stations in Europe and Canada. This cable stated that stations should carefully examine material obtained from a specified sensitive and reliable source, "because of obvious significance of any scrap information which bears on [the] assassination issue."⁴¹ The Desk Officer in charge of the CIA investigation was unaware that such a message had been sent out and was at the time unaware of the sensitive and reliable source mentioned.⁴²

On November 27, a European Station cabled information to Headquarters which had been obtained through the use of this sensitive and reliable source. That information indicated that AMLASH was indiscreet in his conversations.⁴³ This cable does not reference any Headquarters' cable, as station cables often do, but, since it reports information obtained through the use of the sensitive and reliable source which had been specified in the November 26 cable which Helms released, it appears likely that it was indeed a response to the Helms request. The cable from the European Station was placed in the AMLASH file but was not disseminated to those investigating the assassination.

By November 27, the Mexico Station and CIA Headquarters were also beginning to question the accuracy of "D's" story. The cables between the Mexico Station and Headquarters indicate the possibility that the story was a fabrication. Nevertheless, on November 28, Headquarters cabled a reminder to the Mexico Station to "follow all leads." The Station was instructed to continue investigating the possibility of Cuban or Soviet involvement, because Headquarters had not excluded the possibility that other persons were involved with Oswald.⁴⁴

Later that day Headquarters learned that Mexican authorities planned to arrest Sylvia Duran again and warned the station that the Mexicans must take responsibility for the arrest. After learning that the U.S. Ambassador was continuing to press for a vigorous investigation into Cuban involvement, Headquarters also warned the Station Chief that the Ambassador was pushing the case too hard and his proposals could lead to a "flap" with the Cubans.⁴⁵ Finally, the Agency concluded that "D's" story was a fabrication and terminated its interest in him.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ Cable from Mexico Station to CIA Headquarters, 11/26/63.

⁴¹ Cable from CIA Headquarters to various European and Canadian stations, 11/26/63. Precise text of this cable paraphrased to protect sensitive intelligence sources and methods.

⁴² Desk Officer, 5/7/76, pp. 27-28.

⁴³ Cable from European station to CIA Headquarters, 11/27/63.

⁴⁴ A cable from CIA Headquarters to Mexico Station, 11/28/63.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 11/28/63.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

On November 30, Director McCone met with the President at 11 a.m. The meeting lasted for an hour and a half. McCone's memorandum for record states that the President "again" raised the question of Cuba and that McCone pointed out speeches made by President Kennedy on September 5, September 13, and November 20, 1962.⁴⁸ The memorandum also refers to a discussion of a Cuban arms cache which had been discovered in Venezuela. While there was a discussion of the allegations made by "D" the memorandum records no action was required on the "Oswald situation."⁴⁹

On December 1, McCone met with the President and Bundy. McCone's memorandum of the meeting indicates they again discussed "D's" story. Later that day, Headquarters cabled the Mexico Station and stated that the White House had been told the story was a fabrication.

Headquarters also informed the Station that it had received information from a sensitive source that a Cubana airlines flight to Havana had been delayed in Mexico City from 6 p.m. until 11 p.m. E.S.T. on the day of the assassination, to await an unidentified passenger who arrived in a twin-engine aircraft and boarded the Cubana aircraft without going through customs.⁵⁰ According to the CIA information, the unidentified passenger rode in the cockpit on the flight to Havana. This cable was found in the Mexico Station file, but the Agency has no record of any follow-up action on the report.⁵¹ The FAA was contacted by the Select Committee staff in order to determine the origins of the twin-engine aircraft, but indicated it would have no records, such as flight plans, from that time period.

On December 2, McCone met with the President and Bundy at 10 a.m. Later that day, the Mexico Station reported it had reason to doubt its earlier conclusion that "D" was fabricating. At 3 p.m. that afternoon, Director McCone's calendar reveals he attended a meeting on Cuba in the CIA conference room.

On December 3, CIA Headquarters first received information from the Mexico Station on a Cuban-American. According to Passport Office records, his file there was checked on December 4 by a representative of the CIA. This CIA representative testified that he could not recall such a check or the report.⁵²

The CIA received its first report from a Cuban agent on December 4. This agent reported that he believed he had met Oswald in Cuba, Mexico or the United States, since his face seemed familiar. He also reiterated his belief that the Cuban government employed assassins and had carried out at least one assassination in Mexico.⁵³

On December 5, the Mexico Station cabled that a source saw the Cuban-American board a flight from Mexico City to Havana reported that he "looked suspicious." It also reported what was then known about his itinerary.⁵⁴ On December 8, CIA Headquarters cabled

⁴⁸ Memorandum for the Record by Director McCone, 12/2/63.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Cable from CIA Headquarters to Mexico Station, 12/1/63.

⁵¹ Letter from CIA to Senate Select Committee, 2/4/76.

⁵² CIA Liaison Officer testimony, 5/7/76, p. 9.

⁵³ Cable from Mexico Station to CIA Headquarters, 12/4/63.

⁵⁴ CIA Cable from Mexico to Headquarters, 12/5/63.

its Florida Station ordering it to halt two planned operations against Cuba pending a high-level policy review.⁵⁵ One of these operations was the delivery of rifles, telescopic sights, and explosives to AMLASH.

A December 9 memorandum to Director McCone discusses U.S. operations against Cuba. Although the memorandum did mention a plot for a coup in Cuba, it does not refer to the AMLASH operation. It noted that:

... These non-Communist anti-Castro dissident Cubans . . . assert that they must have solemn assurances from high level U.S. spokesman, especially the President, that the United States will exert its decisive influence during and immediately after the coup to prevent their personal liquidation and a political regression.

2. CIA has attempted in a general and very limited manner to provide these assurances, but it remains for the President and other Administration spokesman to instill a genuine sense of U.S. commitment to our efforts.⁵⁶

On December 10, Director McCone met with CIA staff in the Agency conference room at noon to discuss Cuba. On December 12 the Mexico Station reported that the FBI was attempting to complete the Mexico aspects of the case.⁵⁷

The desk officer in charge of the investigation recalled sometime in the latter part of December he completed and submitted a brief report on his investigation which was then taken to the President.⁵⁸ After he prepared the report, he was given an opportunity to review the FBI report on its part of the investigation. The desk officer testified that in reviewing the Bureau's report he learned many new facts which he felt were significant but which had not been known to him during his investigation.⁵⁹ As an example, he testified that until reading the FBI report, he had not known that Oswald allegedly shot at General Walker in April 1963.⁶⁰

The desk officer recalled a meeting in late December 1963 with Helms, Karamessines, Angleton and others where the CIA report was discussed. According to the desk officer, Angleton suggested that his own Counterintelligence Division take over the investigation and Helms acceded to this suggestion.⁶¹ According to one of Angleton's subordinates, he did not become involved with the investigation until January 23, 1964, when the Warren Commission began requesting information from the CIA, at which time Angleton designated him the "point of record" for all matters related to the assassination and the Warren Commission.⁶²

⁵⁵ Cable from CIA Headquarters to JMWAVE Station, 12/8/63.

⁵⁶ Memorandum for the DCI, "Policy Considerations for Cuba and Latin America," 12/9/63.

⁵⁷ Cable from Mexico Station to CIA Headquarters, 12/12/63.

⁵⁸ Desk Officer, 5/7/76, pp. 6-9.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ Desk Officer, 5/7/76, pp. 60, 61.

Mr. Karamessines could recall no meetings on the structure of the CIA's investigation. (Karamessines, 4/18/76, p. 41.)

⁶² Staff summary of interview of CIA analyst, 3/15/76.

B. The FBI Response

The FBI investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy was a massive effort. Literally thousands of leads were followed in the field by hundreds of agents, many of whom worked around the clock during the days immediately following the assassination. The FBI files produced by this investigation are in excess of five hundred and ninety volumes.

Two divisions at FBI headquarters supervised the assassination investigation. Because the Bureau's jurisdiction was originally predicated upon statutes which made it a crime to assault a Federal officer, primary responsibility for the investigation was assumed by the General Investigative Division, which regularly supervised those kinds of criminal investigations. Certain responsibilities for the investigation were assumed by the Domestic Intelligence Division which had conducted a security investigation of Oswald in connection with his trip to the Soviet Union and activities on behalf of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

Although the Domestic Intelligence Division did participate in the Bureau's inquiry, the case was handled primarily as a traditional criminal investigation. Lee Harvey Oswald was charged with the murder of the President and, as the identified subject of a criminal case, became the focus of the Bureau's investigation. The investigation collected evidence on Oswald's background, activities, and contacts, and specific data relative to the *act* of the assassination itself. The investigation thus relied heavily upon interviews of eyewitnesses, analyses of physical evidence, and ballistic tests. The Committee has found no evidence that the Bureau ever conducted a wide-ranging investigation which explored larger questions, such as possible foreign involvement in the assassination.

1. The Investigative Attitude of Senior FBI Officials

Almost immediately after the assassination, Director Hoover, the Justice Department and the White House "exerted pressure" on senior Bureau officials to complete their investigation and issue a factual report supporting the conclusion that Oswald was the lone assassin. Thus, it is not surprising that, from its inception, the assassination investigation focused almost exclusively on Lee Harvey Oswald.

On November 23, 1963, J. Edgar Hoover forwarded an FBI memorandum to President Johnson which detailed the results of the Bureau's preliminary "inquiry into the assassination" and "background information relative to Lee Harvey Oswald."⁶³ The memorandum stated that "state complaints were filed on November 22, 1963, charging Oswald with the murder of President Kennedy" and detailed evidence which indicated that Oswald had indeed assassinated the President. Although the memorandum did not inform President Johnson that the FBI had an open security case on Oswald at the time of the assassination, it did provide a limited description of Oswald's background, including his visit to the Soviet Union and activities for the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.⁶⁴

⁶³ Letter from Hoover to President Johnson, 11/23/63, with attachment.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

In a telephone conversation with White House Aide Walter Jenkins immediately following Oswald's murder, Director Hoover stated:

The thing I am most concerned about, and so is Mr. Katzenbach, is having something issued so we can convince the public that Oswald is the real assassin.⁶⁵

The pressure to issue a report that would establish Oswald as the lone assassin is reflected in internal Bureau memoranda. On November 24, 1963, Assistant FBI Director Alan Belmont informed Associate FBI Director Clyde Tolson that he was sending two Headquarters supervisors to Dallas to review

the written interview and investigative findings of our agents on the Oswald matter, so that we can prepare a memorandum to the Attorney General . . . [setting] out the evidence showing that Oswald is responsible for the shooting that killed the President.⁶⁶

On November 26, 1963, J. Edgar Hoover spoke with Deputy Attorney General Katzenbach. According to Alan Belmont, Hoover relayed:

Katzenbach's feeling that this [FBI] report should include everything which may raise a question in the mind of the public or press regarding this matter.

In other words, this report is to settle the dust, insofar as *Oswald and his activities* are concerned, both from the standpoint that he is the man who assassinated the President, and relative to Oswald himself and his activities and background.⁶⁷ [Emphasis added.]

The next day, Belmont responded.

Relative to the Director's question as to how long we estimate the investigation in this matter will take, we plan to have the report on this matter, and on the Jack Ruby matter, this Friday, 11/29/63.

The investigation in both cases will, however, continue, because we are receiving literally *hundreds of allegations regarding the activities of Oswald and Ruby*, and these, of course, are being run out as received. I think this will continue and in the absence of being able to prove Oswald's motive and complete activities, we must check out and continue to investigate to resolve as far as possible any allegations or possibility that he was associated with others in this assassination. Likewise, we have to continue to prove [sic] the possibility that Jack Ruby was associated with someone else in connection with his killing of Oswald.⁶⁸ [Emphasis added.]

⁶⁵ Memorandum to the Files, by Walter Jenkins, 11/24/63, (4 p.m.). By November 23 the State Department had concluded there was no foreign conspiracy involved in the President's assassination. (Dean Rusk testimony, 6/10/64, Warren Commission, Vol. V, pp. 367-368.)

⁶⁶ Memorandum from Belmont to Tolson, 11/24/63.

⁶⁷ Memorandum from Belmont to Sullivan, 11/26/63.

⁶⁸ Memorandum from Belmont to Tolson, 11/27/63.

The following notation appears at the bottom of this memorandum in Director Hoover's handwriting:

The Presidential Report on both matters should not be prepared until *all* allegations and angles have been completed.⁶⁹

The FBI delivered these reports to the White House and the Attorney General on December 5, 1963.

In a November 29, 1963, memorandum, Hoover recounted a telephone conversation he had that day with President Johnson:

The President called and asked if I am familiar with the proposed group they are trying to get to study my report—two from the House, two from the Senate, two from the courts, and a couple of outsiders. I replied that I had not heard of that but had seen reports from the Senate Investigating Committee.

The President stated he wanted to get by just with my file and my report. I told him I thought it would be very bad to have a rash of investigations. He then indicated the only way to stop it is to appoint a high-level committee to evaluate my report and tell the House and Senate not to go ahead with the investigation. I stated that would be a three-ring circus.

I advised the President that we hope to have the investigation wrapped up today, but probably won't have it before the first of the week as an angle in Mexico is giving trouble—the matter of Oswald's getting \$6,500 from the Cuban Embassy and coming back to this country with it; that we are not able to prove that fact; that we have information he was there on September 18 and we are able to prove he was in New Orleans on that date; that a story came in changing the date to September 28 and he was in Mexico on the 28th.⁷⁰

On December 3, 1963, the UPI wire carried a story reported in various newspapers under the following lead

An exhaustive FBI report now nearly ready for the White House will indicate that Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone and unaided assassin of President Kennedy, Government sources said today.⁷¹

When he was informed of these news articles, Director Hoover wrote, "I thought no one knew this outside the FBI."⁷² According to William Sullivan, Hoover himself ordered the report "leaked" to the press, in

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Memorandum from Hoover to Tolson, Belmont, DeLoach, Mohr, Sullivan and Rosen, 11/29/63.

William C. Sullivan, former Assistant Director in charge of the Domestic Intelligence Division, stated that "on November 29, 1963, the FBI had no data to support the conclusion that there was no foreign conspiracy." (Staff interview of William C. Sullivan, 4/21/76.)

⁷¹ Washington Evening Star, 12/3/63.

⁷² Hoover handwritten note on UPI ticker of 12/3/63.

an attempt to "blunt the drive for an independent investigation of the assassination."⁷³

In a December 1963 memorandum prepared to aid the Director in briefing the President, W. C. Sullivan wrote:

No evidence has been developed which would indicate Oswald's assassination of the President was inspired or directed by these [pro-Castro] organizations or by any foreign country.⁷⁴

2. Investigation by the General Investigative Division

The evidence developed by the Committee reveals that certain senior FBI officials in May 1962 learned of the 1960-1962 CIA-underworld plots to assassinate Fidel Castro, and learned from an informant in July 1964 that meetings between the CIA and a Cuban official dealt with the assassination of Castro.⁷⁵ Information concerning these plots was not general knowledge within the Bureau. For example, Alex Rosen the Assistant Director in charge of the General Investigative Division during the assassination investigation, testified that he had been unaware of CIA efforts to kill Castro and of Castro's retaliation threat.⁷⁶ Rosen was also unaware of any discussion of possible Cuban involvement in the assassination. For example, he testified :

I don't remember the Castro name coming up. Obviously it did, but I do not recall it. It is not fixed in my memory at all as being pertinent to the investigation.⁷⁷

The Committee heard similar testimony from the Headquarters officials who were actually responsible for the Division's day-to-day supervision of the assassination case.⁷⁸ One of these supervisors testified that he had "no knowledge whatsoever" of any Federal investigation of possible Cuban government involvement in the assassination of President Kennedy.⁷⁹ Another supervisor testified that he never

⁷³ Staff interview of William C. Sullivan, 4/21/76.

The Bureau, in response to a Committee request for documents in a letter dated 4/28/76, stated that it had no documents pertaining to any FBI release of the referenced preliminary report. Other persons, possibly knowledgeable of the alleged "leak," have not been questioned.

⁷⁴ Memorandum for the record from J. Edgar Hoover, 5/10/62; memorandum from Sullivan to Belmont, 12/4/63.

Sullivan told the Committee staff that "his initial view of his responsibility in the investigation [as head of the Intelligence Division] was to resolve questions of international involvement in the conspiracy." (Staff interview of William C. Sullivan, 4/21/76.)

⁷⁵ Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 7/29/64.

This Cuban official is referred to as AMLASH in this report and in the Committee's Assassination Report.

The FBI could not have characterized these meetings involving the Cuban official as the AMLASH operation because they did not know the Cuban had been code-named AMLASH by the CIA.

⁷⁶ Rosen, 4/30/76, pp. 14, 21. For further discussion of the retaliation threat.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁷⁸ Testimony of Supervisor I, 4/27/76, p. 19; testimony of Supervisor II, 4/27/76, p. 25; testimony of Supervisor III, 4/29/76, p. 9.

⁷⁹ Testimony of Supervisor I, 4/27/76, p. 13.

attended any conference or meetings where there was discussion of whether Castro or the Cuban government were responsible for the assassination.⁸⁰ According to one of these supervisors, the General Investigative Division's responsibility was "primarily dealing with the physical aspects of the case, the weapons, the bullets, the scientific approach to it, circumstances of [Oswald's] apprehension and subsequent killing, and that would be about it."⁸¹ [Emphasis added]

3. The Domestic Intelligence Division

In November 1963, William Sullivan was the head of the Domestic Intelligence Division, which was responsible for the "subversive aspects of the assassination case." Sullivan told the Committee staff that he had never been informed of any assassination plots after 1962, including the AMLASH operation.⁸² Although he had been apprised of earlier Agency efforts to use underworld figures to assassinate Castro, by a memorandum detailing Director Hoover's May 10, 1962 conversation with Attorney General Kennedy, Sullivan's impression was that these plans had only been in the "discussion stage."⁸³ According to Sullivan, the Bureau made an "all-out effort" to investigate "possible foreign conspiracy" in the President's assassination. Sullivan could not recall specific measures the Bureau had taken and stated that he believed there were certain "gaps" in the FBI investigation.⁸⁴

Within the Domestic Intelligence Division, the assassination investigation was supervised by a squad of several Headquarters agents in the Soviet Section.⁸⁵ One of the Soviet Section supervisors who conducted the investigation described it as follows:

. . . our investigation was primarily concentrated on Lee Harvey Oswald, was he the assassin and to get the complete background investigation of him . . . it was an investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald, the man.

Question: But it didn't include Cuba?

Supervisor: Well, it included Oswald's contacts within the Cuban area.⁸⁶

This Soviet Section supervisor could not recall whether he had known of the CIA plots against Castro or Castro's warning of September 7, 1963.⁸⁷ Although in late 1963 he had been assigned the "responsibility of going through every file in the FBI to see whether any lead had

⁸⁰ Supervisor testimony, 3/31/76, p. 24. The third case supervisor within the General Investigative Division is deceased.

⁸¹ Supervisor testimony, 4/27/76, p. 12.

⁸² Staff interview of William C. Sullivan, 4/21/76.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ The Domestic Intelligence Division had supervised the FBI security case on Lee Harvey Oswald before the assassination. Within that Division, the Espionage Section (which handled Soviet matters) and the Nationalities Intelligence Section (which handled Cuban matters), had specific responsibilities in this case.

⁸⁶ Soviet Section Supervisor testimony, 4/23/76, pp. 5, 22.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

been overlooked in the case," to his knowledge, the Bureau never conducted an investigation to determine whether the Cuban government was responsible for the assassination of President Kennedy. The Supervisor noted that if such an investigation had been conducted, it would have been the responsibility of the Nationalities Intelligence Section of the Domestic Intelligence Division.⁸⁸

The Select Committee also examined former FBI officials who had been in the Nationalities Intelligence Section in the early 1960s. These officials were the Bureau personnel most familiar with Cuban matters and the activities of anti-Castro groups at the time of the assassination. The Chief of the Nationalities Intelligence Section testified

the investigation of the assassination was not in the division and I wasn't privy to any of the discussions, . . . even the phases that spilled over to the division were handled in the [Soviet] Section.⁸⁹

Another official in the Nationalities Intelligence Section, reputed to be the leading Cuba expert within the Bureau, testified that he was never informed of any CIA assassination attempts against Fidel Castro.⁹⁰ This supervisor had no recollection of any Bureau investigation of Cuban involvement in the assassination.

Q. Were there ever any meetings that you recall where there were discussions as to whether or not the Cubans were involved in the assassination of President Kennedy?

A. No. I don't recall. I would say no.

Q. Do you know if that possibility was investigated?

A. Well, I can't even say that for sure, no, I can't.

Q. Do you recall at any time ever seeing any memoranda or instructions that Cuban sources be contacted to see if there was any Cuban involvement in the assassination of President Kennedy?

A. There were no such communications, to my knowledge, ever sent out from Headquarters.

Q. If they were sent out, in all likelihood you would have known about it?

A. Yes, I think I would have. It's—that would have been a normal way of handling this kind of thing.⁹¹

This supervisor does not recall ever being informed of Castro's warning of retaliation. He did testify that had he been informed, he would have conducted the investigation differently.

Q. We have here a copy of an article from the New Orleans Times-Picayune on September 9, 1963, which I think has recently been in the press again. I will read a portion of it to you. It says "Prime Minister Fidel Castro turned up today at a reception at the Brazilian Embassy in Havana and submitted to an impromptu interview by Associated Press Correspondent Daniel Harker."

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁸⁹ Former Section Chief, testimony, 5/11/76, p. 36.

⁹⁰ Supervisor testimony, 5/5/76, p. 33.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Now, we have been told by CIA experts that Castro giving an interview at that time was somewhat unusual.

Would you agree with that?

A. Yes.

Q. And it was also unusual that he would go to a reception at the Brazilian Embassy?

A. Uh huh.

Q. And the first paragraph of the article says, "Prime Minister Castro said Saturday night U.S. leaders would be in danger if they helped in any attempt to do away with leaders of Cuba." Then it goes on from there.

Do you recall ever seeing that article or hearing that statement from Castro?

A. No, I don't. In retrospect that certainly looks like a pointed signal, . . . If it had come to our attention—you know, if this article had been routed to us, it would have been a typical reaction by headquarters, to instruct the key field offices handling Cuban matters to alert their sources and be aware, you know, be particularly aware of anything that might indicate an assassination attempt but there was no such communication, to my knowledge, ever sent out from headquarters.⁹²

The Committee also took testimony from the Nationalities Intelligence Section expert on anti-Castro exiles in the United States. This supervisor testified that he was never asked to conduct an investigation of whether any Cuban exile group was involved in the assassination,⁹³ and stressed that he was "not part of the assassination team." He noted,

If there would be anything of interest to me, they may have given it to me. I don't recall any specific incident about that, but they were handling the assassination; I was handling the exiles. We were pretty much apart. I had little contact with them on the assassination, *per se*.⁹⁴

The Documentary Record.—The Committee's review of FBI instructions to its field offices in the United States, and to legal attaché offices around the world, confirms that FBI Headquarters did not inform field agents involved in the investigation of the CIA plots or Castro's warning.⁹⁵ Additionally, no instructions were ever issued by FBI Headquarters authorizing an intelligence investigation to determine whether there had been foreign involvement in the assassination.

For example, the FBI had sources in the field who might have been able to provide relevant information on possible Cuban involvement in

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 32-34.

⁹³ Supervisor I, 4/27/76, p. 16.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

This supervisor also testified that he could not recall any occasion where the issue of possible foreign involvement in the assassination was raised. (*Ibid.*, p. 25.)

⁹⁵ Each of the field agents involved in the assassination investigation who testified before the Committee confirmed this fact.

the assassination, but those sources were never utilized.⁹⁶ The instructions from FBI Headquarters were very general in nature and did not focus on such a possibility. The only Bureau communication which could have been construed as an instruction to interview security informants was rescinded by an instruction issued on the following day. Those security informants would have included individuals familiar with Cuba and Cuban exile matters.

At 9:40 p.m. on November 22, 1963, the Bureau dispatched a teletype to all of its field offices which read:

All offices immediately contact all informants, security, racial and criminal, as well as other sources, for information bearing on assassination of President Kennedy. All offices immediately establish whereabouts of bombing suspects, all known Klan and hate group members, known racial extremists, and any other individuals who on the basis of information available in your files may possibly have been involved.⁹⁷

At about 11 p.m. on November 22, 1963, the Bureau sent another teletype to its field offices:

The Bureau is conducting an investigation to determine who is responsible for the assassination. *You are therefore instructed to follow and resolve all allegations pertaining to the assassination.* This matter is of utmost urgency and should be handled accordingly keeping the Bureau and Dallas, the office of origin, apprised fully of all developments.⁹⁸ [Emphasis added.]

However, at 11:20 a.m. on November 23, 1963, the Bureau dispatched the following teletype to all of its field offices:

Lee Harvey Oswald has been developed as the principal suspect in the assassination of President Kennedy. He has been formally charged with the President's murder along with the murder of Dallas Texas patrolman J. D. Tippett by Texas state authorities. In view of developments all offices should resume normal contacts with informants and other sources with respect to bombing suspects, hate group members and known racial extremists. Daily teletype summaries may be discontinued. All investigation bearing directly on the President's assassination should be afforded most expeditious handling and Bureau and Dallas advised.⁹⁹ [Emphasis added.]

⁹⁶ It is also instructive to note that CIA Director John McCone telephoned FBI Director Hoover on the morning of November 26, 1963, and after noting that the President wanted to make sure the CIA was giving the FBI full support, specifically offered to make "CIA's operational resources in Mexico" available to the Bureau.

The Committee has seen no evidence that the FBI asked the CIA to conduct an investigation or gather information on the assassination case, but middle-level CIA personnel did routinely provide the Bureau with information that came to their attention in the assassination case.

⁹⁷ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to all Field Offices, 11/22/63.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to all Field Offices, 11/23/63.

Thus, the Committee found that FBI Headquarters never instructed field agents to contact informants or sources familiar with Cuban matters to determine whether they had any information concerning Cuban involvement in the assassination. Those Cuban issues which were explored related solely to *Oswald* and *Oswald's* contacts, rather than the larger issue of determining whether subversive activities of the Cuban government or Cuban exile community were relevant to the assassination. No counterintelligence program, operation, or investigation, was ever initiated or discussed, to pursue this question.

The FBI Investigation in Mexico City.—The FBI Legal Attaché (Legat) in Mexico is the highest ranking Bureau official in that country, thus, the Bureau's assassination investigation there was under his direction. The Legat stated that while conducting the investigation, he proceeded under the "impression" conveyed to him by Bureau Headquarters, that Oswald was the lone assassin.¹⁰⁰ He further stated:

Our investigation was dedicated or directed toward establishing *Oswald's* activities in Mexico and looking toward trying to establish whether he had been accompanied by anyone while he was in Mexico.

We were able to get *him* in, get *him* out, where *he* stayed. I don't recall that we were able to establish where *he* was every day in Mexico.¹⁰¹ [Emphasis added.]

Bureau documents and testimony of knowledgeable officials revealed that the investigation was as circumscribed as the Legat testified.¹⁰²

On November 23, 1963, the Mexico Legat informed Headquarters:

[The] Ambassador . . . is greatly concerned that Cubans behind subject's assassination of President. He feels that both we and CIA doing everything possible there to establish or refute Cuban connection.¹⁰³

On November 24, 1963, the Legat cabled FBI Headquarters:

Ambassador here feels Soviets much too sophisticated to participate in direction of assassination of President by subject, but thinks Cubans stupid enough to have participated in such direction even to extent of hiring subject. If this should be case, it would appear likely that the contract would have been made with subject in U.S. and purpose of his trip to Mexico was to set up get away route. Bureau may desire to give consideration to polling all Cuban sources in U.S. in effort to confirm or refute this theory.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Legat testimony, 2/4/76, p. 23.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 24.

¹⁰² The evidence also establishes that there was confusion as to which U.S. agency was conducting the investigation in Mexico. Although the Ambassador and high-level government officials in Washington believed that the FBI was conducting the investigation in Mexico, the FBI's position was that, although the FBI would cooperate, only the "State Department and CIA have jurisdiction in getting investigative results abroad." (Memorandum to A. Belmont, 11/27/63.)

Ironically, neither the Legat nor the Bureau supervisor sent down to "direct and coordinate the investigation" knew whether the State Department or the CIA was in fact investigating in Mexico.

¹⁰³ FBI cable, Mexico Legat to Headquarters, 11/23/63.

¹⁰⁴ FBI cable, Mexico Legat to Headquarters, 11/24/63.

The Committee found no indication that the Bureau ever attempted to confirm or refute this theory. Indeed, a FBI Headquarters supervisor's handwritten notation on the cablegram states: "Not desirable. Would serve to promote rumors."

Richard Helms' sentiments coincided with this Bureau supervisor's. In his November 28, 1963, cable to the CIA's Mexico Station chief, Helms stated:

For your private information, there distinct feeling here in all three agencies [CIA, FBI, State] that Ambassador is pushing this case too hard . . . and that we could well create flap with Cubans which could have serious repercussions.¹⁰⁵

On November 27, 1963, the Legat sent an urgent cablegram informing Bureau Headquarters that a press release had been made by a former Cuban diplomat and noting:

At one point in the lengthy release he was quoted as saying that they do not have the slightest doubt that assassination of President Kennedy and subsequent elimination of his assassin is work of Communist direction. To back up this statement he alleged that Fidel Castro in his speech made at the Brazilian Embassy in Havana on September 7, 1963, accused CIA and President Kennedy of planning attempt against Castro and that Castro stated "Let Kennedy and his brother Robert take care of themselves since they too can be the victims of an attempt which will cause their death."¹⁰⁶

One of the major areas of investigation soon after Kennedy's assassination involved an allegation made by a Latin American, "D".¹⁰⁷ "D" walked into the American Embassy in Mexico City on November 25, 1963, and alleged that on September 18, 1963, he had observed Oswald receive \$6,500 from a Cuban consulate employee. "D" eventually admitted that he fabricated the allegation.¹⁰⁸ The Warren Commission reviewed "D's" original claim and concluded it was false, since overwhelming evidence indicated Oswald was in New Orleans on September 18, 1963.¹⁰⁹

Cable traffic discussing investigative responses to "D's" allegation indicates problems of coordination, especially in the area of possible Cuban involvement. When the American Embassy learned of "D's" allegation, the Ambassador requested that a Bureau representative "come down from Washington to Mexico City."¹¹⁰ CIA cables reflect the Ambassador's belief that he was not being fully informed on all

¹⁰⁵ CIA cable, Headquarters to Mexico Station, 11/28/63.

¹⁰⁶ FBI cable, Mexico Legat to Headquarters, 11/27/63.

The Committee has seen no indication that any action was taken upon receipt of this cable.

¹⁰⁷ Memorandum from Hoover to Messrs. Tolson, DeLoach, Sullivan, Belmont, Mohr and Rosen, 11/29/63. According to this memorandum, the Director advised the president that the FBI hoped "to have the investigation wrapped up today but probably won't have it before the first of the week as an angle in Mexico is giving trouble—the matter of Oswald's getting \$6,500 from the Cuban Embassy."

¹⁰⁸ Cable from Legat, Mexico City, to FBI Headquarters, 11/30/63.

¹⁰⁹ Warren Commission Report, pp. 307-309.

¹¹⁰ CIA cable from Mexico Station to Headquarters, 11/26/63.

developments in the FBI investigation in the United States. The Ambassador was also concerned about the gravity of "D's" allegation and requested that the investigation of "D's" claim be given the highest priority.¹¹¹ J. Edgar Hoover shared the Ambassador's concern over the allegation, noting:

Ambassador . . . may be one of the psuedo-investigators, a Sherlock Holmes, but he has made a lot of statements which, if true, throw an entirely different light on the whole picture.¹¹²

The supervisor's presence in Mexico City was short-lived. He arrived on November 27, and returned to FBI Headquarters on December 1, 1963. The supervisor testified that on the morning after his arrival in Mexico City that he, the Legat and the CIA Station Chief met with the Ambassador. At this meeting, the Ambassador

expressed his opinion that he felt that this was definitely a conspiracy and that we must turn over the last stone to find out if there is any overt conspiracy on the part of the Cubans.

He also made reference, I believe, to previous boasts by Castro that he would endeavor to get back at attempts by American forces to assassinate him.

At that time we tried to stress to Ambassador that every bit of information that we had developed in Washington, at Dallas, and elsewhere, indicated that this was a lone job.¹¹³

The supervisor also testified that he "knows of no investigation in Mexico to determine if there was Cuban involvement in the assassination of President Kennedy," other than disproving the "D" allegation.¹¹⁴ Once "D" admitted he had fabricated his story, the Ambassador "advised that it was no longer necessary for [the supervisor] to stay."¹¹⁵ Sullivan's previous statement that the supervisor was "selected to go to Mexico to direct and coordinate the entire investigation there and pursue it vigorously *until the desired results are obtained.*"¹¹⁶ cannot be reconciled unless the thorough investigation and desired results were to discredit "D's" allegations.¹¹⁷

Q. What I am trying to understand is what was done other than what ended up being the disproving of the "D" allegation. It looks like a negative investigation . . . well, let's get down there and wash it out and get this ambassador off our backs and we will all be happy and gay.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Memorandum from Sullivan to Belmont, 11/27/63.

One former FBI official told the Committee that Hoover's labeling the Ambassador a "Sherlock Holmes" had the effect within the Bureau, of causing FBI personnel "to disregard what the Ambassador was saying."

¹¹³ FBI supervisor testimony, 4/8/76, p. 10.

The supervisor subsequently testified that he had no knowledge of American attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹¹⁵ Memorandum from Belmont to Sullivan, 12/3/63.

¹¹⁶ William C. Sullivan, while admitting that this was a "poor choice of words," denied that he sent the supervisor to Mexico specifically to placate the Ambassador and "disprove" "D."

¹¹⁷ Select Committee staff interview of W. C. Sullivan, 4/21/76.

Supervisor: Well, possibly on one hand you could say yes, we wanted definitively to protect the Bureau from any future allegations that the investigation was shoddy.

I believe there was a feeling that we had an outsider here, possibly a Sherlock Holmes, who wanted to insert himself on this . . . so we went down there certainly to cover ourselves, to pacify the Ambassador, but in no way were we going to try to water it down.¹¹⁸

The supervisor also testified that he never had the opportunity to question "D." On the morning he arrived in Mexico City, the CIA turned "D" over to the Mexican police and denied the supervisor's repeated requests to interrogate "D".¹¹⁹ He learned that the Mexican police had exhaustively interrogated "D" and that he had recanted his allegations. The supervisor testified:

Q. There could have been a feeling of gratitude to the Mexican police's interrogation that resulted in this guy's recanting his story, that you wouldn't have the chance to get it out of him.

A. That could be very definitely, I know the pressure was off when the Mexican police came and told us this was a complete fabrication.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Supervisor, 4/8/76, p. 43.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

However, the FBI Mexico City Legat later had access to "D" and interrogated him.

IV. THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES AND THE WARREN COMMISSION: JANUARY TO SEPTEMBER 1964

Legally, the assassination of President Kennedy and the subsequent murder of Lee Harvey Oswald were within the jurisdiction of Texas state authorities. However, in the days immediately following the assassination, many Americans questioned how a President could be assassinated despite the vast U.S. intelligence apparatus. Many were also openly skeptical of the FBI findings that Oswald was the lone assassin.

Congress and the President felt that public concern could only be assuaged by a thorough and independent investigation of the assassination. Two resolutions were submitted in Congress calling for congressional investigations into the circumstances surrounding the assassination. The State of Texas established a Commission for the same purpose. The Warren Commission, established by President Johnson's Executive Order on November 29, 1963, preempted the field.

The President stated that he established the Commission to ensure a thorough and independent investigation of the circumstances surrounding the assassination.¹ Because the only previous investigations of the assassination were those conducted by the Dallas Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and recognizing public criticism and skepticism directed toward these agencies, it would appear that the Commission's investigation was to be independent from the Bureau's. As the Warren Commission's report noted: "Because of the numerous rumors and theories, the Commission concluded that the public interest in insuring that the truth was ascertained could not be met by merely by accepting the reports or the analyses of Federal or State agencies."²

When it began its substantive work in mid-December, the Commission received a tremendous number of reports from various Federal and State agencies. By far the largest number of reports were supplied the Commission by the FBI. The FBI forwarded a five-volume December 9, 1963 report summarizing the Bureau's investigation immediately after the assassination. Subsequently, the Commission requested and received the report of the field investigation from which the December 9, 1963, report had been derived. The Warren Commission noted in its report:

As these investigative reports were received, the staff began analyzing and summarizing them. The members of the legal staff, divided into teams, proceeded to organize the facts revealed by these investigations, determine the issues, sort out the unresolved problems, and recommend additional investigation by the Commission. . . .

¹ Warren Commission Report, p. ix.

² Warren Commission Report, p. x.

After reviewing the accumulating materials, the Commission directed numerous additional requests to Federal and State agencies.

Because of the diligence, cooperation, and facilities of Federal investigative agencies, it was unnecessary for the Commission to employ investigators, other than the members of the Commission's legal staff.³

With only minor isolated exceptions, the entire body of factual material from which the Commission derived its findings was supplied by the intelligence community, primarily, the FBI. Even when material was provided by an agency other than the FBI, that agency usually checked with the Bureau before supplying information to the Commission. Moreover, CIA and Secret Service personnel reviewed Director Hoover's testimony before the Commission prior to the appearance of CIA Director McCone and DDP Helms and Secret Service Director Rowley to ensure that there were no conflicts in testimony.

Thus, the Commission was dependent upon the intelligence agencies for the facts and preliminary analysis. The Commission and its staff did analyze the material and frequently requested follow-up agency investigations; but if evidence on a particular point was not supplied to the Commission, this second step would obviously not be reached, and the Commission's findings would be formulated without the benefit of any information on the omitted point.

On the crucial question of whether Oswald was involved in a conspiracy to assassinate the President, the Warren Commission noted that the Secret Service, CIA and FBI and Treasury, Justice, State and Defense Departments independently arrived at the same conclusion, that there was no evidence of a conspiracy.⁵

It must be remembered that the purpose of the Committee's inquiry was to allow for an evaluation of the intelligence agencies (both prior and subsequent to the assassination) and the process by which information was provided to the Warren Commission. The following section discusses the FBI's and the CIA's relationship to the Warren Commission.

A. The Relationship Between the FBI and the Warren Commission

Director Hoover initially opposed President Johnson's decision to create the Warren Commission;⁶ but once the Commission was established by Executive Order, he had to accept that decision and respond to the Commission's requests.⁷ Nevertheless, he repeatedly told others in the Bureau that the Warren Commission was "looking for gaps in the FBI's investigation" and was "seeking to criticize the FBI."⁸ The memoranda of other senior Bureau officials also reveal a

³ Warren Commission Report, pp. xii, xiii.

⁵ Warren Commission Report, p. 374.

⁶ Memorandum from Hoover to Messrs. Tolson, Belmont, Mohr, DeLoach, Rosen and Sullivan, 11/29/63.

⁷ Cover Sheet, 11/29/63, with attached memorandum from Hoover to Messrs. Tolson, Belmont, Mohr, DeLoach, Rosen and Sullivan, 11/29/63.

⁸ Memorandum from Hoover to Tolson, Belmont, Mohr, Sullivan, Rosen, FBI Inspector and DeLoach, 1/31/64; Hoover handwritten note on memorandum from Rosen to Belmont, 4/4/64.

deep concern that the FBI might be charged with some dereliction in connection with the President's death.⁹ Thus, although the Commission had to rely on the FBI to conduct the primary investigation of the President's death, their relationship was at times almost adversarial.¹⁰ Such a relationship was not conducive to the cooperation necessary for a thorough and exhaustive investigation.

1. The FBI's Perception of the Warren Commission as an Adversary

In the days immediately following the assassination of President Kennedy, the Bureau was subjected to its first major public criticism in years for its handling of the Lee Harvey Oswald security case before the assassination. Many Americans were skeptical of the Bureau's investigative findings that Oswald was the assassin and that he acted alone. If the Warren Commission reported that the Bureau's handling of the assassination investigation or the Oswald security case was deficient in some manner, the FBI would have been open to embarrassment and criticism. Given this possibility, and FBI Director Hoover's known hostility to criticism or embarrassment of the Bureau, it is not at all surprising that from its inception, the Commission was perceived as an adversary by both Hoover and senior FBI officials.

After the Warren Commission had been established, each time Hoover received word that a particular person was being considered for the Commission staff, he asked "what the Bureau had" on the individual. Although derogatory information pertaining to both Commission members and staff was brought to Mr. Hoover's attention, the Bureau has informed the Committee staff that there is no documentary evidence which indicates that such information was disseminated while the Warren Commission was in session.¹¹

On December 10, 1963, Hoover informed Assistant Director Alan Belmont that he would be "personally responsible for reviewing every piece of paper that went to the Warren Commission." Hoover also designated the FBI Headquarters inspector who had previously been assigned to supervise the Dallas field investigation as the Bureau liaison with the Warren Commission. In a memorandum recounting the December 10th meeting, where this inspector was briefed on his new assignment, the Director wrote:

I told [the inspector] that I wanted him to establish the closest and most amiable working relationship with Mr. Ran-

⁹ Memorandum from Section Chief to Sullivan, 2/18/64; memorandum from Section Chief to Sullivan, 4/3/64.

¹⁰ Memorandum from Hoover to Tolson, Belmont, Mohr, DeLoach, Rosen, FBI Inspector and Sullivan, 1/31/64, p. 4; Hoover handwritten note on memorandum from Rosen to Belmont, 4/4/64.

¹¹ The Committee and the Bureau defined their terms, such that "dissemination" includes informing the person himself of the derogatory information. Additionally, in order to ensure the protection of individual privacy, the Committee did not request access to any derogatory information.

kin. I told him that I had personally known Mr. Rankin quite well since he had served as Solicitor General under Attorneys General Brownell and Rogers.

I also alerted [the inspector] that there were indications that the Chief Justice, who headed the Presidential Commission, was endeavoring to find fault with the FBI and certain information had been leaked by the Chief Justice to [a newspaperman] which was critical of the FBI's functioning in Dallas prior to the assassination.

I told [the inspector] and Mr. Belmont that the Chief Justice had now demanded all of the so-called "raw" reports upon which the FBI report of the assassination was predicated, and in doing so that Chief Justice had characterized the FBI report as being in "skeleton form." I stated the Chief Justice had further added in his statement to the press: "In order to evaluate it we have to see the materials on which the report was prepared."

I stated that this statement by the Chief Justice I felt was entirely unwarranted and could certainly have been phrased better so as not to leave the impression, at least by innuendo, that the FBI had not done a thorough job.¹³

On January 28, 1964, Lee Rankin met with Hoover at the Commission's direction to discuss the allegation that Oswald was an FBI informant. According to a Hoover memorandum of January 31, 1964:

Rankin stated that the Commission was concerned as to how this matter could be resolved, and it was for this reason that they asked him to see me. He stated that the Commission did not desire to initiate an investigation on the outside . . . as it might appear the Commission was investigating the FBI.

I told Mr. Rankin that Lee Harvey Oswald was never at any time a confidential informant, undercover agent, or even a source of information for the FBI, and I would like to see that clearly stated on the record of the Commission and I would be willing to so state under oath.

I commented to him that I had not appreciated what I interpreted as carping criticism by the Chief Justice when he referred to the Bureau's report originally furnished to the Commission as being a "skeleton report."¹⁴

Throughout the Warren Commission's existence, Alan Belmont kept Hoover informed daily on:

1. the internal Commission meetings and decisions;
2. the areas in which the Commission was requesting information, or further FBI investigation; and

¹³ Memorandum from Hoover to Tolson, 12/26/63.

¹⁴ Memorandum from Hoover to Messrs. Tolson, Belmont, Mohr, Sullivan, Rosen, FBI Inspector and DeLoach, 1/31/64.

3. the materials which the Bureau intended to provide to the Commission.¹⁵

On various occasions, Hoover learned that the Commission members or staff had stated that they were impressed with the testimony of Bureau personnel and the investigation conducted for the Bureau.¹⁶ His handwritten notation on an April 4, 1964, memorandum succinctly states his usual response to such complimentary remarks:

I place no credence in any complimentary remarks made by Warren nor the Commission. They were looking for FBI "gaps" and having found none yet they try to get sympathy.¹⁷

In an April 3, 1964 memorandum to William Sullivan, a Bureau Supervisor wrote:

While complimenting the Bureau for its cooperation, the President's Commission, by letter dated 3/26/64, forwarded what purports to be 30 questions (by actual count there are 52 as some of the enumerated questions have more than one part) to which they request a reasoned response in reasonable detail and with such substantiating materials as seem appropriate.

The questions are those of a cross-examining attorney and it is evident that this is a cross-examination of the FBI or a part of it in the case of the assassination of President Kennedy.¹⁸

Mr. Hoover noted on the memorandum, "Their so-called compliments of the Bureau's work are empty and have no sincerity."¹⁹ Similarly, when he was informed that the Commission intended to send two of its staff members to Mexico City, the Director "expressed concern as to how lawyers on the Commission could spot gaps in our investigation."²⁰

¹⁵ For example, memorandum from C. D. DeLoach to J. Mohr, 12/12/63; memorandum from A. Rosen to A. Belmont, 4/4/64.

FBI documents also reveal that James Angleton of the CIA passed information he received about the Warren Commission investigation to the FBI. On May 13, 1964, he contacted William Sullivan, stating "that it would be well for both McCone and Hoover to be aware that the Commission might ask the same questions, wondering whether they would get different replies from the heads of the two agencies." Angleton then informed Sullivan as to the questions he believed McCone would be asked, and the "replies that will be given," two of which series are set forth below:

(1) Q: Was Oswald ever an agent of the CIA?

A: No.

(2) Q: Does the CIA have any evidence showing that a conspiracy existed to assassinate President Kennedy?

A: No.

(Memorandum, W. C. Sullivan to A. H. Belmont, 5/13/64.)

¹⁶ Memorandum from A. Rosen to A. Belmont, 4/4/64.

¹⁷ Hoover's handwritten note on memorandum from Rosen to Belmont, 4/4/64.

¹⁸ Memorandum from Section Chief to Sullivan, 4/3/64.

¹⁹ Hoover's handwritten note on memorandum from Section Chief to Sullivan, 4/3/64.

²⁰ Memorandum from Section Chief to Sullivan, 2/18/64.

2. The FBI's Handling of the Oswald Security Case

Immediately after the assassination, J. Edgar Hoover ordered a complete analysis of "any investigative deficiencies in the Oswald case."²¹ On December 10, 1963, Assistant Director J. H. Gale of the Inspection Division reported that there were a number of investigative and reporting delinquencies in the handling of the Oswald security case. Gale wrote:

Oswald should have been on the Security Index; his wife should have been interviewed before the assassination, and investigation intensified—not held in abeyance—after Oswald contacted Soviet Embassy in Mexico.²²

In the paragraph immediately preceding Gale's recommendations for disciplinary actions, he observes:

Concerning the administrative action recommended herein-after, there is the possibility that the Presidential Commission investigating instant matter will subpoena the investigating Agents. If this occurs, the possibility then exists that the Agents may be questioned concerning whether administrative action had been taken against them. However, it is felt these possibilities are sufficiently remote that the recommended action should go forward at this time. It appears unlikely at this time that the Commission's subpoenas would go down to the Agent level.²³

Director Hoover responded, "In any event such gross incompetency cannot be overlooked nor administrative action postponed."²⁴

Assistant Director Cartha DeLoach responded to Gale's report as follows:

I recommended that the suggested disciplinary action be held in abeyance until the findings of the Presidential Commission have been made public. This action is recommended inasmuch as any "leak" to the general public, or particularly to the communications media, concerning the FBI taking disciplinary action against its personnel with respect to captioned matter would be assumed as a direct admission that we are responsible for negligence which might have resulted in the assassination of the President. At the present time there are so many wild rumors, gossip, and speculation that even the slightest hint to outsiders concerning disciplinary action of this nature would result in considerable adverse reaction against the FBI. I do not believe that any of our personnel will be subpoenaed. Chief Justice Warren has indicated he plans to issue no subpoenas. There is, however, the possibility that the public will learn of disciplinary action being

²¹ The Bureau's handling of the pre-assassination Oswald case is discussed in Appendix A.

²² Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Hoover's handwritten note on memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

taken against our personnel and, therefore, start a bad, unjustifiable reaction.²⁵

Director Hoover, however, responded to DeLoach's recommendation, "I do not concur."²⁶

On December 10, 1963, 17 Bureau employees (five field investigative agents, one field supervisor, three special agents in charge, four headquarters supervisors, two headquarters section chiefs, one inspector, and one assistant director) were censured or placed on probation for "shortcomings in connection with the investigation of Oswald prior to the assassination."²⁷ Although the transfers of some of these agents were discussed at that time, certain transfers were held in abeyance until the issuance of the Warren Commission's report on September 24, 1964.²⁸

One of the specific shortcomings identified by Assistant Director Gale was the failure to include Oswald's name on the Security Index.²⁹ Indeed, of the seventeen agents, supervisors, and senior officials who were disciplined, not a single one believed that Oswald met the criteria for the Security Index. In this regard, Assistant to the Director Alan Belmont noted in an addendum to Mr. Gale's December 10, 1963 memorandum :

It is significant to note that all of the supervisors and officials who came into contact with this case at the seat of government, as well as agents in the field, are unanimous in the opinion that Oswald *did not* meet the criteria for the Security Index. If this is so, it would appear that the criteria are not sufficiently specific to include a case such as Oswald's and, rather than take the position that all of these employees were mistaken in their judgment, the criteria should be changed. This has now been recommended by Assistant Director Gale.³⁰

Mr. Hoover made the following handwritten notations next to Mr. Belmont's addendum : "They were worse than mistaken. Certainly no one in full possession of all his faculties can claim Oswald didn't fall within this criteria."³¹

On September 24, 1964, the same day the Warren Commission's report was officially released, Assistant Director William C. Sullivan wrote :

In answer to the question as to why Lee Harvey Oswald was not on the Security Index, based on the facts concerning

²⁵ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

²⁶ Hoover's handwritten note on memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

²⁷ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

²⁸ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 9/30/64.

²⁹ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

See Book II, "Intelligence Activities and the Rights of Americans," pp. 91-93 for a discussion of the Security Index. It is important to note, however, that under the procedures then in effect, the inclusion of Oswald on Security Index would not have resulted in the dissemination of Oswald's name to the Secret Service.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Hoover's handwritten note on *memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

Oswald which were available prior to his assassination of the President, it was the judgment of the agents handling the case in Dallas and New Orleans, the field supervisor, and the SAC in New Orleans, as well as supervisors at the Seat of Government, that such facts did not warrant the inclusion of Oswald in the Security Index. The matter has, of course, been re-examined in the Bureau and Mr. Gale by memorandum 12/10/63 expressed the opinion that Oswald should have been placed on the Security Index prior to 11/22/63. The Director concurred with Mr. Gale's opinion and administrative action has been taken.³²

Hoover wrote on this Sullivan memorandum that the Bureau personnel who failed to include Oswald on the Security Index, "could not have been more stupid . . . and now that the Bureau has been debunked publicly I intend to take additional administrative action."³³

Certain FBI agents testified before the Warren Commission on May 5, 1964. One of the agents had previously requested to talk to Hoover, and he learned from Alan Belmont on the morning of May 6, 1964, that he would be allowed to see the Director later that day.³⁴ According to the agent, the Director could not have been more pleasant; he quoted Hoover as saying that "Everything was in order" and that he had "nothing to worry about."³⁵ Indeed, this is exactly what the agent recounted to his special agent in charge upon his return to Dallas.³⁶ Mr. Hoover's version of the meeting differs considerably from the agents. According to the Director:

I discussed with him the situation which had developed in Dallas . . . and of embarrassment which had been caused.³⁷

On September 28, 1964, four days after the Commission's report had been issued, eight of the Bureau employees against whom disciplinary action had been taken in December 1963 were again censured, or put on probation, for reasons identical to those that led to action being taken against them in December 1963. Some of the eight were also transferred on this occasion.³⁸ In addition to the above eight, three other employees who had not been disciplined in December 1963 were disciplined as follows:

1. A Special Agent in Dallas was censured and placed on probation for failing to properly handle and supervise this matter;

2. An inspector at FBI Headquarters was censured for not exercising sufficient imagination and foresight to initiate action to have Security Index material disseminated to Secret Service;

³² Memorandum from W. C. Sullivan to A. H. Belmont, 9/24/64.

³³ Hoover's handwritten note on memorandum from Sullivan to Belmont, 9/24/64.

³⁴ FBI Special Agent, 12/5/75, p. 71.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ SAC testimony, 12/20/75, p. 19.

³⁷ Memorandum from Hoover to Tolson, 5/6/64.

³⁸ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 9/30/64.

3. An Assistant to the Director at FBI Headquarters was censured for his overall responsibility in this entire matter.³⁹

In a memorandum disseminated to senior bureau officials on October 12, 1964, Hoover noted :

There is no question in my mind but that we failed in carrying through some of the most salient aspects of the Oswald investigation. It ought to be a lesson to all, but I doubt if some even realize it now.⁴⁰

J. Edgar Hoover did not believe that these disciplinary actions would ever become known outside the Bureau, and they did not until October 1975. Although none of the information made available to the Commission by the FBI suggests the slightest investigative deficiency in the Oswald security case, Bureau officials were continually concerned with the possibility that the FBI might be regarded as "responsible for negligence that resulted in the assassination of President Kennedy because of pre-assassination investigative deficiencies in the Oswald case."⁴¹

3. The Bureau's Reaction to the Warren Commission Report

On September 25, 1964, when the FBI received a copy of the Warren Commission's Report, the Director noted: "I want this carefully reviewed as it pertains to FBI shortcomings by Gale. Chapter 8 tears us to pieces."⁴² On September 29, 1964, Mr. Hoover, after reading a *Washington Post* article captioned "Praise is Voiced for Staff Engaged in Warren Report," directed that the Bureau's files on the 84 staff members listed in the article "be checked."⁴³ On October 2, 1964, the Director was informed that "Bureau files contain derogatory information concerning the following individuals and their relatives."⁴⁴

On September 30, 1964, Assistant Director Gale presented Associate Director Clyde Tolson with a memorandum captioned "Shortcomings in handling of Lee Harvey Oswald matter by FBI personnel." Gale wrote :

The Commission has now set forth in a very damning manner some of the same glaring weaknesses for which we previously disciplined our personnel such as lack of vigorous investiga-

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Administrative Cover Sheet to memorandum from FBI Supervisor to Gale, 10/12/64.

⁴¹ Memorandum from A. Belmont to C. Tolson, 10/1/64.

⁴² Hoover's handwritten note on memorandum from DeLoach to Mohr, 9/25/64.

⁴³ Hoover's handwritten note on a 9/29/64 *Washington Post* article, "The Federal Diary."

⁴⁴ Memorandum from Rosen to Belmont, 10/2/64.

On November 8, 1966, memoranda were furnished to Presidential Assistant Marvin Watson, setting forth background information, including derogatory materials on seven private citizens who wrote unfavorable articles concerning the Warren Commission findings. A February 3, 1975, FBI memorandum which discusses these memoranda and their dissemination in 1966 to the White House recounts :

No information was developed or furnished to the White House concerning immoral conduct on the part of the seven above listed critics of the Warren Commission with the exception of the information furnished regarding [identity of individual deleted for reasons of privacy].

tion after we had established that Oswald visited the Soviet Embassy in Mexico.⁴⁵

Gale notes several instances where the testimony of FBI agents makes the Bureau "look ridiculous and taints its public image." These instances include:

One agent testified that conditions in the Dallas police station at the time of detention and interrogation of Oswald were not "too much unlike Grand Central Station at rush hour, maybe like Yankee Stadium during the World Series games." It is questionable whether the agent should have described conditions in such an editorializing and flamboyant manner but rather should have indicated conditions were crowded.⁴⁶

More importantly, Gale's memorandum reveals a dichotomy between the Bureau's "public position" and what Bureau officials regarded as the truth:

The Commission report indicates that we did not have a stop on Oswald's passport with the Department of State and did not know Oswald applied for a passport in June 1963, to travel to Western European countries, Soviet Union, Finland and Poland. This is another specific example of how this case was improperly investigated. The same personnel are responsible for this example as were previously criticized for not using appropriate techniques and making a more vigorous and thorough investigation, to determine with whom Oswald was in contact or whether he had intelligence assignment. *The Bureau by letter to the Commission indicated that the facts did not warrant placing a stop on the passport as our investigation disclosed no evidence that Oswald was acting under the instructions or on behalf of any foreign Government or or instrumentality thereof. Inspector feels it was proper at that time to take this "public" position. However, it is felt that with Oswald's background we should have had a stop on his passport, particularly since we did not know definitely whether or not he had any intelligence assignments at that time.* [Emphasis added.]⁴⁷

Not surprisingly, Gale states in the "observations" section of this memorandum:

We previously took administrative action against those responsible for the investigative shortcomings in this case some of which were brought out by the Commission. It is felt that it is appropriate at this time to consider further administrative action against those primarily culpable for the derelictions in this case which have now had the effect of publicly embarrassing the Bureau. [Emphasis added.]⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 9/30/64.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

After reviewing the Gale memorandum, Alan Belmont forwarded a one-page memorandum to Clyde Tolson on October 1, 1964. Belmont argued that:

I think we are making a tactical error by taking this disciplinary action in this case at this time. The Warren Commission report has just been released. It contains criticism of the FBI. We are currently taking aggressive steps to challenge the findings of the Warren Commission insofar as they pertain to the FBI. It is most important, therefore, that we do not provide a foothold for our critics or the general public to serve upon to say in effect, 'See, the Commission is right, Mr. Hoover has taken strong action against personnel involved in this case and thus admits that the Bureau was in error.'⁴⁹

Mr. Hoover disagreed with Belmont's observations, writing:

We were wrong. The administrative action approved by me will stand. I do not intend to palliate actions which have resulted in forever destroying the Bureau as the top level investigative organization.⁵⁰

By letter dated September 30, 1964, the Bureau informed the White House and Acting Attorney General Katzenbach that "the Commission's report is seriously inaccurate insofar as its treatment of the FBI is concerned."⁵¹ In an October 1, 1964 memorandum to Clyde Tolson, Alan Belmont considered whether a copy of this letter should be sent to the Warren Commission. Belmont wrote:

It is noted that this letter is an indictment of the Commission in that we charge that in the Commission's approach, instead of adopting a realistic and objective attitude, the Commission was more interested in avoiding possible criticism. Bearing this in mind, if we send a copy of this letter to the Commission now, it will probably make the letter public together with a definite answer.

I suggest we may want to wait a few days before we consider sending a copy of this letter to the Commission. Certainly we owe no courtesy to the Commission.⁵²

After reviewing the October 1, 1964 Belmont memorandum, Hoover wrote:

We might as well lay down and let anybody and everybody kick us around and not *defend nor retaliate*.⁵³

⁴⁹ Memorandum from Belmont to Tolson, 10/1/64.

⁵⁰ Hoover's handwritten note on memorandum from Belmont to Tolson, 10/1/64.

Mr. Tolson also disagreed with Mr. Belmont. In an addendum to the Gale memorandum Tolson wrote: "Most of the administrative directions with respect to the Security Index, the prompt submission of reports, etc., and not the Oswald case per se." (Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 9/30/64.)

⁵¹ Letter from Hoover to Jenkins, 9/30/64.

⁵² Memorandum from Belmont to Tolson, 10/1/69.

⁵³ Hoover's handwritten note on the memorandum from Belmont to Tolson, 10/1/64.

On October 1, 1964, a senior Bureau official instructed the FBI Inspector, who had handled the Bureau's liaison with the Warren Commission, to telephonically contact Commission General Counsel J. Lee Rankin and inform him that "he did the Bureau a great disservice and had out-McCarthyed McCarthy." ⁵⁴ A memorandum dated October 2, 1964, reflects that this request was carried out.

On October 6, 1964, Cartha D. DeLoach forwarded to Assistant Director John Mohr a memorandum captioned "Criticism of the FBI Following the Assassination of the President," in which he wrote:

The criticism concerning the FBI and its role in events surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy raises three questions which merit consideration at this time.

(1) What is the public image of the FBI at the present time?

Certainly, it cannot be denied that the public image of the FBI has been affected in certain areas by the criticism made of the Bureau and its role in the events taking place prior to the assassination of the President. It is believed this situation reached one stage during the days immediately following this event and was climaxed by Dallas Chief of Police Curry's statements which left the implication this Bureau was seriously derelict in discharging its responsibilities as an intelligence agency.

The second stage, the most acute, followed the issuance of the Warren Report.

While there is admittedly no absolute way to assess a public image, it is believed the image of the FBI improved steadily since the week following the assassination, and it improved immeasurably up until the release of the Warren Report. At the time we suffered a rough setback. Following the release of the Director's testimony, we have been well on the road back to good prestige. There is every indication this improvement will continue if we follow our current program regarding this situation.

(2) What has been done to counteract this criticism of the FBI?

Immediately following the assassination, we undertook a program designed to eliminate the misunderstanding as to the statutory responsibilities of the Secret Service and the FBI which existed among the uninformed . . . Every appropriate medium such as the news media, radio scripts, FBI tours, correspondence, speeches and police training was used to clear the air concerning our responsibility.

For the more educated group, those who were not necessarily biased, and who were aware of the statutory authority of the FBI we furnished full explanations for our actions prior to the assassination with respect to Lee Harvey Oswald.

⁵⁴ Memorandum from Rosen to Belmont, 10/2/64.

The FBI Inspector could not recall the identity of the Bureau official who instructed him to make the phone call. (Staff Interview of FBI Inspector, 3/20/76.)

This was designed to convince them that this Bureau did not fail to properly evaluate the information available on Oswald prior to November 22, 1963, and that, in light of the facts available and the authority granted within which to act, we were not derelict in disseminating pertinent information to proper authorities.

(3) What should be our future course in this matter?

The liberal press, with the exception of the "New York Times," and its friends will continue to make a determined effort to place the FBI on the defensive; however, it is not felt we should engage in any prolonged debate with them. By keeping the argument going, we are diverting public attention from Secret Service and the State Department and their culpability.

The Director has said that "nothing is more devastating to a smear than an offensive of real outstanding accomplishments." Our attention and energies should be directed toward this end in the coming months.⁵⁵

At the bottom of the last page of this DeLoach memorandum, Mr. Hoover made the following handwritten notation:

The FBI will never live down this smear which could have been so easily avoided if there had been proper supervision and initiative.⁵⁶

B. Relationship Between the CIA and the Warren Commission

After the CIA's initial review of the assassination was completed by the Western Hemisphere desk officer in December 1963, Helms assigned responsibility for investigative matters related to the President's assassination to the Counterintelligence Division headed by James Angleton.⁵⁷

When the Warren Commission began to request information from CIA, Angleton directed one of his subordinates to become the "point of record" for coordinating research undertaken for the Commission. This CIA analyst said it was his responsibility to know what materials the CIA had on the assassination and to know what research was being conducted.⁵⁸

This analyst chose three others from the Counterintelligence Staff to work with him. They were experts in the KGB and Soviet matters, and were not affiliated with the CIA Cuban affairs staff. Cuban operations were uniquely compartmented within CIA. As one witness described the Special Affairs Staff, it was "sort of a microcosm of the Agency with emphasis on Cuban matters."⁵⁹ SAS had its own counter-intelligence staff which coordinated with Angleton's, but was not subordinate to it.

⁵⁵ Memorandum from DeLoach to Mohr, 10/6/64.

⁵⁶ Hoover's handwritten note on memorandum from DeLoach to Mohr, 10/6/64.

⁵⁷ See Chapter III, p. 31.

⁵⁸ Staff summary of interview of CIA analyst, 3/15/76.

⁵⁹ Chief SAS/CI testimony, 5/10/76, p. 6.

Files on this phase of the CIA investigation reflect the Soviet orientation of the investigation. The CIA staff exhaustively analyzed the significance of Oswald's activities in the Soviet Union, but there is no corresponding CIA analysis of the significance of Oswald's contacts with pro-Castro and anti-Castro groups in the United States.

During the Warren Commission investigation, the Commission worked directly with designated CIA officials. The Commission staff was given access to CIA files on the assassination, including material obtained from sensitive sources and methods.

However, the Warren Commission staff did not work directly with anyone from SAS. Although the CIA centered its work on the assassination in its Counterintelligence Division, the Chief of SAS Counterintelligence testified that the SAS had no "direct" role in the investigation of the assassination.⁶⁰

SAS was not completely removed from investigative work on the assassination. The Counterintelligence Staff occasionally requested a name check or similar information from SAS, but there is no evidence whatsoever that SAS was asked or ever volunteered to analyze Oswald's contacts with Cuban groups. The Chief of SAS/CI testified he could recall no such analyses.⁶¹

Moreover, SAS capabilities to obtain information from Cuba, and from Cuban exiles, were not fully utilized. The CIA JMWAVE Chief of Station in Florida was asked what his station's capability in this regard was:

Well, in relationship to Cubans living in the United States, I would say that our capability was quite good. Now if you are referring to our capability to conduct an investigation in Cuba, I would have to say it was limited.⁶²

He summarized his station's participation in the investigation in the following testimony:

We felt that the nature of our capability was to simply respond to what we were able to obtain in the Miami area, and from our sources in a passive way, because this was an investigation that was being conducted in the United States with the primary responsibility with agencies other than CIA.

We had no reason at the particular time to feel that there was any kind of a case, hard information, that the Cubans were behind the assassination. . . . But we had no persuasion that this was being mounted by the Cubans at that particular time.⁶³

Indeed all the evidence suggests that the CIA investigation into any Cuban connection, whether pro-Castro or anti-Castro, was passive in nature. The Special Affairs Staff did conduct name traces on the request of the CIA investigators. The JMWAVE station passed along any information its intelligence network collected on the assassination. SAS did interrogate one defector from Cuban intelligence about his

⁶⁰ Chief, SAS/CI testimony, 5/10/76, p. 9.

⁶¹ Chief, SAS/CI testimony, 5/10/76, pp. 9-12.

⁶² Chief, JMWAVE testimony, 5/6/76, p. 13.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

knowledge of Cuban involvement, but there is no evidence that the CIA made any affirmative effort to collect such information. Indeed, AMLASH himself had access to high government officials in Cuba. He was never asked about the assassination of President Kennedy in meetings with the CIA in 1964 and 1965.

Some CIA witnesses before the Select Committee have argued that an intensive investigation into Cuban involvement was not warranted by the facts known at the time, and in any event the FBI had primary responsibility for the investigation. Yet in view of Oswald's preoccupation with Cuba, and his visit to Mexico City ostensibly to obtain visas to Cuba and the Soviet Union, it would appear that potential involvement with pro-Castro or anti-Castro groups should have been investigated.

Even if CIA investigators did not know that the CIA was plotting to kill Castro, they certainly did know that the Agency had been operating a massive covert operation against Cuba since 1960. The conspiratorial atmosphere of violence which developed over the course of three years of CIA and exile group operations, should have led CIA investigators to ask whether Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby, who were known to have at least touched the fringes of the Cuban community were influenced by that atmosphere. Similarly that arguments that the CIA domestic jurisdiction was limited belie the fact CIA Cuban operations had created an enormous *domestic* apparatus, which the Agency used both to gather intelligence domestically and to run operations against Cuba.

CIA records relating to its investigation of President Kennedy's assassination, including documents acquired after issuance of the Warren Commission Report, are contained in approximately 57 file folders. The Select Committee staff has reviewed those records and taken testimony from key figures in the CIA investigation. All of the evidence reviewed by the Committee suggests that these investigators conducted a thorough, professional investigation and analysis of the information they had. So far as can be determined, the CIA furnished the Warren Commission directly, or through the FBI, all significant information CIA investigators had, except as otherwise noted in this report.

For example, one of the CIA mail surveillance operations did acquire at least some of Oswald's correspondence from the Soviet Union. Despite the fact that this operation was of the highest sensitivity at that time, the CIA did furnish the FBI with the information the Agency had acquired.⁶⁵ Similarly, the CIA interrogated a former KGB officer who had access to Oswald's KGB dossier. Despite the extraordinary sensitivity of this defector, the CIA furnished the Warren Commission the details of his knowledge and an assessment of his reliability.

The CIA investigation of Cuban matters for the Warren Commission was not comparable to its effort in the Soviet area. The CIA staff for Cuban affairs was not in direct contact with the Warren Commis-

⁶⁵ CIA Letter to Rockefeller Commission, 5/7/75.

The Agency regularly supplied information gathered by this mail surveillance program to the Bureau. See the Select Committee staff report, "Domestic CIA and FBI Mail Opening."

sion, and the counterintelligence chief of that staff never met with the Commission or its staff.⁶⁶

Apparently, neither the Warren Commission as a body nor its staff was given details of CIA Cuban operations. Although CIA manpower in Florida far surpassed the FBI, the Warren Commission and its staff relied completely on the FBI for reports about the Cuban exile community in Florida. Apparently, unaware of the fact that the CIA maintained a sizeable book on all Cuban exile organizations, their leadership, and activities, the Warren Commission asked the FBI to provide information on all such organizations. The Commission was informed by the FBI that the CIA could provide "pertinent information" on certain exile organizations, but there is no evidence that the Warren Commission either asked the CIA about that interest or pursued the matter in any way with the CIA.⁶⁷ There would seem to have been some obligation for the CIA to disclose the general nature of its operations which might affect the Commission's investigation.

In any event, the Warren Commission did not pursue with the CIA the questions of Oswald's pro-Castro and anti-Castro contacts. Of the thirty-four requests to the CIA from the Warren Commission on file at the Archives of the United States, fifteen deal with the Soviet Union or with Oswald's stay in the Soviet Union, but only one request information on a Cuban matter. That is a request for the CIA to furnish information about Jack Ruby's alleged visit to Cuba in 1959.

C. Unpursued Leads

In the course of its investigation, the Select Committee noted several instances where detailed knowledge of the intelligence agencies' operations with respect to Cuban matters would have been of assistance to the Warren Commission in its investigation. It is possible that the Warren Commission and its staff either received briefings on Cuban operations or were told informally about these operations. However, the Committee has necessarily relied on the documentary record to determine whether the Warren Commission or its staff was aware of specific details. The following discussion is based on a comparison of the documents located in CIA files with those in Warren Commission files.

Given the thorough investigation the CIA and the FBI conducted of most of the leads they received, their failure to follow significant leads in the Cuban area is surprising. These leads raise significant questions, and there is no evidence the Warren Commission staff was ever provided information which would have allowed it to pursue the leads.

On December 1, 1963, CIA received information that a November 22 Cubana airlines flight from Mexico City to Cuba was delayed some five hours, from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. E.S.T., awaiting an unidentified passenger.⁶⁸ This unidentified passenger arrived at the air-

⁶⁶ Chief, SAS/CI, 5/10/76, pp. 7, 8.

⁶⁷ The index of Warren Commission documents contain no such request.

⁶⁸ Cable from CIA Headquarters to Mexico Station, 12/1/63.

The CIA also received highly reliable information that many of the Cuban diplomatic personnel in Mexico City had gone to the airport at about this time on November 22. Again, there is no evidence CIA checked on this information.

port in a twin-engined aircraft at 10:30 p.m. and boarded the Cubana airlines plane without passing through customs, where he would have needed to identify himself by displaying a passport. The individual travelled to Cuba in the cockpit of the Cubana airlines plane, thus again avoiding identification by the passengers.⁶⁹

In response to a Select Committee request of January 9, 1976, the CIA wrote it had no information indicating that a follow-up investigation was conducted to determine the identity of the passenger and had no further information on the passenger, and no explanation for why a follow-up investigation was not conducted.⁷⁰

In early December 1963, even more intriguing information was received by the CIA, and passed almost immediately to FBI. In the case of the Cuban-American, a follow-up investigation was conducted. Although the information appeared to relate to the President's assassination and one source alleged the Cuban-American was "involved" in the assassination, the follow-up investigation was not conducted as part of the FBI's work for the Warren Commission.

The CIA learned that this Cuban-American crossed the border from Texas into Mexico on November 23,⁷¹ and that the border had been closed by Mexican authorities immediately after the assassination and reopened on November 23.⁷² The Cuban-American arrived in Mexico City on November 25. He stayed in a hotel until the evening of November 27, when he departed on a late evening regularly scheduled Cubana airlines flight to Havana, using a Cuban "courtesy visa" and an expired U.S. passport. He was the only passenger on that flight, which had a crew of nine.⁷³

In March 1964, the CIA received a report from a source which alleged the Cuban-American had received his permit to enter Mexico on November 20 in Tampa, Florida.⁷⁴ The same source also said the Cuban-American was somehow "involved in the assassination."⁷⁵ There is no indication that CIA followed-up on this report, except to ask a Cuban defector about his knowledge of the Cuban-American's activities.⁷⁶

The FBI did investigate this individual after receiving the CIA report of his unusual travel. However, by the time the Warren Report was published, the Cuban-American was still residing in Cuba and therefore outside FBI's jurisdiction. Before the FBI terminated the case, it had developed the following confusing and incomplete information.

The Cuban-American applied for a U.S. passport at the U.S. Consul Office in Havana in June 1960.⁷⁷ In July 1960, he was issued a passport, but it was only valid until January 1963, when he would become 23 years old.⁷⁸

⁶⁹ CIA cable from Headquarters to Mexico Station, 12/1/63.

⁷⁰ Letter from CIA to Select Committee, 2/4/76.

⁷¹ CIA cable from Mexico Station to Headquarters, 12/3/63.

⁷² CIA cable from Mexico Station to Headquarters, 12/3/63.

⁷³ CIA cable from Mexico Station to Headquarters, 12/5/63.

⁷⁴ CIA cable from Mexico Station to Headquarters, 3/19/64.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Memorandum from CIA analyst to Helms, 5/11/64, attachment.

⁷⁷ Memorandum from Washington Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 12/9/63.

⁷⁸ Memorandum from Washington Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 12/9/63.

In May 1962 the Cuban-American requested that Cuban authorities permit him to return to Cuba.⁸⁰ The Cuban-American's cousin said the Cuban-American apparently did travel to Cuba sometime after May 1962, and spent several weeks there.⁸¹ In August 1962, the Cuban-American married an American woman. They lived in Key West until June 1963, when they moved to Tampa. In August 1963, his wife moved back to Key West because of marital problems. His wife and others characterized the Cuban-American as pro-Castro.⁸²

The Cuban-American allegedly told FBI sources that he had originally left Cuba to evade Cuban military service. Nevertheless, some sources told the FBI that the Cuban-American had returned to Cuba in 1963 because he feared being drafted in the United States, while others attributed his return to his worry about his parents or about his own health.⁸³

It was also reported to the FBI that the Cuban-American had a brother in the Cuban military who was studying in the Soviet Union.⁸⁴

On November 17, 1963, according to several sources, the Cuban-American was at a get-together at the home of a member of the Tampa Chapter of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, where color slides of Cuba were shown.

There was some talk about the Cuban-American having been at the residence for some time waiting for a telephone call from Cuba which was very important. It was understood that it all depended on his getting the "go ahead order" for him to leave the United States. He indicated he had been refused travel back to his native Cuba . . .⁸⁵

On November 20, 1963, the Cuban-American obtained a Mexican tourist card at the Honorary Consulate of Mexico in Tampa and on November 23 crossed the border into Mexico at Nuevo Laredo.⁸⁶ Since the Cuban-American was apparently not listed as the driver of any vehicle crossing the border that day, the FBI concluded he crossed in a privately owned automobile owned by another person.⁸⁷

At a regular monthly meeting of the Tampa FPCC in December 1963, a woman told the group that she had telephoned Cuba at 5:00 a.m. and was informed that the Cuban-American had arrived there safely via Texas and Mexico.⁸⁸ Another source reported that as of September 1964, the Cuban-American was not working in Cuba but spent a great deal of time playing dominoes.⁸⁹

The preceding was the extent of the FBI and the CIA investigation.⁹⁰ So far as can be determined, neither the FBI nor the CIA told

⁸⁰ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to Miami Field Office, 6/7/62.

⁸¹ Memorandum from Tampa Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 8/26/64.

⁸² Memorandum from Tampa Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 6/3/64.

⁸³ Memorandum from Tampa Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 6/3/64.

⁸⁴ Memorandum from Tampa Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 3/31/64.

⁸⁵ Memorandum from Tampa Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 3/31/64. President Kennedy made several public appearances in Tampa on November 18.

⁸⁶ Memorandum from Mexico Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 12/5/63.

⁸⁷ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to Mexico Field Office, 11/31/64.

⁸⁸ Memorandum from Tampa Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 3/31/64.

⁸⁹ Memorandum from Tampa Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/26/64.

⁹⁰ A CIA employee did check the U.S. Passport Office's file on this individual in early December 1963, after the Mexico Station cabled a request for a check. In May 1964, a defector from Cuban intelligence was asked if he knew anything about this individual and he responded in the negative.

the Warren Commission about the Cuban-American's strange travel. Warren Commission files contain an excerpt of the FBI check on the Cuban-American at the Passport Office, but nothing else. In responding to the Commission's request for information on the Miami chapter of the FPCC, FBI reported that the Tampa chapter had 16 members in 1961 and was active in May 1963. The FBI response did not discuss the Cuban-American or the November and December 1963 meetings.⁹¹

Moreover, a possible connection between Oswald and the Tampa chapter of FPCC had already been indicated. Oswald applied to V. T. Lee, national president of the FPCC, for a charter for a New Orleans chapter. Lee wrote Oswald on May 29, 1963, suggesting Oswald get in touch with the Tampa chapter, which Lee had personally organized.⁹² Thus, the suspicious travel of this individual coupled with the possibility that Oswald had contacted the Tampa chapter certainly should have prompted a far more thorough and timely investigation than the FBI conducted and the results should have been volunteered to the Warren Commission, regardless of its failure to request such information.

In the two preceding cases the Warren Commission staff was apparently not furnished with what now seems to be significant information relating to possible Cuban involvement. In other instances, the Warren Commission staff levied requirements on the FBI for information on pro-Castro and anti-Castro groups, apparently unaware that other agencies could make a significant contribution to the Commission's work.

On March 26, 1964, J. Lee Rankin, the General Counsel of the Warren Commission, wrote Director Hoover requesting the FBI to furnish the Commission with information on certain pro-Castro and anti-Castro organizations which were then active in the United States.⁹³ In a letter of May 20, 1964, Rankin again wrote Hoover:

As a result of my letter of March 26, 1964, with respect to background materials on the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and certain other subversive groups, it was agreed that your Agency would await further instructions from this Commission.

The Commission would now appreciate your providing the following information on the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, "JURE," "DRE," Alpha 66, and 30th of November Movement.⁹⁴

Rankin's letter went on to detail the nature of the requested information:

1. all reports from Dallas and Fort Worth in 1963 on active members of the groups;
2. summaries of the groups' activities in Texas in 1963; and
3. a general summary of the activities of such groups outside Texas in 1963 with particular reference to activities in certain parts of the country.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Memorandum from Hoover to Rankin, 6/11/64.

⁹² Warren Commission Report, Vol. XX, pp. 514-516.

⁹³ Memorandum from Rankin to Hoover, 3/26/64.

⁹⁴ Memorandum from Rankin to Hoover, 5/20/64.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

FBI Director Hoover responded to this request on June 11, 1964. Enclosed with this letter were 15 reports on named individuals and 46 memoranda on the identified organizations.⁹⁶ All 46 memoranda were prepared by FBI field offices in various cities and all were dated after May 20, 1964.⁹⁷ In other words, it appears that FBI Headquarters simply directed its *field offices* in identified cities to prepare the responses. The individual responsible for preparing this response at FBI Headquarters has not been questioned by the Select Committee on this matter. However his superior was asked whether he thought the FBI response provided a fair and accurate picture of the information FBI held on these groups.

Q. Would you have received that correspondence [of June 11, 1964] and be asked whether it was an accurate or fair portrayal of these [Cuban] groups?

A. No, because this correspondence would have been the results of investigations we had conducted, regularly submitted by investigative reports or by letterhead memos, and there would be no need for me to review that and say this was a fair portrayal of the investigation.⁹⁸

In addition, Hoover's letter directed the Commission's attention to the fact that the CIA and the Department of the Army "may have pertinent information concerning these organizations."⁹⁹ On the copy of the letter not provided the Warren Commission, but kept in FBI files, there is a note which states that the CIA and the Department of the Army in fact had "operational interests" in identified organizations and certain individuals involved with these groups.¹⁰⁰ This FBI letter alerted the Warren Commission to the fact that the Army and CIA might provide "pertinent information" on these groups and individuals, but it did not disclose the fact that those other two agencies actually had an "operational interest," e.g., that those agencies might be using the groups or individuals for intelligence collection or in covert operations. The Select Committee was unable to locate any documentary evidence that the Commission pursued this matter with either the CIA or the Army.

At this time the CIA was in fact funding and sponsoring the activities of several anti-Castro groups.¹⁰¹ Although most CIA contacts with these groups in the Fall of 1963 were for gathering intelligence and issuing propaganda, paramilitary operations of these groups may have received Agency support.

The Department of the Army was in contact with the members and leadership on one group. Apparently, the Army attempted to use individuals associated with the group to collect intelligence on Cuba.¹⁰²

Whether pursuing these connections to the CIA and the Army would have affected the Warren Commission's investigation is difficult to

⁹⁶ Memorandum from Hoover to Rankin, 6/11/64, with attachment.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Section Chief, 5/11/76, p. 45.

⁹⁹ Memorandum from Hoover to Rankin, 6/11/64, with attachment.

¹⁰⁰ Memorandum from Hoover to Rankin, 6/11/64.

¹⁰¹ Memorandum from Hoover to Rankin, 6/11/64.

¹⁰² Letter from Department of Defense to Select Committee, 4/30/76.

determine. The Warren Commission might have asked the Army and the CIA to use their sources in these groups to obtain additional information on the groups' activities. More importantly, such information might have given the Warren Commission a better understanding of the background of the individuals it was investigating. For example, one Cuban in the Dallas area was investigated by the FBI at the request of the Warren Commission, because he was alleged to be an agent of the Cuban government.¹⁰³ The FBI agent who interviewed the individual was apparently unaware that this Cuban exile was an approved, though unused, source of Army intelligence in 1963 in an operation centered in the Miami area and that he had been used as a source in 1962 in Miami.¹⁰⁴

The FBI reports on Alpha 66 furnished the Commission did note that Alpha 66 was responsible for an attack on a Soviet vessel in March 1963,¹⁰⁵ but did not detail the fact that it had continued planning paramilitary operations against Cuba.¹⁰⁶ These reports did not include information, scattered through several other FBI reports, that Alpha 66 had held discussions with other anti-Castro groups in an attempt to unite their efforts.¹⁰⁷ The FBI reports did not include the fact that the Alpha 66's leaders in September 1963 had been negotiating for the use of aircraft with which to conduct raids against Cuba, with those involved in a New Orleans anti-Castro training camp.¹⁰⁸

Although the FBI informed the Warren Commission that the CIA and the Army had "pertinent information" on some of these groups, the Select Committee has been unable to find any evidence to indicate that the FBI itself contacted these other agencies. The Select Committee has been unable to find evidence that either the CIA or the Army independently contacted their sources in these groups to determine what they might be able to contribute to the investigation.

The CIA also took an interest in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee with which Oswald was associated. According to the FBI documents, on September 16, 1963, the CIA advised the FBI that the "Agency is giving some consideration to countering the activities of [the FPCC] in foreign countries."¹⁰⁹ The memorandum continued:

CIA is also giving some thought to planting deceptive information which might embarrass the Committee in areas where it does have some support.

Pursuant to a discussion with the Liaison Agent, [a middle level CIA official working on anti-Castro propaganda] advised that his Agency will not take action without first consulting with the Bureau, bearing in mind that we wish to make certain the CIA activity will not jeopardize any Bureau investigation.¹¹⁰

¹⁰³ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 6/14/63.

¹⁰⁴ Army Intelligence Dossier.

¹⁰⁵ Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 6/3/64.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ Memorandum from FBI liaison to Liaison Section Chief, 9/18/63.

¹¹⁰ Memorandum from FBI liaison to Liaison Section Chief, 9/18/63.

The CIA specifically wanted the FPCC's foreign mailing list and other documents.¹¹¹ On September 26, 1963, FBI Headquarters wrote its New York office about the proposed CIA operation, concluding:

New York should promptly advise whether the material requested by CIA is available or obtainable, bearing in mind the confidential nature and purpose of CIA's request. If available, it should be furnished by cover letter with enclosures suitable for dissemination to CIA by liaison.¹¹²

At the bottom of the Headquarters copy of this directive is the note:

We have in the past utilized techniques with respect to countering activities of mentioned organization in the U.S. During December 1961, New York prepared an anonymous leaflet which was mailed to selected FPCC members throughout the country for purpose of disrupting FPCC and causing split between FPCC and its Socialist Workers Party (SWP) supporters, which technique was very effective. Also during May 1961, a field survey was completed wherein available public source data of adverse nature regarding officers and leaders of FPCC was compiled and furnished Mr. DeLoach for use in contacting his sources.

It is noted, with respect to present status of FPCC during July and August, 1963, several New York sources reported FPCC was "on the ropes for lack of funds" and in danger of being taken over by Progressive Labor members.¹¹³

By Airtel of October 4, 1963, the New York office responded to the Headquarters directive saying: "The NYO plans to contact an (informant) on about 10/27/63 and it is believed possible that this source will be able to furnish both of the above mentioned items."¹¹⁴

By Airtel of October 28, 1963, the New York Office reported to Headquarters:

"On 10/27/63, [the informant] was contacted by agents of the New York office. This source furnished approximately 100 photographs of data pertaining to the current finances and general activities of the FPCC. In addition, the source furnished other documents and information regarding the FPCC mailing list. After processing the photographs, prompt dissemination will be affected and the material of interest to CIA per referenced Bureau letter will be immediately forwarded to the Bureau."

The FBI documents indicate processing of the 100 photographs was not completed before the assassination. The New York office began an expedited review of the material so obtained on the afternoon of the assassination to determine whether it contained anything about Oswald. This was mentioned in a November 23 memorandum to William Sullivan.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to New York Field Office, 9/26/63.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Memorandum from New York Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/4/63.

That memorandum also reported the New York office's expedited review uncovered a letter Oswald had written Ted Lee about Oswald's FPCC activities in New Orleans.¹¹⁵

By letter of November 27, the New York office wrote Headquarters:

On 10/27/63, [the informant] furnished the above material to agents of the NYO. Enclosed for Bureau are suitable for dissemination, dated and captioned as above, containing information furnished by [informant].¹¹⁶

Enclosed with this letter was a copy of "the foreign mailing list of FPCC as of October 1963."¹¹⁷

It should be noted that there is no reason to believe that any of this FBI or CIA activity had any direct connection with Oswald. The CIA could not have received the information it requested the FBI to obtain until after the assassination, so there is no reason to think the CIA propaganda program was underway before the assassination. Although the FBI liaison was told by the CIA that any action the CIA took against the FPCC would be cleared first with FBI,¹¹⁸ Bureau documents do not indicate any request for such clearance.

D. Knowledge of Plots to Assassinate Castro

The Warren Commission was concerned with the general subject of political assassination. For example, the Commission requested information from the State Department¹¹⁹ on alleged attempts at political assassination in other countries. However, none of these requests involved the plots conceived by the CIA; and the Warren Commission did not ask if the United States government had sponsored assassination attempts.

With the exception of Allen Dulles, it is unlikely that anyone on the Warren Commission knew of CIA assassination efforts. Former Senator John Sherman Cooper, a member of the Commission, advised the Select Committee that the subject never came up in the Commission's deliberations.¹²⁰ Lee Rankin, Chief Counsel for the Warren

¹¹⁵ Memorandum from New York Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/28/63. A copy of what probably is the same letter was turned over to the Warren Commission by Ted Lee. Warren Commission files at the Archives contained information that may have come from these photographs of documents. However, Warren Commission files contain no reference to any CIA interest in FPCC or to the FBI operation which yielded the mailing list.

¹¹⁶ Memorandum from New York Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 11/27/63, w/attachment.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Memorandum from FBI liaison to Liaison Section Chief, 9/18/63.

¹¹⁹ State Department Information Report 2/1/55, re: Assassination of President Remon of Panama, Commission Document #279; State Department Information Report, 5/10/57, re: Attempted Assassination of Vice President Chang Myon, Republic of Korea, Commission Document #280; State Department Information Report, 5/24/62, re: Attempted Assassination of President Sukarno, Indonesia, Commission Document #283; State Department Information Report, 6/14/62, re: Attempted Assassination of President Sukarno, Indonesia, Commission Document #284; State Department Information Report, 9/27/62, re: Attempted Assassination of President deGaulle, Commission Document #285; State Department Information Report, 1/25/63, re: President Olympio, Togo, Commission Document #286.

¹²⁰ Staff discussion with Ambassador John Sherman Cooper, 5/24/76.

Commission, and Burt Griffin, Howard Willens, and David Belin of the Commission staff have all stated they were not aware of the CIA plots.¹²¹

Many government officials, however, were aware that the CIA used the underworld in attempts to assassinate Castro. Attorney General Kennedy had been informed of these plots,¹²² and FBI Director Hoover knew there had been such operations;¹²³ Allen Dulles, who had been Director of Central Intelligence until November 1961, was a member of the Warren Commission, and knew of the CIA plots with underworld figures which had taken place during his tenure at the Agency.¹²⁴ Since CIA, FBI, and Justice Department files all contained information about these plots with the underworld, any number of government officials may have known that the CIA had attempted to assassinate Castro.

Nevertheless, it might have appeared to these government officials that there was no clear reason to connect these underworld plots to the President's assassination. Most government officials who were aware of them probably assumed they had ended in 1962. Since that time, the Cuban missile crisis had occurred and U.S.-Cuban hostility had cooled. Officials at both the CIA and the FBI were aware that William Harvey had told his underworld contacts in early 1963 that the CIA was no longer interested in Castro's assassination.¹²⁵ So these unsuccessful plots were officially terminated well before President Kennedy's assassination.

Moreover, Fidel Castro probably would not have been certain that the CIA was behind the underworld attempts. Elements of the underworld and of the Cuban exile community which were not affiliated in any way with CIA were also interested in assassinating Castro. It is unlikely that Castro could have distinguished the CIA plots with the underworld from those plots not backed by the CIA. In fact, the methods the CIA used in these attempts were designed to prevent the Cuban government from attributing them to the CIA.¹²⁶

The AMLASH operation was clearly different. CIA case officers, not underworld figures, were in direct contact with AMLASH and told him they were with the CIA. Upon meeting AMLASH, Mr. Fitzgerald, a senior CIA official, told him that he was the personal representative of Attorney General Robert Kennedy.¹²⁷ Fitzgerald and the case officer assured AMLASH that his proposed coup had the support of the United States government.¹²⁸ Thus, if anyone learned of the operation, he would have known that the CIA was clearly responsible for it.

In addition, the AMLASH operation was underway at the time of the President's assassination. While the assassination plots against Castro, which involved the underworld, may not have been considered

¹²¹ Letter from Burt Griffin to David Belin, 4/7/75, p. 3; staff interview with Howard Willins, 5/12/76; memorandum from Belin to the Rockefeller Commission 5/20/75, p. 1.

¹²² Assassination Report, pp. 130-131.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ Assassination Report, pp. 91-92.

¹²⁵ Memorandum of FBI liaison to CIA, 6/20/63.

¹²⁶ 1967 I.G. Report, p. 55.

¹²⁷ 1967 I.G. Report, pp. 88-91.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

relevant to the President's assassination, the AMLASH operation had particular significance.

Very few individuals in the United States government knew of the AMLASH plot. Mr. McCone, who was then Director of Central Intelligence, testified he did not know of the AMLASH operation.

Q. Were you aware of any effort to assassinate Mr. Castro through an agent known as AMLASH?

A. No.

Q. I would like to draw your attention to [the fact that] at the very moment President Kennedy was shot, a CIA officer was meeting with a Cuban agent . . . and offering him an assassination device for use against Castro.

I take it you didn't hear anything about that operation?

A. [Indicates "No"].¹²⁹

Mr. Helms, who was Deputy Director for Plans, knew of the operation, although he would not characterize the operation as an assassination plot.¹³⁰ The case officer, who met with AMLASH on November 22, similarly rejected such a characterization.¹³¹

Several individuals on the CIA Special Affairs Staff knew of the operation, but they were not in direct contact with the Warren Commission. Desmond Fitzgerald, Chief of SAS, knew of the operation, as did his executive officer who has testified that he regarded it as an assassination plot.¹³² The Chief of SAS Counterintelligence also knew of the operation, and testified that he regarded it as an assassination plot.¹³³ Others within the SAS who had access to the AMLASH file obviously knew about the operation but, since there is no record of the poison pen in that file, they may not have known that key fact. Those CIA technicians who fabricated the pen would have been aware of its existence, but probably would not have known anything else about the operation.

James Angleton, whose Counterintelligence Division conducted CIA research for the Warren Commission, has testified that he was not aware of the AMLASH operation, although he did suggest that he had reason to suspect there was something to Harvey's meetings with "underworld figures."¹³⁴ His assistant, who was made "point of record" for the Warren Commission, has stated he did not know of any assassination plots against Castro.¹³⁵ In 1975, after being questioned

¹²⁹ John McCone testimony, 6/6/75, p. 59; Assassination Report, pp. 99-100.

¹³⁰ Helms' testimony, 6/13/75, pp. 133, 135; See Assassination Report, pp. 174-176, for further discussion.

¹³¹ Case Officer testimony, 2/11/76, p. 22.

¹³² Executive Officer testimony, 4/22/76, p. 15.

¹³³ Chief, SAS/CI testimony, 5/10/76, p. 24.

¹³⁴ Angleton testimony, 2/6/76, pp. 31-34. It is important to note that Mr. Angleton testified he was often in contact with Dulles after the latter had left the Agency. Angleton testified that Dulles consulted with him before agreeing to President Johnson's request that he be on the Commission and that he was in frequent contact with Dulles. Angleton has also indicated that he and Dulles informally discussed the progress of the Commission's investigation and that Dulles consulted with him about what further investigation the CIA could do. So if Dulles relied solely on Angleton to discretely check matters, which Dulles did not feel the entire Commission should know about, he would not have learned of the AMLASH operation.

¹³⁵ Staff interview of CIA analyst, 3/15/78.

by the Rockefeller Commission on this point, he noted knowledge of an ongoing assassination plot might have changed his thinking about Oswald's Mexican trip.¹³⁶

Thomas Karamessines, who had some contact with the Commission, has testified that he was unaware of the CIA assassination plots.¹³⁷

Thus, according to the testimony, Mr. Helms was the only CIA official who was both in contact with the Warren Commission and knowledgeable of the AMLASH operation. On several occasions Mr. Helms has been questioned about whether he informed the Warren Commission of the CIA assassination plots.

CHAIRMAN CHURCH: Since you had knowledge of the CIA involvement in these assassination plots against Castro [from the context the question is not specifically focused on the AMLASH plot], and knew it at the time . . . I would have thought . . . that ought to have been related to the Commission, because it does bear on the motives whatever else.

MR. HELMS: . . . Mr. Allen Dulles was a member of the Warren Commission. And the first assassination plot happened during his time as director. What he said to the Warren Commission about this . . . I don't know. But at least he was sitting right there in [the Commission's] deliberations and knew about this, and I am sure that the same thought that occurred to you must have occurred to him.¹³⁸

SENATOR MORGAN: . . . [in 1963] you were not . . . just an employee of the CIA. You were in the top echelon, the management level, were you not?

MR. HELMS: Yes, I was Senator Morgan. . . .

SENATOR MORGAN: . . . you had been part of an assassination plot against Castro?

MR. HELMS: I was aware that there had been efforts made to get rid of him by these means.

SENATOR MORGAN: . . . you were charged with furnishing the Warren Commission information from the CIA, information that you thought was relevant?

MR. HELM: No sir, I was instructed to reply to inquiries from the Warren Commission for information from the Agency. I was not asked to initiate any particular thing.

SENATOR MORGAN: . . . in other words if you weren't asked for it, you didn't give it.

MR. HELMS: That's right, sir.¹³⁹

Mr. Helms also stated that he thought the Warren Commission could have relied on public knowledge that the United States wanted "to get rid of Castro."

I don't recall that I was either instructed or it occurred to me to cover with the Warren Commission the precise details of the Agency's operations not because I made a significant

¹³⁶ Memorandum from CIA analyst, 4/2/75.

¹³⁷ Karamessines, 4/18/76, p. 32.

¹³⁸ Helms testimony, 7/18/75, pp. 36-37.

¹³⁹ Helms testimony, 7/17/75, pp. 118-119.

judgment not to do this, but . . . my recollection at the time was that it was public knowledge that the United States was trying to get rid of Castro.¹⁴⁰

In testimony before the Rockefeller Commission, Mr. Helms was directly asked whether he linked Oswald's pro-Cuban activity with the possibility that Castro had retaliated for CIA attempts against him.

Q. Now, after President Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963, and after it became known to you that the individual, Lee Harvey Oswald, was believed very broadly to have done the shooting, that Oswald had had some activity in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee . . . did you hold any conversations with anybody about the possibility that the assassination of President Kennedy was a retaliation by Oswald against the activity, the talks and plans to assassinate Castro?

A. No. I don't recall discussing that with anybody. I don't recall the thought ever having occurred to me at the time. The first time I ever heard such a theory as that enunciated was in a very peculiar way by President Johnson. . . .

Q. I am not asking you about a story, Ambassador, I am asking you whether or not there was a relationship between Oswald's contacts with the Cuban's, and his support for the Castro government, his attempts in September 1963 to get a passport to Cuba, to travel to Cuba, his attempts to penetrate anti-Castro groups. Did this connection ever enter your mind?

A. I don't recall its having done so.¹⁴¹

Mr. Helms also testified he did not believe the AMLASH operation was relevant to the investigation of President Kennedy's assassination.¹⁴²

The testimony of the AMLASH Case Officer is similar. He stated, "I find it very difficult to link the AMLASH operation to the assassination. I find no way to link it. I did not know of any other CIA assassination attempts against Fidel Castro, so I have nothing to link."¹⁴³

Director Hoover knew of CIA effort to assassinate Castro using underworld contacts. While Hoover may have assumed that those plots terminated in 1962, in June 1963, the FBI learned that William Harvey had told his underworld contacts that the CIA was no longer interested in assassinating Castro. In October 1963, an informant reported to the FBI that the CIA had recently been meeting with a Cuban official (AMLASH), but there is no evidence the FBI then had actual knowledge of the assassination aspect of the operation involving the Cuban.¹⁴⁴

After receiving a report of an assassination plot against Castro in January 1964, the FBI liaison to the CIA checked to see if the CIA was involved in the plot.¹⁴⁵ According to a memorandum prepared by

¹⁴⁰ Helms testimony, 6/13/75, p. 82.

¹⁴¹ Richard Helms testimony, Rockefeller Commission, 4/24/75, pp. 389-391.

¹⁴² Helms testimony, Rockefeller Commission, 4/24/75, pp. 389-391-2.

¹⁴³ Case Officer testimony, 7/29/75, p. 116.

¹⁴⁴ Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/10/63.

The FBI knew the true name of the Cuban official, but was unaware that he had been code-named.

¹⁴⁵ Memorandum from FBI liaison, 1/24/64.

the FBI liaison: "The Agency currently is not involved in any activity which includes plans to assassinate Castro."¹⁴⁶ This memorandum was distributed to two Section Chiefs, and to the Bureau supervisor responsible for anti-Castro activities. In February, this information was passed to at least one field office.

In late July 1964, an FBI informant again reported that the CIA had meetings with the Cuban official (AMLASH). This report indicates that the purpose of those meetings had been to plan the assassination of Castro.¹⁴⁷ The informant reported that the Cuban official had been unhappy with the CIA response and that Attorney General Kennedy had refused to support the plan.¹⁴⁸ He also reported that the plan had not been completely put to rest.¹⁴⁹ Because the informant requested that the Bureau not inform the CIA or the White House about this report, it was not disseminated outside the FBI. Headquarters advised the field office in contact with the informant, to keep them advised.¹⁵⁰ The FBI supervisor involved noted on his copy of the communication to the field office, that the Bureau, acting on orders from the Attorney General, was investigating a reported underworld plot against Castro, and that this might be the same as the alleged plot involving the Cuban (AMLASH).

In hindsight, the AMLASH operation seems very relevant to the investigation of President Kennedy's assassination. It is difficult to understand why those aware of the operation did not think it relevant, and did not inform those investigating President Kennedy's assassination of possible connections between that operation and the assassination.

The Desk Officer who was in charge of the initial CIA investigation of President Kennedy's assassination, first learned of the AMLASH operation when he testified before the Select Committee:

Q. Did you know that on November 22, 1963, about the time Kennedy was assassinated, a CIA case officer was passing a poison pen, offering a poison pen to a high level Cuban to use to assassinate Castro?

A. No, I did not.

Q. Would you have drawn a link in your mind between that and the Kennedy assassination?

A. I certainly think that that would have been—become an absolutely vital factor in analyzing the events surrounding the Kennedy assassination.¹⁵¹

Several Warren Commission staff members have also stated that a connection between CIA assassination operations and President Kennedy's assassination should have been investigated. For example,

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarter, 7/29/64.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to Miami Field Office, 8/8/63.

¹⁵¹ Desk Officer, 5/7/76, pp. 31, 32.

Mr. Belin, Executive Director of the Rockefeller Commission and Counsel to the Warren Commission wrote:

At no time did the CIA disclose to the Warren Commission any facts which pertained to alleged assassination plans to kill Fidel Castro

The CIA withheld from the Warren Commission information which might have been relevant . . . in light of the allegations of conspiratorial contact between Oswald and agents of the Cuban government.¹⁵²

Another former Warren Commission staff counsel, Judge Burt Griffin, expressed his views on the matter. Judge Griffin wrote Belin expressing his opinion that assassination plots against Castro might have a significant effect on the Warren Commission findings:

As you can see, my questions are prompted by two underlying theories: First, if Castro or Castro sympathizers, feared a U.S. fostered effort on his life, it is likely that they might have tried to assassinate Kennedy first. Second, if the CIA suspected that pro-Castro individuals, in addition to Oswald, were behind the assassination of John F. Kennedy, they would have considered retaliation against Castro. Those theories lead not only to the issue of possible conspirators with Oswald, but also his motive.¹⁵³

The Chief of SAS Counterintelligence was asked whether it was reasonable to make a connection between AMLASH and President Kennedy's assassination:

Q. Would you quarrel with individuals who had the same knowledge you did—and who have testified that they did not draw such a connection?

A. That they did not draw a connection?

Q. Yes.

A. I couldn't quarrel with them, no.

Q. In other words, you think knowledgeable officials, knowledgeable of both the Kennedy assassination investigation and of the AMLASH operation. . . .

A. I think it would have been logical for them to consider that there could be a connection and to have explored it on their own.¹⁵⁴

The CIA Inspector General seemed to make a connection. Desmond Fitzgerald's Executive Officer testified about being interviewed in 1967 by the Inspector General:

Q. Did [member of Inspector General's staff] ask you about any connections between the Kennedy assassination and CIA plots against Castro?

A. No. The only comment I think he made was something to the effect that it was strange and ironic that the day

¹⁵² Memorandum from David Belin to the Rockefeller Commission, May 20, 1975, p. 1.

¹⁵³ Letter from Burt Griffin to David Belin, 4/7/75, p. 3.

¹⁵⁴ Chief SAS/CI testimony, 5/10/76, p. 21.

Kennedy died the case officer was trying to give AMLASH a poison pen. That is the only connection that I remember.¹⁵⁵

Finally, the CIA analyst, who was the "point of record" coordinating the CIA research for the Warren Commission, prepared a memorandum stating he was unaware of the plots until 1975, and expressing concern about the Warren Commission's findings in light of this new information.¹⁵⁶

The conduct of the AMLASH operation during the fall of 1963, should have raised major concerns within the CIA about its possible connection with the Kennedy assassination. The Chief of SAS Counterintelligence has testified he was always concerned about the operation's security.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, various reports received by the CIA during the fall of 1963 contained information which should have raised questions about the operation's security. In 1965, when CIA ties to the Cubans involved in the AMLASH operation were severed, the Chief of SAS Counterintelligence pointed out the security problems in the operation.¹⁵⁸

Among other things noted in that memorandum is the possibility that AMLASH had been a provocation, i.e., an agent sent by Cuban intelligence to provoke a certain reaction from the CIA.¹⁵⁹

Until Select Committee staff informed officials at the CIA, the Agency was unaware that in October 1963 the FBI had received a report that the CIA was meeting with AMLASH.¹⁶⁰ That report contained information which indicates that the FBI informant knew the date and location of one of the meetings.¹⁶¹ In July 1964, the informant gave the FBI additional details about the AMLASH operation, including the fact that the operation had involved assassination plotting.¹⁶² Thus, an operation the CIA felt to be extraordinarily sensitive, perhaps so sensitive that its existence could not be disclosed to the Warren Commission, was known to at least one FBI informant in the United States.

Finally, the operation should have been of concern because Desmond Fitzgerald had personally met with AMLASH. The Chief of the CIA JMWAVE station testified that Fitzgerald had asked him if he should meet with AMLASH. The Chief told Fitzgerald that he should not meet AMLASH because such a meeting could prove very embarrassing for the CIA, if AMLASH was working for Cuban intelligence.

My recollection of this AMLASH case is as follows. At some point in time, I had a conversation with Desmond Fitzgerald in Washington during one of my periodic visits to

¹⁵⁵ Executive Officer, 4/22/76, p. 44.

¹⁵⁶ Memorandum for the record from CIA analyst, 4/1/75.

¹⁵⁷ Chief, SAS/CI testimony, 5/10/76, pp. 23-24.

¹⁵⁸ Undated memorandum from Chief, SAS/CI to Chief, WHD Cuba.

¹⁵⁹ Undated memorandum from Chief, SAS/CI to Chief, WHD Cuba.

¹⁶⁰ In 1965 the FBI did pass to CIA information that they received from "A" that he was aware of the AMLASH operation. They offered the CIA the opportunity to interrogate "A", but the FBI did not pass to the CIA information reviewed in October 1963.

¹⁶¹ Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/10/63.

¹⁶² Memorandum from Miami Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 7/29/64.

Washington from Miami. We discussed at that meeting the nature of our approach to the military establishment in Cuba.

In the context of that conversation, Mr. Fitzgerald asked me if whether I thought it would be a good idea for him to meet one of these Cuban military personalities, and he subsequently identified to me the personality he was talking about was AMLASH. My advice to him was that it would probably not be a good idea for him to meet him, and the only thing that I could see coming out of that kind of contact would be . . . a personal feel for what makes some of these people tick, in human terms, and that that was too high a price to pay for the prospect if anything went wrong. . . .¹⁶³

The Chief SAS/Counterintelligence had similar reservations. When questioned about the security of the AMLASH operation, he testified :

Q. Did you know back in November 1963 that the CIA was meeting with AMLASH?

A. Yes, and I had expressed my reservations about such a meeting. I didn't consider him to be responsible.

Q. Did you know that Mr. Fitzgerald met with AMLASH in late October of 1963?

A. I believe I did. I have vague recollections of that now, yes.

Q. What was the purpose of that meeting?

A. I believe this was related to the assassination, an assassination plot against Castro, and as to this I had reference before. I couldn't recall the exact time frame, but I thought it was nonsense. I thought it would be counterproductive if it had been successful, so I opposed it.

Q. Did you know that Mr. Fitzgerald went ahead with it?

A. Yes. Mr. Fitzgerald and I did not always agree.

Q. But he told you he was going ahead with the operation?

A. I expressed my reservations about it. He went ahead. He didn't ask my permission. He was my boss.¹⁶⁴

Thus, information on the AMLASH operation, an operation which those who investigated the assassination of President Kennedy now believe would have been relevant to their inquiries, was not supplied to either the Warren Commission or the FBI. Even the CIA personnel responsible for investigating the assassination were not informed of the operation.

¹⁶³ Chief, JMWAVE, testimony 8/19/75, pp. 79-80.

¹⁶⁴ Chief, SAS/CI, 5/10/76, pp. 20, 21.

V. DEVELOPMENTS AFTER THE WARREN COMMISSION

Before the Warren Commission issued its report on the assassination of President Kennedy on September 24, 1964, both the CIA and the FBI had assured the Commission that they would never close the case. When appearing before the Warren Commission, CIA Deputy Director for Plans Richard Helms stated:

Q. . . . after the Commission completed its report you would keep the matter open if there was anything new that developed in the future that could be properly presented to the authorities?

A. Yes. I would assume the case will never be closed.¹

FBI Director Hoover made a similar statement before the Warren Commission:

. . . so far as the FBI is concerned, the case will be continued in an open classification for all time.²

A. 1965: Termination of the AMLASH Operation

Although 1965 developments in the AMLASH operation should have raised questions about the possibility of a connection between that operation and the President's assassination, there is no evidence that either the FBI or the CIA investigated such a possibility.

As the Select Committee's Assassination Report noted:

Toward the latter part of 1964, AMLASH became more insistent that the assassination of the Cuban leadership was a necessary initial step in a successful coup.³

A fall 1964 memorandum states:

AMLASH was told and fully understands that the United States Government cannot become involved to any degree in the "first step" of his plan. If he needs support, he realizes he will have to get it elsewhere.

FYI: This is where B-1 could fit in nicely in giving any support he would request.⁴

AMLASH and B-1 were then put in contact with one another, and B-1 kept the CIA informed of their plotting.⁵

In early 1965, the Agency began receiving indications that the AMLASH operation was not secure. By that time a number of other

¹ Helms testimony, 5/14/64, Vol. V, Warren Commission Hearings, p. 124.

² Hoover testimony, 5/14/64, Vol. V, Warren Commission Hearings, p. 100.

³ Assassination Report, p. 89.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

individuals outside the CIA had been brought into the operation, and the Agency learned that one of these individuals was in clandestine contact with Cuban intelligence.⁶

Several months later, "A," a Cuban exile who had been involved in transporting explosives to New Orleans in 1963, contacted the Immigration and Naturalization Service with information about the AMLASH operation. This information was turned over to the FBI which informed the CIA. Representatives from both agencies interrogated "A" jointly in June 1965.⁷ The interrogation established that the Cuban exile knew that (1) AMLASH and others were planning a coup which involved the assassination of Castro, and (2) the CIA had been involved with AMLASH and others in the plotting.

Although "A" claimed that he and AMLASH were lifelong friends,⁸ the reports of the interrogation do not indicate that he knew of the fall 1963 AMLASH-CIA meetings.⁹ The 1967 I.G. Report noted that information given by "A" suggested a link between the AMLASH operation and the 1960-1962 CIA plots to assassinate Castro using underworld contacts. In other words, the information "A" provided raised the possibility that underworld figures who were aware of the assassination plots in which William Harvey participated, may have also been aware of the AMLASH operation.¹⁰

On July 2, 1965, the FBI sent some of the details obtained from the interrogation to the White House, the Attorney General, and then DCI, Admiral Raborn.¹¹ The CIA reaction to the information was to terminate the entire AMLASH operation. It cabled its stations:

Convincing proof that entire AMLASH group insecure and that further contact with key members of group constitutes a menace to CIA operations. . . . Under no circumstances are newly assigned staff personnel or newly recruited agents to be exposed to the operation.¹²

In an undated memorandum, the Chief of SAS Counterintelligence wrote:

The AMLASH circle is wide and each new friend of whom we learn seems to have knoweldge of plan. I believe the problem is a more serious and basic one. Fidel reportedly knew that this group was plotting against him and once enlisted its support. Hence, we cannot rule out the possibility of provocation.¹³

In mid-1965, the CIA interrogated AMWHIP one of the Cuban exiles who had been involved with the AMLASH operation from the

⁶ Cable from European station to CIA Headquarters, 3/18/65.

⁷ Memorandum from New York Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 7/2/65.

⁸ Memorandum from New York Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 6/2/65.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ I.G. Report, p. 103.

¹¹ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to New York Field Office, 7/2/65.

¹² Cable from CIA Headquarters to various European Stations and JMWAWE Station, 6/23/65 in AMWHIP file.

¹³ Undated memorandum from Chief, SAS/CI to Chief WHD.

"Provocation" in this context is the use of an agent by an intelligence agency to induce a response from another intelligence agency.

beginning; a person who knew about the meetings between AMLASH and the CIA case officers in the fall of 1963. The report of the interrogation cautioned that analysis of the results was difficult since the examination was conducted in English and the subject had difficulty understanding the questions. The report recommended a second examination be conducted in Spanish. Nevertheless, the report tentatively concluded that the subject was deceptive during the interrogation and withheld pertinent information in one or more relevant areas.¹⁴

The report noted that the subject apparently lied in response to certain questions dealing with AMLASH and with both the subject's and AMLASH's ties to Cuban intelligence.¹⁵ During the examination, the subject told the interrogator that AMLASH had no plan to overthrow Castro and that the subject had never considered AMLASH's various activities as constituting a plan for such an objective.¹⁶ The subject said AMLASH never controlled a viable group inside Cuba which could attempt a coup against Castro.¹⁷ The subject said AMLASH had strong connections with Cuban intelligence and was probably cooperating with it in various ways. Although AMLASH had not mentioned these connections to his CIA case officers, the subject stated that AMLASH had mentioned them to him, and almost everyone else AMLASH met.¹⁸ There is no record of a second interrogation. The last documents in the file on this individual are dated only months after this interrogation, indicating that the CIA terminated all contact with him.

Although the CIA had received information that the AMLASH operation was insecure and the possibility that AMLASH was a "provocation," there is no evidence that the CIA investigated the possibility of a connection between its fall 1963 meetings with AMLASH, and the assassination of President Kennedy. Moreover, CIA files contained at least some FBI reports on "A" the Cuban exile who was involved in transporting explosives to New Orleans in 1963. These reports detail his involvement with anti-Castro exiles and underworld figures who were operating the guerrilla training camp in New Orleans in July 1963.

The FBI clearly made the connection between "A's" 1963 activities and the fact that in 1965 he was knowledgeable of CIA involvement in plans to assassinate Castro.¹⁹ But there is no evidence that either the FBI or the CIA made any investigation of this connection. It was not until 1967 that both the AMLASH operation and the President's assassination, including the facts developed in 1965, were reviewed by either agency.^{19a}

¹⁴ Report of Interrogation.

¹⁵ Report of Interrogation.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Unaddressed memorandum from FBI Headquarters, 6/4/65.

^{19a} It should be noted that the committee found no conclusive evidence that Castro was aware of AMLASH's 1963 dealings with the CIA.

During Senator McGovern's recent trip to Cuba, he was provided with a notebook containing details of numerous assassination plots against Castro which Castro believed were CIA inspired. AMLASH's 1963 meetings with the CIA were not mentioned within this notebook.

B. 1967: Allegations of Cuban Involvement in the Assassination

In late January 1967, Washington Post columnist Drew Pearson met with Chief Justice Earl Warren. Pearson told the Chief Justice that a Washington lawyer had told him that one of his clients said the United States had attempted to assassinate Fidel Castro in the early 1960's,²⁰ and Castro had decided to retaliate.²¹ Pearson asked the Chief Justice to see the lawyer; however, he declined. The Chief Justice told Pearson that it would be necessary to inform Federal investigative authorities, and Pearson responded that he preferred that the Secret Service rather than the FBI be notified.²²

On January 31, 1967, the Chief Justice informed Secret Service Director James J. Rowley of the allegations. Rowley testified:

The way he [the Chief Justice] approached it, was that he said he thought this was serious enough and so forth, but he wanted to get it off his hands. He felt that he had to—that it had to be told to somebody, and that the Warren Commission was finished, and he wanted the thing pursued, I suppose, by ourselves or the FBI.²³

According to Rowley, Warren and Pearson arranged for the lawyer to see him on February 8, 1967.²⁴ On February 10, 1967, Rowley told the Chief Justice that neither Pearson nor the lawyer had called, and that he would forward the information to the Bureau.²⁵

On February 13, 1967, Rowley wrote Hoover informing him of the allegations. Hoover immediately sent the Rowley letter to six senior Bureau officials on an "eyes only" basis.²⁶ FBI files contain no record of internal meetings or discussions concerning the allegations. Super-

²⁰ The Select Committee found concrete evidence of at least eight plots involving the CIA to assassinate Fidel Castro from 1960 to 1965. Each of these plots is described in detail in the Committee's Assassination Report.

²¹ Memorandum from Rowley to Hoover, 2/13/67.

Secret Service Director James J. Rowley confirmed the allegations detailed in that memorandum in his testimony before the Committee on February 13, 1976. The Secret Service has informed the Committee that they do not have copies of either the 2/13/67 Rowley memo or the 2/15/67 FBI response, or any other materials pertaining to the Rowley-Warren meeting or the retaliation allegation.

²² Memorandum from Rowley to Hoover, 2/13/67.

²³ James J. Rowley testimony, 2/13/76, p. 17.

Rowley also testified that the Chief Justice did not state whether this was the first time he had heard that the United States Government had plotted to assassinate Castro. (Rowley, 2/13/76, p. 16.)

²⁴ The lawyer testified that no such meeting was ever arranged or even discussed with him.

²⁵ Memorandum from Rowley to Hoover, 2/13/67; memorandum from Rosen to DeLoach, 2/14/67.

It was Rowley's understanding that either Pearson or the lawyer was to meet with him on February 8, 1967, or else contact him to arrange a meeting on another date. Rowley still had not heard from either by February 10, 1967, and he decided to forward the information to the FBI. (Rowley, 2/13/76, p. 20.)

Assistant FBI Director Cartha DeLoach later informed Marvin Watson that Rowley had "made several attempts to contact" the lawyer, but the lawyer refused to keep the appointments. (Memorandum from DeLoach to Tolson, 3/17/67. Neither Rowley nor the lawyer recalled any such attempts.)

²⁶ Bureau personnel have testified that use of the "eyes only" classification on internally disseminated material was extremely rare. This classification was employed only when material was extremely sensitive.

visory personnel assigned to the assassination investigation have uniformly testified that they do not recall *ever* discussing or reviewing memoranda which touch upon Cuban involvement in the assassination, or the possibility of Cuban retaliation for CIA assassination attempts.

The supervisor in the General Investigative Division who was assigned responsibility for the assassination case in March 1964 drafted the FBI response to the Rowley letter. Although senior Bureau officials had been told of CIA assassination attempts against Fidel Castro in 1962 this supervisor had never before heard even allegations of such attempts.²⁷ The supervisor testified that when the Rowley letter came to his attention, he asked the Domestic Intelligence Division whether there was any Cuban involvement in the assassination.²⁸

He summarized its response as follows:

In connection with the allegation regarding the alleged Castro conspiracy, the Domestic Intelligence Division advised that during the investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald no evidence was uncovered indicating the Cuban Government had any involvement in the assassination. Sensitive and reliable sources of the Bureau and CIA reported Oswald was unknown to Cuban Government officials when he visited the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City on 9/27/63, and attempted, without success, to get a visa for travel to Cuba. Secretary of State Dean Rusk testified before the Commission on 6/10/64, and stated there was "very considerable concern" in Cuba immediately following the assassination as to whether Cuba would be held responsible for the assassination and what effect the assassination might have on Cuba's position and security.²⁹

The supervisor testified that, on the basis of this response, he believed the possibility of Cuban involvement in the assassination had been thoroughly investigated, and that there was no substance to the allegations Rowley had received.³⁰

On February 15, 1967, Cartha DeLoach received a memorandum with a proposed FBI reply to Rowley's letter. The memorandum stated that "no investigation will be conducted regarding the allegations made . . . to Chief Justice Warren."³¹ Both the memorandum and letter were drafted by the General Investigative Division supervisor. The letter thanked Rowley for the information furnished, and noted:

In connection with the allegation that a Castro Conspiracy was involved in the assassination of President Kennedy, our investigation uncovered no evidence indicating Fidel Castro

²⁷ General Investigative Division Supervisor testimony, 3/31/76, p. 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁹ Memorandum from Rosen to DeLoach, 2/15/67.

³⁰ General Investigative Division Supervisor, 3/31/76, pp. 19-20.

³¹ Memorandum from Rosen to DeLoach, 2/15/67.

Alex Rosen, then Assistant Director in charge of the General Investigative Division testified before the Committee on April 30, 1976. It should be noted that Mr. Rosen informed the Committee that he was hospitalized in the Spring of 1967 and therefore had no knowledge of the sequence of events described in this section of the Report. In this regard Mr. Rosen testified that this memorandum would have been written over his name by one of his subordinates.

or officials of the Cuban Government were involved with Lee Harvey Oswald in the assassination of President Kennedy.

This Bureau is not conducting any investigation regarding this matter. However, should Mr. Pearson, [the lawyer], or [his] source of information care to volunteer any information to this Bureau, it would be accepted. Thereafter, consideration would be given as to whether any additional investigation is warranted.³²

The supervisor testified:

Everyone in the higher echelons read this and there was a decision made apparently some place along that line as to whether there was any basis in fact for [these allegations] or not. And to this day I don't recall how or what decision was made or who was involved in it but I had the responsibility then [upon orders from superiors] of concluding it by preparing this and stating that no further investigation was going to be conducted.³³

When asked why the FBI did not investigate such a serious allegation, particularly in light of Director Hoover's testimony before the Warren Commission that the assassination case would always remain open,³⁴ the supervisor responded:

I understand your thinking and I can't truthfully and logically answer your question because I don't know.³⁵

The letter was approved and sent to Rowley on February 15, 1967. A copy was also sent to the Acting Attorney General and the Deputy Attorney General, but the internal FBI memorandum from Rosen to DeLoach stated:

Consideration was given to furnishing this information to the White House, but since this matter does not concern, nor is it pertinent to the present Administration, no letter was being sent.³⁶

Although the General Investigative Division supervisor testified that he was instructed to put this language in the memorandum, he cannot recall who issued these instructions, or their basis.³⁷

President Johnson subsequently learned of the allegations and the Bureau's decision not to investigate. On March 17, 1967, Cartha DeLoach received a telephone call from Presidential Assistant Marvin Watson, who informed him that, "The President had instructed that

³² Letter from Hoover to Rowley, 2/15/67.

³³ General Investigative Division Supervisor, 3/31/76, pp. 11-12.

³⁴ Hoover testified before the Warren Commission:

Well, I can assure you so far as the FBI is concerned the case will be continued in an open classification for all time. That is, any information coming to us or any report coming to us from any source will be thoroughly investigated, so that we will be able to either prove or disprove the allegation. (J. Edgar Hoover testimony, 5/6/64, Warren Commission, Vol. I, p. 100.)

³⁵ General Investigative Division Supervisor, 3/31/76, p. 16.

³⁶ Memorandum from Rosen to DeLoach, 2/15/67.

³⁷ General Investigative Division Supervisor, 3/31/76, pp. 46-47.

the FBI interview [the lawyer] concerning any knowledge he might have regarding the assassination of President Kennedy."³⁹ Watson stated that, "This request stemmed from a communication which the FBI had sent to the White House some weeks ago."⁴⁰ DeLoach explained that he believed this communication was actually supplied by Secret Service. According to DeLoach, he briefed Watson on Drew Pearson's discussion with Chief Justice Warren and then,

told Watson that, under the circumstances, it appeared that [the lawyer] did not want to be interviewed, and even if he was interviewed he would probably not divulge the identity of his sources who apparently were clients. Watson stated that the President still desired that the FBI conduct the interview in question. I told Watson that, under the circumstances, we had no alternative but to make this attempt; however, I hoped he and the President realized that this might be putting the FBI into a situation with District Attorney Garrison, who was nothing more than a publicity seeker.⁴¹

DeLoach concluded:

Under the circumstances it appears that we have no alternative but to interview [the lawyer] and then furnish the results to Watson in blind memorandum form.⁴²

The responsibility for interviewing the Washington lawyer was assigned to the General Investigative Division. This assignment is itself somewhat puzzling, because the Domestic Intelligence Division had been assigned responsibility for possible foreign involvement in the assassination.⁴³

The lawyer was interviewed by two agents from the FBI's Washington Field Office, both of whom had had supervisory responsibility on the assassination case within their office. These agents testified that they were briefed at FBI Headquarters prior to the interview, but neither could recall the details of that briefing or who was present.⁴⁴ Both agents testified that they were "surprised" during the interview when the lawyer recounted United States' assassination efforts targeted at Fidel Castro.⁴⁵ These agents stated that they could not evaluate the lawyer's allegations or question him in detail on them, since they had not been briefed on the CIA assassination efforts.⁴⁶

³⁹ Memorandum from DeLoach to Tolson, 3/17/67.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ The FBI Headquarters supervisor in the General Investigative Division, who was responsible for the interview with the lawyer, could not explain why it was assigned to his division, stating "I've often wondered about that myself." (General Investigative Division Supervisor, 3/31/76, p. 30.)

⁴⁴ FBI Agent I testimony, 5/3/76, p. 8; FBI Agent II testimony, 4/13/76, p. 10.

The Bureau's response to the Committee's March 18, 1976 request for documents reflects that there are no memoranda in Bureau files relating to said briefing.

⁴⁵ FBI Agent I testimony, 5/3/76, p. 24; FBI Agent II testimony, 4/13/76, p. 18.

The lawyer testified he had no recollection of having been interviewed by any FBI agent about the information he gave to Drew Pearson. (Washington Lawyer testimony, 3/17/76, p. 53.)

⁴⁶ FBI Agent I testimony, 5/3/76, p. 25; FBI Agent II testimony, 4/13/76, p. 16.

Neither the agents, nor FBI Headquarters personnel could explain why they were dispatched to conduct an interview without the benefit of all relevant background material in FBI files.

On March 21, 1967, the Washington Field Office sent FBI Headquarters ten copies of a blind memorandum reporting on the interview. This memorandum can be summarized as follows:

1. The lawyer had information pertaining to the assassination, but that it was necessary for him in his capacity as an attorney to invoke the attorney-client privilege since the information in his possession was derived as a result of that relationship.

2. His clients, who were on the fringe of the underworld were neither directly nor indirectly involved in the death of President Kennedy, but they faced possible prosecution in a crime not related to the assassination and through participation in such crime they learned of information pertaining to the President's assassination.

3. His clients were called upon by a governmental agency to assist in a project which was said to have the highest governmental approval. The project had as its purpose the assassination of Fidel Castro. Elaborate plans were made; including the infiltration of the Cuban government and the placing of informants within key posts in Cuba.

4. The project almost reached fruition when Castro became aware of it; by pressuring captured subjects he was able to learn the full details of the plot against him and decided "if that was the way President Kennedy wanted it, he too could engage in the same tactics."

5. Castro thereafter employed teams of individuals who were dispatched to the United States for the purpose of assassinating President Kennedy. The lawyer stated that his clients obtained this information "from 'feedback' furnished by sources close to Castro," who had been initially placed there to carry out the original project.

6. His clients were aware of the identity of some of the individuals who came to the United States for this purpose and he understood that two such individuals were now in the State of New Jersey.

7. One client, upon hearing the statement that Lee Harvey Oswald was the sole assassin of President Kennedy "laughs with tears in his eyes and shakes his head in apparent disagreement."

8. The lawyer stated if he were free of the attorney-client privilege, the information that he would be able to supply would not directly identify the alleged conspirators to kill President Kennedy. However, because of the project to kill Fidel Castro, those participating in the project, whom he represents, developed through feedback information that would identify Fidel Castro's counterassassins in this country who could very well be considered suspects in such a conspiracy.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Memorandum from Washington Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 3/21/67.

The transmittal slip accompanying this memorandum noted, "No further investigation is being conducted by the Washington Field Office unless it is advised to the contrary by the Bureau."⁴⁸ Had the interviewing agents known of the CIA-underworld plots against Castro, they would have been aware that the lawyer had clients who had been active in the assassination plots.

The Washington Field Office memorandum of the interview was rewritten at FBI Headquarters before it was sent to the White House, the Attorney General, and the Secret Service.⁵⁰ The cover letter sent with this memorandum did not recommend any FBI investigation of the lawyer's allegations. As rewritten, this memorandum varies from the original field version in two significant respects. Three new paragraphs were added summarizing FBI file materials about CIA-underworld plots to assassinate Castro.⁵¹ In addition the rewritten version of the memorandum twice deletes the words "in place" from the phrase "sources in place close to Castro."⁵² The supervisor who rewrote the memorandum could provide no explanation of the omission.⁵³

Neither the Field agents who interviewed the lawyer nor the Headquarters supervisory agents assigned to the assassination case, could provide any explanation for the Bureau's failure to conduct any followup investigation.⁵⁴ When they were informed of the details of CIA assassination efforts against Castro, each of these agents stated that the allegations and specific leads provided should have been investigated to their logical conclusions.⁵⁵

Although the Select Committee has not been able to establish through direct evidence that President Johnson asked CIA officials about the lawyer's allegations, CIA Director Helms met with the President at the White House on the evening of March 22, 1967. Earlier that day, the President had been furnished the FBI memorandum which summarized CIA use of underworld figures in plots against Castro and the lawyer's interview. On March 23, Director Helms

⁴⁸ Memorandum from Washington Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 3/21/67.

⁴⁹ There was no dissemination to the CIA.

⁵⁰ According to the FBI Headquarters agent who wrote the memorandum, this information was given directly to him by the Domestic Intelligence Division.

⁵¹ General Investigative Division Supervisor, 3/31/76, p. 20.

⁵² Supervisor testimony, 3/31/76, p. 20. It is unclear whether the identity of "the sources in place close to Castro" was known to the FBI or whether the Bureau attempted to develop information concerning them in either 1963 or 1967.

⁵³ It should be noted that neither the President, nor the Attorney General ordered a follow-up investigation after receiving this memorandum.

It was during this time period that New Orleans District Attorney James Garrison was conducting his own probe of the Kennedy assassination. Although there is no evidence that the Bureau's avoidance of any activity in support of, or interference with Garrison's investigation was the reason for its refusal to follow up on the lawyer's allegations, certain documents suggest that this might have been at least one of the factors that influenced the determination. For example, DeLoach cautioned:

The agents interviewing [the lawyer] should make it quite clear that the FBI is not interfering with any current investigation being conducted by local authorities in New Orleans. (Memorandum from DeLoach to Tolson, 3/15/67.)

⁵⁴ The Select Committee questioned the lawyer and the clients who were the sources of the allegations. The "clients" told the Committee they had no recollection of either receiving information that Castro retaliated or discussing it with the lawyer. (Client No. 1, 4/23/76, pp. 12, 13; Client No. 2, 4/28/76, p. 4.)

ordered the CIA Inspector General to prepare a report on the CIA assassination plots.

On April 24, 1967, the I.G. began submitting portions of his report to Director Helms. The May 23 draft report which was the only draft retained by the CIA, refers to the Drew Pearson columns and the lawyer's contacts with Chief Justice Warren, Rowley and the FBI, but does not analyze the retaliation allegations.

Sometime between April 24 and May 22, the Director met and orally briefed President Johnson on the I.G.'s findings.⁵⁶ When questioned during the course of the Committee's investigation into CIA assassination plots, Helms was not asked specifically whether he briefed the President about the fall 1963 AMLASH operations. Helms did testify that he did not brief President Johnson about the 1964 and 1965 phases because he did not regard AMLASH as an assassination agent.⁵⁷ Although a note in Director Helms' handwriting, which apparently was prepared for use in briefing the President⁵⁸ only refers to covert actions against Cuba through mid-1963, the I.G. Report treated the AMLASH project from 1963 through 1965 as an assassination operation.

Even before work began on the 1967 I.G. Report, the CIA analyst on the counterintelligence staff who had been the "point of record" for the CIA work for the Warren Commission was asked to analyze public allegations of conspiracy. This analyst was not furnished a copy of the 1967 I.G. Report and was not asked to determine whether there were any connections between CIA assassination operations and the assassination of President Kennedy. CIA records disclose that he did request a name check on "A," the individual who had been tangentially connected with an anti-Castro training camp in New Orleans. Although "A's" file at the CIA notes that he was aware of the AMLASH operation in 1965, the response to the name check did not disclose that fact. Indeed, it was not until 1975, during the Rockefeller Commission's study, that this analyst learned of the CIA assassination plots.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Assassination Report, p. 179.

⁵⁷ Richard Helms testimony, 6/13/75, p. 135.

⁵⁸ Assassination Report, p. 179.

⁵⁹ Staff summary of interview of CIA Analyst, 3/15/76.

APPENDIX A

THE FBI AND THE OSWALD SECURITY CASE

A. *Oswald's Defection*

On October 31, 1959, after learning that Lee Harvey Oswald had defected to the Soviet Union and informed officials at the American Embassy in Moscow that he intended to provide "radar secrets" to the Soviet Union, the FBI opened a "security case" with Oswald as the subject.¹ As part of the investigation, the Bureau made inquiries of the Navy and discovered that Oswald did not have knowledge of strategic information that would benefit the Soviets. The FBI concluded that a stop should be placed against Oswald's fingerprints to prevent him from obtaining a passport and entering the United States under any name.²

About six months later, the Bureau interviewed Oswald's mother who believed that he had taken his birth certificate with him to the Soviet Union.³ In a memorandum subsequently sent to the State Department, the FBI raised the possibility that an imposter might attempt to return to the United States using Oswald's identity.⁴

B. *Oswald's Return to the United States*

Despite this concern that an imposter might attempt to enter the United States using Oswald's identity, the FBI did not interview Oswald until almost three weeks after his return on June 13, 1962.⁵ There is no indication that any of the FBI agents assigned to the Oswald case were ever warned that an imposter might attempt to assume Oswald's identity. In particular, Special Agent James Hosty, the FBI agent responsible for the Oswald case at the Dallas Field Office, testified that he had neither seen a copy of the June 3, 1960 memorandum, nor attempted to determine whether someone had assumed Oswald's identity.⁶

On June 26, 1962, Special Agents John W. Fain and B. Tom Carter interviewed Oswald in Fort Worth, Texas. According to SA Fain's report, Oswald was cold, arrogant, and difficult to interview. Oswald denied that he told State Department officials at the American Embassy in Moscow that he was going:

- (1) was going to renounce his American citizenship;
- (2) apply for Soviet citizenship; and
- (3) reveal radar secrets to the Soviets.⁷

¹ Memorandum from Belmont to Soviet Section Supervisor, 11/4/59.

² *Ibid.*

³ Report from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 5/12/60.

⁴ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to Department of State, 6/3/60.

⁵ Memorandum from New York Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 6/26/62. Oswald was interviewed at the dock by an Immigration and Naturalization Service Inspector on his return to the United States.

⁶ Hosty, 12/12/75, p. 119.

The Committee has found no evidence that an imposter entered the United States in Oswald's stead.

⁷ John W. Fain testimony, Warren Report, Vol. IV, p. 418.

When Fain asked Oswald to take a polygraph test, Oswald refused to even be polygraphed on whether he had dealings with Soviet intelligence.⁸

Oswald also denied he had traveled to the Soviet Union because "of a lack of sympathy for the institutions of the United States."⁹ A second interview on August 16, 1962, yielded similar denials. Despite Oswald's attitude and demonstrable lies, the Bureau closed the Oswald security case on August 20, 1962. It was not to be reopened until March 26, 1963.¹⁰

The only additional action taken by the Bureau before March 26, 1963, consisted of: reviews of the Oswald file at the Department of State, inquiries of two low-level Dallas Communist Party informants as to whether they knew of Oswald (with negative responses), and interviews with three of Oswald's relatives.¹¹ Although wide-ranging interviews were a basic investigative technique commonly used by the Bureau to develop background information on subjects of security investigations, no neighborhood or employment sources were checked in Oswald's case, nor was his wife interviewed.¹²

The FBI did not interview Marina Oswald prior to the assassination. Although Marina Oswald was considered in June 1962 for a Bureau program which monitored the activities of Soviet immigrants and repatriates to detect possible foreign intelligence ties, the Dallas Field Office supervisor postponed consideration of her for the program on July 25, 1962, noting that "her activities could be sufficiently monitored in connection with the security case on Lee Harvey Oswald."¹³ Hoover as noted above, the FBI security case on Lee Harvey Oswald was closed less than a month later.

With respect to Oswald's marriage to Marina, and her return to the United States, the Warren Commission stated:

Oswald's marriage to Marina Prusakova on April 30, 1961, is itself a fact meriting consideration. A foreigner living in Russia cannot marry without the permission of the Soviet Government. It seems unlikely that the Soviet authorities would have permitted Oswald to marry and to take his wife with him to the United States if they were contemplating using him alone as an agent. The fact that he had a Russian

⁸ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 7/10/62. The Warren Commission apparently was not provided with the administrative cover pages of SA Fain's report which discussed Oswald's refusal to be polygraphed. Nor did Fain report Oswald's refusal to be polygraphed when he testified before the Warren Commission on May 6, 1964, despite detailed questioning by Commission members Ford and Dulles as to the discrepancies in Oswald's statements and Fain's reaction to them. (Fain testimony, Warren Report, Vol. IV, p. 418.)

⁹ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 7/10/62.

¹⁰ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

¹¹ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

¹² Assistant Director Gale commented upon this failure in his memorandum of December 10, 1963, where he wrote: "No neighborhood or employment sources developed, wife not interviewed, no mail covers or other techniques were used to determine whom Oswald in contact with or whether he had an intelligence assignment. Inspector feels this limited investigation inadequate. Dallas agent responsible for delinquencies now retired and no explanations obtained from him."

¹³ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 7/25/62.

wife would be likely, in their view, to increase any surveillance under which he would be kept by American security agencies, would make him even more conspicuous to his neighbors as "an ex-Russian", and would decrease his mobility. A wife's presence in the United States would also constitute a continuing risk of disclosure. On the other hand, Marina Oswald's lack of English training and her complete ignorance of the United States and its customs would scarcely recommend her to the Soviet authorities as one member of an "agent team" to be sent to the United States on a difficult and dangerous foreign enterprise.¹⁴

In contrast, a retired Bureau Soviet Section Supervisor told the Committee that of greatest concern to him in the Oswald case was the fact that the Soviets had allowed Marina to return to the United States with Oswald. He felt that if they desired to "tap Oswald on the shoulder and make use of him at some future date, Marina's presence would give them a great deal of leverage." The supervisor explained, "The Russians might try to exert leverage, possibly through her relatives or threats to her relatives in Russia and that sort of thing."¹⁵ However, it should be emphasized that the Supervisor testified that he is not aware of any evidence which establishes that the Soviets in fact used or attempted to contact Oswald.¹⁶

C. The Continued Investigation: Dallas

On September 28, 1962, the New York Field Office learned that Oswald subscribed to *The Worker*, which the Bureau characterized as "an east coast Communist Newspaper," and subsequently informed the Dallas Field Office. From the FBI's perspective, Oswald's subscription to this newspaper contradicted his interview statements that he was "disenchanted with the Soviet Union."¹⁷ Oswald's subscription was noted in his field office security file but FBI Headquarters was not informed of the subscription until September 10, 1963, and then only after it had requested information on Oswald from the Dallas office.¹⁸ Assistant Director Gale critically commented on this aspect of the Bureau's handling of the Oswald case: "In light of Oswald's defection, the case should have been reopened at the first indication of Communist sympathy or activity (i.e., September 1962)."¹⁹

¹⁴ Warren Commission Report, p. 274.

¹⁵ Staff summary of interview with former FBI Headquarters Supervisor, 1/16/76; FBI Headquarters Supervisor testimony, 3/15/76, p. 21.

¹⁶ The Committee has discovered no such evidence.

¹⁷ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 9/10/63.

See, e.g., testimony of SA James P. Hosty, Jr., 12/13/75, p. 111, who previously recommended on March 25, 1963, that the Oswald case be reopened on the basis of this contradiction.

¹⁸ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 9/10/63.

¹⁹ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

Director Hoover noted on November 29, 1963, that, "In Oswald's case there was no indication of repentance but only one of openly avowed hostility, and contacts with subversive elements." (Memorandum from W. C. Sullivan to A. H. Belmont, 11/29/63.)

None of the Bureau's internal criticism of its own handling of the Oswald security case, or even the fact that there was such criticism, was ever made known to the Warren Commission.

In October 1962, SA Hosty was assigned the Marina Oswald security case, which was then in a "pending inactive" status. The file was reviewed by Hosty in March 1963, when he also located Marina Oswald, but he did not interview her because of her alleged marital difficulties.²⁰ Hosty reviewed the Dallas security file on Oswald and, on the basis of Oswald's subscription to *The Worker*, requested approval to reopen the case.²¹ On March 26, 1963, Hosty received approval. Hosty stated that he did not interview Marina Oswald because he had developed information that Oswald had been drinking to excess and beating his wife, and the relevant FBI manual provision required that he allow a "cooling off" period.²² FBI Director Hoover later commented on the December 10, 1963, Gale memorandum that "this was certainly an asinine excuse" and "I just don't understand such solicitude." Inspector Gale had written that:

this entire facet of the investigation was mishandled. Mrs. Oswald definitely should have been interviewed and the best time to get information from her would be after she was beaten up by her husband.

The Director added the following notation next to Gale's conclusion: "This certainly makes sense."²³

On April 21, 1963, the New York Field Office learned that Oswald had written a letter to the Fair Play for Cuban Committee. This was the first indication in Bureau files that Oswald had a relationship with this pro-Castro organization.^{23a} Oswald's letter stated that he had passed out FPCC literature in Dallas with a placard around his neck reading "Hands Off Cuba—Viva Fidel." This information was not reported to Dallas until June 27, 1963,²⁴ and not reported to Headquarters until September 10, 1963.²⁵ Once again, Oswald's activities contradicted his interview statements.

On May 27, 1963, Hosty returned to the Oswalds' Neely Street residence to interview Marina and was informed that the Oswalds had moved from the Dallas area without leaving a forwarding address. In response to an SAC memorandum issued by the Dallas office seeking information on the Oswalds' whereabouts, the New Orleans office informed Dallas on July 17, 1963, that the Oswalds were living in that city.²⁶ The Bureau apparently learned of Oswald's presence in New Orleans from a letter he had written to *The Worker* on June 26, 1963. Oswald claimed in the letter to be a long-time subscriber and stated that he was forming an FPCC chapter in New Orleans. He enclosed honorary membership cards for "those

²⁰ Hosty, 12/12/75, p. 119.

²¹ Hosty, 12/13/75, p. 111.

²² Hosty, 12/12/75, p. 119.

The Committee has verified that since such a manual provision was in effect, it appears that Hosty's decision to allow "a cooling off" period prior to interviewing Marina was entirely in accordance with FBI regulations. Neither the documents nor the testimony of knowledgeable FBI Officers provides any explanation for either Hoover or Gale's critical comments.

²³ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

^{23a} Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 9/10/63.

²⁴ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

²⁵ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 9/10/63.

²⁶ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters and New Orleans Field Office, 8/23/63.

fighters for peace," Mr. Gus Hall (Secretary General of the Communist Party, USA) and Benjamin Davis (National Secretary of the Communist Party, USA).²⁷ On September 10, 1963 New Orleans became the office for the Oswald case.²⁸

D. The Continued Investigation: New Orleans

Oswald was arrested on August 9, 1963, in New Orleans in connection with his FPCC activities and charged with "disturbing the peace by creating a scene."²⁹ On the morning of August 10, Oswald asked to see a Bureau agent, and he was interviewed at length by SA John L. Quigley. Oswald also repeatedly lied to this FBI agent. For example, he told Quigley that he had met and married his wife in Fort Worth, Texas.³⁰

The New Orleans office learned on August 22, 1963, that Oswald participated in a radio program where he stated that he was a Marxist and that "Cuba is the only real revolutionary country in the world today."³¹ On August 23, 1963, the New Orleans office was instructed by Headquarters to "submit results of their Oswald investigation to the Bureau."³² On September 24, 1963, the New Orleans office advised the Bureau that the investigation was continuing and that a report detailing the investigative findings would be furnished.³³ An investigative report was subsequently sent to the Bureau on October 31, 1963, but it did not contain any significant information that was not already in Oswald's Headquarters file. The report reveals that only two informants in the New Orleans area were asked about Oswald and that neither had heard of him.³⁴

On October 2, 1963, agents of the New Orleans office attempted to ascertain Oswald's residence and place of employment. They learned that the Oswalds had left New Orleans. Leads to locate Oswald were sent to Dallas, Fort Worth, and Malvern, Arkansas.³⁵

²⁷ Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/31/63.

²⁸ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 9/10/63.

²⁹ There is no indication in FBI documents or the Warren Commission's record that Oswald was in New Orleans on any occasion between October 1959 and April 24, 1963. However, an Immigration and Naturalization Service Inspector testified before the Committee that he is absolutely certain that he interviewed Lee Harvey Oswald in a New Orleans jail cell sometime shortly before his April 1, 1963, transfer out of New Orleans. Although the Inspector is not now certain whether Oswald was using that particular name at that time, he is certain that Oswald was "claiming to be a Cuban alien" and that he "interviewed Oswald to verify or disprove this status." The Inspector neither recalls what Oswald said nor what language or languages he conversed in. He does not recall anything unusual about Oswald's dress or demeanor, and believes that he quickly ascertained that Oswald was not a Cuban alien, at which time he would have left Oswald in his jail cell. (I&NS Inspector testimony, 12/11/75.)

³⁰ On January 6, 1976, the Committee staff telephonically contacted the New Orleans Police Department and requested that they review their Oswald arrest records to see if he had been arrested other than on August 9, 1963. On January 7, the staff was informed that there was no record of another Oswald arrest, and that the New Orleans Police Department, in fact, had no information on Oswald prior to August 9, 1963.

³¹ Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 8/15/63.

³² Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/31/63, p. 11.

³³ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to New Orleans Field Office, 8/23/63.

³⁴ Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 9/24/63.

³⁵ Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/31/63.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

The evidence indicates that Lee Harvey Oswald was in Mexico City from September 27, 1963, through October 2, 1963. On October 10, 1963, Bureau Headquarters was provided with a copy of a CIA cable which stated that "Lee Henry Oswald" (sic) had been in contact with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City on September 28, 1963.³⁶

It was not until October 22, 1963, that information pertaining to Oswald's Mexico City trip was provided to the New Orleans office.³⁷ SA Hosty in Dallas had by chance ascertained similar information from the local I&NS office and coincidentally, his report detailing this information was received in New Orleans on October 22, 1963.³⁸

Thus, despite the fact that both the Dallas and New Orleans field offices were aware that Oswald had been in contact with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City, there is no evidence that either of these field offices intensified their "efforts" to locate and interview Oswald. Most surprising, however, is that the "Soviet experts" at FBI Headquarters did not intensify their efforts in the Oswald case after being informed that Oswald had met with Vice Consul Kostikov at the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City.³⁹ Not only were these experts familiar with Soviet activities in general, but they knew that Kostikov was a member of the KGB. Further, the Bureau's Soviet experts had reason to believe he was an agent within the KGB's Department which carries out assassination and sabotage.⁴⁰ They were also aware that American citizen contacts with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City were extremely rare.⁴¹ Ironically, the teletype which informed the Bureau of Oswald's Mexico City activities was sitting on a pile of documents on a Headquarters supervisor's desk awaiting initial action on November 22, 1963. That portion of the Gale memorandum which discusses Oswald's Mexico City trip reads as follows:

The SOG [Seat of Government] supervisor failed to take any action on the teletypes, stating it did not appear to him any action was warranted. Inspector (i.e., Gale) feels . . . the field should have been instructed to intensify investigation . . . and Oswald placed on Security Index.⁴²

E. Continued Investigation: Dallas

On October 26, 1963, the New Orleans Field Office advised the Dallas office that the Oswalds had left a forwarding address in Irving,

³⁶ CIA Cable from Mexico Station to FBI Headquarters 10/10/63; memorandum from LEGAT, Mexico City to FBI Headquarters, 10/18/63.

All the information that the FBI had prior to November 22, 1963, on Oswald's activities in Mexico City came from the CIA. On October 3, 1963, the CIA Mexico Station reported to Headquarters that Oswald had been in contact with the Soviet Embassy. On October 10, 1963, CIA Headquarters passed this information with some background material to the Navy, the State Department, and the FBI. The Mexico Station made a similar distribution to FBI and State Department officials in Mexico. Since Oswald was an American citizen, and since FBI was the responsible agency, disseminating this information ended CIA's responsibility in this matter.

³⁷ Memorandum from FBI Headquarters to LEGAT, Mexico City, 10/22/63, copy to New Orleans Field Office.

³⁸ Memorandum from Dallas Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/22/63, copy to New Orleans Field Office.

³⁹ Memorandum from LEGAT, Mexico City to FBI Headquarters, 10/18/63.

⁴⁰ Information regarding Vice Consul Kostikov was made available to the Warren Commission. (Letter from CIA to the Warren Commission, 1/22/64.)

⁴¹ Former FBI Mexico City Legal Attaché testimony, 2/4/76, p. 17.

⁴² Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

Texas. Dallas was asked to verify the new residence,⁴³ and on October 30, 1963, SA Hosty reported that although Oswald's family was living with the Paine family in Irving, Oswald was not living there. On November 1, 1963, Hosty went to the Paine residence to "find out where Oswald was residing."⁴⁴ Ruth Paine informed Hosty that she did not know where Oswald lived; however, she did state that Oswald was employed at the Texas Book Depository. Toward the end of the interview, Marina Oswald came into the room. According to Hosty, she expressed fear of the Bureau and their brief conversation, with Ruth Paine translating, was an attempt to re-assure her.⁴⁵

After the assassination, the Dallas office explained to FBI Headquarters that the investigation had been delayed to "be sure that it was in possession of all information from New Orleans." Inspector Gale commented on this explanation in his December 10, 1963, memorandum:

Inspector definitely does not agree, New Orleans submitted sixteen-page report, 10/31/63, and only leads outstanding in New Orleans were to ascertain Oswald's whereabouts. No indication New Orleans had any further data. . . . Even if New Orleans had not reported all information in their possession, Dallas should have intensified investigation in light of Oswald's contact with Soviet Embassy in Mexico City and not held investigation in abeyance.⁴⁶

Finally, it should be noted that facts publicly disclosed by the Bureau in October 1975,⁴⁷ establish that some two weeks prior to the assassination Lee Harvey Oswald visited the FBI's Dallas Field Office and left a note for Special Agent James P. Hosty, Jr., and that the note was subsequently destroyed. The circumstances surrounding the receipt and destruction of the Oswald note are discussed in Appendix B.

⁴³ Memorandum from New Orleans Field Office to FBI Headquarters, 10/25/63, copy to Dallas Field Office.

⁴⁴ It should be noted that under the relevant FBI manual provisions then in effect, any contact such as Oswald's with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City required that immediate investigative action at the appropriate field office be undertaken. However, it should be further noted that other provisions precluded the field office's interviewing Oswald without the express written approval or direction of Headquarters.

⁴⁵ Hosty, 12/13/75, p. 54.

⁴⁶ Memorandum from Gale to Tolson, 12/10/63.

⁴⁷ Deputy Associate FBI Director James B. Adams testimony, before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, 10/21/75.

APPENDIX B

THE FBI AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE OSWALD NOTE

In early July 1975, a Dallas newsman met with former FBI Special Agent-in-Charge for Dallas, J. Gordon Shanklin. The newsman informed Shanklin that an unidentified source had told him that Lee Harvey Oswald had visited the FBI office in Dallas sometime prior to the assassination and had left a threatening note for Special Agent James Hosty, who had been conducting the FBI investigation of Oswald. The newsman stated that neither Oswald's visit, nor the note, were reported to FBI Headquarters officials. Shanklin suggested that the newsman contact Deputy Associate Director James Adams at FBI Headquarters.¹

On July 7, 1975, the newsman met in Washington, D.C., with Adams and Director Kelley and informed them of these allegations. The Attorney General was advised on July 8, 1975, that the Bureau intended to conduct an inquiry regarding these allegations.² Later that day, Director Kelley held a conference with Adams, Shanklin, the Headquarters agent assigned to the assassination case, the Assistant Director in charge of the Inspection Division, and the Dallas SAC. The Assistant Director in charge of the Inspection Division was assigned personal responsibility for directing the FBI inquiry of the circumstances surrounding the delivery and duplication of the note.³

The Bureau's initial file review failed to develop any information indicating that Oswald had ever visited the FBI field office in Dallas or that he had left a note.⁴ FBI interviews with personnel assigned to the Dallas field office in 1963 established that:

- (1) Lee Harvey Oswald did visit the office some two or three weeks prior to the assassination;
- (2) Oswald asked to see SA James Hosty, and upon being informed that he was not in, left a note for Hosty; and
- (3) the note was destroyed after the assassination.⁵

The evidence developed by the Bureau contained sharp conflicts. The investigation failed to establish:

- (1) whether the note was threatening in nature; and
- (2) at whose instruction the note was destroyed.

Rather than attempting to draw conclusions from an evidentiary record replete with factual discrepancies, the Committee has decided to set forth in summary fashion the evidence developed by the Bureau and the committee, highlighting those areas where discrepancies exist.

¹ J. Gordon Shanklin testimony, 12/19/75, p. 10.

² Memorandum from the Director, FBI, to the Attorney General 7/29/75.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Memorandum from the Director, FBI to the Attorney General, 7/29/75.

⁵ *Ibid.*

The Wording of the Note

Approximately one week or ten days prior to November 22, 1963, Lee Harvey Oswald appeared at the reception desk in the Dallas field office and asked to see Special Agent James Hosty. After being informed that he was not available, Oswald left an envelope with a note inside for Hosty. The envelope was unsealed and the note was partly visible. According to the receptionists, the note read as follows:

Let this be a warning. I will blow up the FBI and the Dallas Police Department if you don't stop bothering my wife.
Signed—Lee Harvey Oswald.

Sometime later in the day the receptionists personally gave the note to Hosty.⁶

Hosty recalled the note's wording as:

If you have anything you want to learn about me, come talk to me directly. If you don't cease bothering my wife, I will take appropriate action and report this to proper authorities.⁷

Hosty's supervisor said he recalled that the note contained some kind of threat, but could not remember specifics.⁸

Aside from the receptionist, Agent Hosty, and the supervisor, no one else interviewed by the FBI recalled having seen the note. Some other individuals indicated that from conversations they had had with the receptionist after the assassination, they understood that the note contained a threat.

Circumstances Surrounding the Destruction of the Note

After reading the note, Hosty placed it in his workbox, where it remained until the day of the assassination. On the day of the assassination, Hosty participated in an interview of Oswald at the Dallas Police Department. When he returned to the field office about an hour later, Hosty was called into Shanklin's office where he met with his supervisor and Shanklin. One of them displayed the note and asked Hosty to explain its contents.⁹ Hosty told them he had interviewed Marina Oswald at the residence of Ruth Paine on November 1, 1963. According to Hosty, during the post-assassination interview at the Dallas Police Department, Oswald commented that Hosty was the FBI agent who had bothered his wife, and that if the agent wanted to know something about Oswald, he should have come and talked to Oswald himself.¹⁰

According to Hosty, Shanklin ordered him to prepare a memorandum detailing facts pertaining to the note and his interview with Marina Oswald and Ruth Paine. Hosty testified that he did prepare such a memorandum and delivered it to Shanklin on the evening of November 22, 1963.¹¹

⁶ Affidavit of receptionist, 7/15/75.

⁷ Affidavit of James P. Hosty, Jr., 7/17/75.

⁸ Affidavit of supervisor, 9/8/75.

The supervisor stated that the note was on plain paper, was either handwritten or handprinted, and was threatening in nature.

⁹ Hosty affidavit, 7/17/75; Hosty, 12/13/75, p. 147.

¹⁰ Hosty affidavit, 9/22/75; Hosty, 12/13/75, p. 148.

¹¹ Hosty, 12/18/75, p. 153.

Hosty's supervisor said that he had found the note in Hosty's workbox very soon after the assassination of President Kennedy. He stated that he took the note to Shanklin's office, but had no recollection of what happened to the note or who may have had it thereafter.¹²

According to Hosty, approximately two hours after Oswald had been pronounced dead on November 24, his supervisor told him that Shanklin wanted to see him. Hosty testified that he was instructed by Shanklin to destroy both the note and the November 22 memorandum regarding it, and that he complied with these instructions.¹³ Shanklin denied any knowledge of Oswald's visit to the Dallas Office and the note. He also maintained that he did not issue any orders to destroy the note. In fact, Shanklin claimed that he had no knowledge of this entire matter until July 1975.¹⁴

The personnel assigned to the Dallas Office in November 1963, do not know whether anyone at FBI Headquarters was ever informed of the Oswald visit, note, or subsequent events. However, William Sullivan, who was an Assistant Director of the Bureau at the time of the assassination, has stated that he discussed the Oswald case many times with Shanklin; and that Shanklin stated "he had an internal problem involving one of his Agents who had received a threatening message from Oswald because the Agent was investigating Oswald." Sullivan recalls that Shanklin seemed disinclined to discuss the matter other than to say he was handling it as a personnel problem with Assistant to the Director, John P. Mohr.¹⁵ Mohr has denied under oath any knowledge of the note or its destruction.¹⁶ Similarly, each of the other living Bureau officials in the chain of command of the two investigative divisions which supervised the Kennedy assassination case furnished the Bureau with a sworn statement denying any knowledge of this matter.

¹² Affidavit of Supervisor, 9/15/75.

¹³ Hosty affidavit, 9/22/75; Hosty, 12/13/75, p. 183.

Deputy Associate FBI Director James B. Adams testified before the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the House Committee on the Judiciary, 10/21/75, that the agent who destroyed the note did so to "avoid embarrassment to the Bureau."

¹⁴ Shanklin affidavit, 9/24/75; Shanklin, 12/19/75, p. 10.

However, a recently retired Special Agent, in an affidavit submitted to the Bureau, stated that he mentioned the note and the destruction to Shanklin while driving with him in a car in August 1974. (Special Agent affidavit, 7/23/75.)

¹⁵ Affidavit of William C. Sullivan, 9/16/75; Staff interview of Sullivan, 4/21/75.

Sullivan added that he did not know whether other Headquarters officials were aware of the note, or that the note had been destroyed.

¹⁶ Affidavit of John P. Mohr, 9/12/75.

APPENDIX C

CHRONOLOGY

1959

January 1—Fidel Castro takes over the Cuban government. Batista and his personal aides leave Cuba.

December 11—Dulles approves “thorough consideration be given to the elimination of Fidel Castro.”

1960

Late September—Bissell and Edwards brief Dulles and Cabell about operations against Castro.

Initial meeting between Rosseli, Maheu and CIA Support Chief. A subsequent meeting takes place in Florida.

1961

January 22—President Kennedy succeeds President Eisenhower.

March—President Kennedy raises subject of assassination with Senator Smathers, indicating his disapproval.

April—Rosseli passes poison pills to a Cuban in Miami.

April 15-17—Bay of Pigs invasion fails.

May 22—Hoover memorandum to Attorney General Robert Kennedy noting CIA had used Giancana in “clandestine efforts” against Castro.

November 16—President gives speech mentioning opposition to assassination.

November 29—John McCone succeeds Allen Dulles as Director, CIA.

November—Operation MONGOOSE is created.

December—FBI meets with Lansdale re: MONGOOSE.

1962

February 19—Helms succeeds Bissell as Deputy Director, Plans, CIA.

April—Harvey establishes contact with Rosseli.

Late April—Harvey passes poison pills to Rosseli in Miami.

May 7—Houston and Edwards brief Attorney General on pre-Bay of Pigs underworld assassination plot.

May 10—Attorney General Kennedy tells Hoover that the CIA has used underworld figures in an effort to assassinate Castro.

September 7—Rosselli tells Harvey the pills are still in Cuba.

October 22-28—Cuban missile crisis.

November—Operation MONGOOSE ends.

1963

Early 1963—William Harvey tells underworld figures the CIA is no longer interested in assassinating Castro.

March 18—Attack on a Soviet vessel off the northern coast of Cuba by members of Alpha 66, assisted by members of the Second National Front of Escambray reportedly occurs.

March 26—Attack on a Soviet vessel by members of Commandos L-66, another anti-Castro group, reportedly occurs.

April—Special Group discusses the contingency of Castro's death.

May-September—Lee Harvey Oswald moves to New Orleans; becomes involved with FPCC. He contacts anti-Castro Cubans as well.

Mid 1963—Series of meetings among major leaders of the anti-Castro movement.

June—Special Group decides to step up covert operations against Cuba.

July 24—Ten Cuban exiles arrive in New Orleans from Miami and join the "training camp" north of New Orleans. This "training camp" is directed by the same individuals who were previously involved in procuring dynamite. "A", a life-long friend of AMLASH, had helped procure the dynamite,

Late July—Carlos Bringuer is requested to assist exiles at the "training camp" in returning to Miami.

July 31—The FBI seizes more than a ton of dynamite, 20 bomb casings, napalm material and other devices at a home in the New Orleans area. Articles appear in the New Orleans *Time Picayune* on August 1, 2, and 4, 1963.

August 16—*Chicago Sun Times* carries an article that reports CIA had dealings with the underworld figure Sam Giancana.

Helms informs McCone of the CIA operation involving Giancana, and tells him it involved assassination.

August—According to FBI report, a Latin American military officer attends a Cuban exile group meeting and talks of assassination.

Early September—Talks between the Cuban delegate to the United Nations, La Chuga, and a U.S. delegate, William Atwood, are proposed by the Cubans.

September 7—CIA case officers, after their first meeting with AMLASH since prior to the October 1962 missile crisis, cable headquarters that AMLASH is interested in attempting an "inside job" against Castro and is awaiting a U.S. plan of action.

Castro gives an impromptu, three-hour interview with AP reporter Daniel Harker. He warns that U.S. leaders aiding terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders will themselves not be safe.

September 12—Cuban Coordinating Committee meets to conduct a broad review of the U.S. Government's Cuban contingency plans. They agree there is a strong likelihood that Castro would retaliate in some

way against the rash of covert activity in Cuba; however, an attack on U.S. officials within the U.S. is considered unlikely.

Late September—Oswald is in Mexico City and visits both the Cuban and Soviet Consulates.

September 27—The coordinator of Cuban Affairs circulates a memorandum listing assignments for contingency papers relating to possible retaliatory actions by the Castro regime. No responsibility is assigned for attacks on U.S. officials within the United States.

October 6—FBI Headquarters learns of Oswald contacts in Mexico City.

October 10—The FBI is told by an informant that the CIA is meeting with AMLASH.

October 24—Jean Daniel, the French reporter, conducts a brief interview with President Kennedy before setting off on an assignment in Cuba. President Kennedy expresses his feeling that Castro had betrayed the revolution.

October 29—Desmond Fitzgerald, a senior CIA officer, meets AMLASH. Fitzgerald tells AMLASH that a coup would receive U.S. support. Fitzgerald is introduced to AMLASH as a personal representative of Attorney General Kennedy.

November 1—Diem is assassinated following a coup.

November—Case Officer is told by Fitzgerald that AMLASH may be told the rifles, telescopic sights and explosives will be provided.

November 17—According to FBI reports, the Cuban-American is at the home of a member of the Tampa FPCC. He is there awaiting a telephone call from Cuba which is to give him the "go-ahead order" to leave the U.S.

November 18—President Kennedy makes a public appearance in Tampa and delivers a speech on Cuba policy in Miami.

November 19—Castro contacts Daniel and spends six hours talking to him about U.S.—Cuban relations.

November 20—CIA officers telephones AMLASH and tells him there will be a meeting on November 22. AMLASH is told that it was the meeting he has requested.

According to FBI reports, the Cuban American obtains a Mexican tourist card at the Consulate in Tampa.

November 22—President Kennedy is assassinated.

The Case Officer meets with AMLASH. He refers to President Kennedy's speech of November 18 in Miami and indicates that Fitzgerald helped write the speech. He tells AMLASH the explosives and rifles with telescopic sights will be provided. The Case Officer also offers AMLASH the poison pen device but AMLASH is dissatisfied with it. As the meeting breaks up, they are told President Kennedy has been assassinated.

Daniel spends the day with Castro and later reports his reaction to news of the assassination.

McCone requests all Agency material on Oswald.

Mexico Station cables CIA Headquarters, 1730 hours, to inform them of Oswald's October visit to Mexico City.

FBI Headquarters dispatches a teletype at 9:40 p.m. to all field offices requesting contact of all informants for information bearing on the assassination.

FBI Headquarters dispatches a teletype at 11:00 p.m. to all field offices requesting they resolve all allegations pertaining to the assassination.

November 23—Director McCone meets with President Johnson and McGeorge Bundy and briefs them on information CIA Headquarters had received from Mexico Station.

CIA Headquarters cables the AMLASH Case Officer and orders him to break contact with AMLASH because of the President's assassination and to return to Headquarters.

CIA personnel on the CI Staff prepare a memorandum suggesting that Oswald's contacts in Mexico City with Soviet personnel might have sinister implications. This information is transmitted to CIA's liaison with FBI by telephone at 10:30 a.m.

Desk officer is put in charge of CIA investigation of the assassination.

CIA Headquarters telephones the Mexico Station to get the planned arrest of Duran called off, but learns the arrest could not be called off. Karamessines sends a cable to Mexico Station saying, the arrest "could jeopardize U.S. freedom of action on the whole question of Cuban responsibility."

Legat informs FBI Headquarters that the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico is concerned that Cubans were behind Oswald's assassination of President Kennedy. The Ambassador requests both the CIA and FBI do everything possible to establish or refute this Cuban connection.

FBI Headquarters dispatches a teletype to all field offices rescinding the early teletype of November 22, 1963.

November 24—Mexico Station dispatches a cable to Headquarters with the names of all known contacts of certain Soviet personnel in Mexico City. Among the names in the cable is that of AMLASH.

At 10:00 a.m., Director McCone meets with the President and briefs him about CIA's operational plans against Cuba.

Cablegram is sent from Mexico to CIA Headquarters stating that the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico feels that the Soviets are too sophisticated to participate in a direct assassination of President Kennedy, but the Cubans would be stupid enough to have participated with Oswald.

Oswald is murdered at 12:21 p.m. EST.

November 25—The Case Officer prepares a "contact report" on the November 22 meeting with AMLASH. On Fitzgerald's orders, no mention is made of the poison pen being offered to AMLASH.

At noon, "D" shows up at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. He tells Embassy personnel that he was in the Cuban Consulate on September 18 and saw Cubans pay Oswald a sum of money and talk about Oswald's assassinating someone.

At 12:00 p. m., Mexico dispatches a cable to CIA Headquarters reminding Headquarters of Castro's September 7, 1963 statement threatening U.S. leaders.

A senior U.S. Embassy official in Mexico City tells a senior Mexican Government official known facts about Oswald's visit to Mexico City and raises questions of Cuban involvement.

November 26—McCone again meets with President Johnson. The President tells him the FBI has responsibility for the investigation of the President's death and directs him to make CIA resources available to assist the FBI's investigation.

The American Ambassador in Mexico sends a cable to the State Department through CIA channels. He gives his opinion that the Cubans were involved in the assassination.

CIA Headquarters cables CIA stations in Europe and Canada for all information on the assassination issue, noting they should carefully examine material obtained from a specified resource.

Deputy Attorney General Katzenbach writes Presidential Assistant Bill Moyers, stating "that the facts should be made public in such a way as to satisfy the people of the U.S. and abroad, that the facts have been told and a statement to this effect be made now." The public should be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin and speculation about his motive ought to be cut off.

November 27—Legat cables FBI Headquarters and notes a press release referencing to Castro's speech of September 7, 1963.

One CIA Station cables information received from the specified resources that AMLASH had been indiscreet in his conversations.

FBI sends a supervisor to Mexico City to coordinate the investigation and to pursue it vigorously until the desired results are obtained.

November 28—CIA Headquarters cables a reminder to the Mexico Station to "follow all leads" and to continue to investigate the possibility of Cuban or Soviet involvement.

CIA Headquarters warns the Station Chief in Mexico that the Ambassador was pushing the case too hard and his proposals could lead to a "flap" with the Cubans.

November 29—President Johnson announces formation of the Warren Commission after discussing other possibilities with Director Hoover.

November 30—Director McCone meets with President Johnson at 11:00 a.m. and they discuss the Cuba question. "D" is mentioned.

December 1—McCone meets with both Bundy and President Johnson. McCone's memorandum indicates they discussed "D's" story.

CIA Headquarters cables Mexico Station indicating it has received information from a sensitive source that a Cubana Airlines flight to Havana had been delayed in Mexico City from 6:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. on the day of the assassination. It was awaiting an unidentified passenger who arrived in the twin engine aircraft and failed to go through customs. The passenger rode in the cockpit on the flight to Havana.

December 2—At 10:00 a.m., McCone meets with the President and Bundy.

At 3:00 a.m., McCone's calendar reveals he attended a meeting at the CIA with the subject being Cuba.

December 3—CIA Headquarters receives information from Mexico that the Cuban-American left the U.S. on November 23 and flew from Mexico City to Havana on November 27.

December 4—CIA receives a report from one of its Cuban agents that he thought he had met Oswald in Cuba, Mexico City or the United States. This agent believes that the Cuban government employed assassins and had carried out at least one assassination in Mexico.

FBI memorandum from Sullivan to Belmont indicates there is no evidence that Oswald's assassination of the President was inspired or directed by [pro-Castro] organizations or by any foreign country.

December 5—Mexico Station cables that someone who saw the Cuban-American board the aircraft to Havana on November 27 reported that he "looked suspicious."

December 6—Warren Commission holds its first meeting, as the FBI and CIA are completing their own investigations.

December 8—CIA Headquarters cables its Miami Station ordering a halt to an operation to supply weapons to AMLASH, pending a high-level policy review.

December 9—A memorandum to Director McCone discusses U.S. operations against Cuba, but does not mention the AMLASH operation, or any other specific operation.

FBI's 5-volume report on the assassination is completed.

Deputy Attorney General Katzenbach writes the Warren Commission and recommends that the Commission immediately state that the FBI report clearly shows Oswald was a loner.

December 10—Hoover receives report on the investigative deficiencies in the handling of the pre-assassination Oswald case. Results in disciplinary action against 17 Bureau officials.

Director McCone meets with CIA staff and the subject of the meeting is Cuba.

December 12—CIA Mexico Station reports the FBI is pushing to wind up the Mexican aspects of the case.

Late December—CIA desk officer completes a brief report on his investigation, which is submitted to the President.

The CIA decides to have the Counterintelligence Division continue the investigation.

1964

January 23—A subordinate to the Chief of Counterintelligence is designated the "point of record" for all matters relating to the assassination and the Warren Commission.

January 24—FBI liaison is told by CIA official that there are no active plots against Castro.

January 28—Rankin meets with Hoover and they discuss the allegation that Oswald was an FBI informant.

January 31—Hoover indicates in his memorandum of the January 28, 1964 meeting, that he did not appreciate the statement by Chief Justice Warren that the Bureau's report was a "skeleton report."

March 26—The President's Commission requests the FBI to respond to 52 questions. In a subsequent memorandum (4/3/64) by a Bureau Supervisor to William Sullivan, he states the Commission is cross-examining the Bureau in regard to its investigation of the President's assassination.

Rankin requests that the FBI furnish the Commission with information on certain pro-Castro and anti-Castro organizations.

May 14—Both Hoover and Helms testify the case will always be open.

May 20—Rankin requests additional information on certain pro-Castro and anti-Castro groups.

June 11—Warren Commission receives a summary of the organizations from the field offices but not from FBI Headquarters. Hoover's letter informs the Commission that the CIA and Department of the Army "may have pertinent information concerning these organizations."

July—The FBI learns some details of the CIA's AMLASH operation from one of the FBI's informants.

September 9—The Bureau informs the White House and the Acting Attorney General that "the Commission's report is seriously inaccurate insofar as its treatment of the FBI is concerned."

September 25—Bureau receives a copy of the Warren Commission's Report.

September 30—Assistant Director Gale presents a memorandum that reviewed the Commission Report "as it pertained to FBI shortcomings." Bureau again disciplines agents.

October 1—An FBI inspector telephonically contacts Rankin and informs him that "he did the Bureau a great disservice and he'd out-McCarthy'd McCarthy."

Late 1964—AMLASH becomes more insistent that the assassination of Cuban leadership is a necessity. He is told that the U.S. Government cannot become involved in the "first step." He is put in contact with B-1 and the CIA through B-1 is kept informed of the plotting.

1965

May—"A" contacts I&NS with information about the AMLASH operation. He is turned over to the FBI for handling. The FBI informs the CIA about "A".

June—Both agencies interrogate "A" and establish that he knew who was involved in the AMLASH operation, including the CIA.

June 23—CIA Headquarters cables its Stations stating the entire AMLASH group is insecure and further contact constitutes a menace to CIA operations.

July 2—FBI writes that the details of the meeting with "A" and the CIA were sent to the White House, the Attorney General and the DCI.

1967

Late January—Drew Pearson meets with Chief Justice Warren and informs Warren that a lawyer was told by an underworld contact that Castro planned Kennedy's assassination.

January 31—Rowley meets with Warren, Rowley is informed of the lawyer's story.

February 2—Warren calls Rowley and informs Rowley that he spoke with Pearson who said the lawyer wanted to see Warren.

February 8—Tentative date set by Pearson with Warren for the lawyer to meet with Secret Service. Neither Pearson nor the lawyer contacted Secret Service.

February 10—Rowley advises Warren that neither Pearson nor Warren have contacted Secret Service. Rowley tells Warren the information would be passed to the FBI.

February 13—FBI is informed by James J. Rowley that Chief Justice Warren had recently been informed of U.S. attempts to assassinate Castro in 1962 and 1963, that Castro had decided to utilize the same procedure and that Warren wants these allegations looked into.

February 15—Hoover informs Rowley that the Bureau “is not conducting any investigation” but would accept volunteered information.

March 4—Robert Kennedy’s secretary calls Hoover and requests a copy of Edward’s memo of May 7, 1962 at which time Robert Kennedy was briefed on assassination plots.

March 7—Drew Pearson’s column is published.

March 17—Presidential Assistant Marvin Watson advises DeLoach that President Johnson has instructed the FBI to interview the lawyer concerning any knowledge he had in the assassination of Kennedy. Watson says request “stemmed from a communication the FBI had sent the White House some weeks ago.”

March 20—The lawyer interviewed by the Washington Field Office would not identify his source of the information that Castro plotted to kill Kennedy. Agents interviewing the lawyer were instructed to make it clear the FBI was “not interfering with any current investigation in New Orleans.

March 22—The FBI forwards results of the interview with the lawyer to the White House. The information indicates that the lawyer’s sources allegedly were used by the CIA in attempts against Castro. The White House also receives information originally from CIA relating to CIA’s use of Maheu and Giancana in a plot against Castro. Material also includes information that Robert Kennedy advised on May 9, 1962 that CIA should never take such steps without first checking with the Department of Justice. Helms meets the President at the White House in early evening.

March 23—Helms assigns the Inspector General the task of reporting on CIA assassination attempts against Castro.

April 4—Watson calls DeLoach and advises that the President is convinced there was a plot in connection with Kennedy’s assassination.

April 24—I.G. Report is delivered to Helms in installments.

May 22—Helms returns copy of report to I.G.

May 23—All notes and other derived source material of the I.G. Report are destroyed.