

OLC #78-533/1

Executive Registry
78-9739/6

4 August 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Gary Cornwell

1. Cornwell came out today to complete arrangements for the Mexico trip. After talking with his people on the HSCA work area, he met with Niles Gooding, Norbert Shepanek, Martin Hawkins, Bill Sturbitts and the undersigned. We had heard that the Embassy had not located persons to be interviewed (but were told to not upstage State) so asked if the trip was on. Cornwell said it was, despite what seemed few to interview.

2. The Mexican trip poses no unrecognized problems. The HSCA people will first interview Agency employee Flores in alias, on Monday afternoon if possible, as Flores is scheduled for leave. Gooding will arrange the interview of the safehouse person who has agreed to come and be interviewed. LIONION-1 is in Madrid (we explained his recent exposure by the Communist affair in Havana), and is not available for interview in Mexico City. We have not been able to locate June Cobb Sharp or [redacted]

3. Cornwell apologized for the use of Agency pictures without checking with us. He said he simply did not recall the limitation that accompanied them. I said we probably would have agreed to using them, but probably would have liked to influence the way in which they were presented. I added that it provided an opportunity to speak about handing out material, also saying that is an ill wind that blows no good, as it had resulted in identifying one of the people. We told him the material would be available for review soon.

4. He asked about access to the Hidalgo OPF. I pointed out that the issue of unrefined access to OPFs had been the subject of a letter to Blakey, explaining the questions in the minds of employees about their future careers. We were asking for a refinement in the information requested -- what periods of service did they wish for what

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purpose. He then asked if he could see the Hidalgo file for the 1960-63 period. It was pointed out that the interest had been understood to be Hidalgo's period as case officer for AMMUG, which didn't commence until 1964. He said he would like to start at the 1960-63 period and go from there. I replied that this approach would take us back to where we had been and that it would be preferred if consideration were to be given just what is wanted and why, and submit it in writing. He said it would be out first thing Monday morning and I promised first attention.

5. He asked about AMMUG's file. Messrs. Sturbitts and Hawkins explained the problem presented: the record revealed the extensive use of MUG after he became available to us, and this had to be reviewed in detail by a number of different desks. This took time. It became apparent that they were really interested in the "Mexican" period, which may suggest how the file is of interest to them.

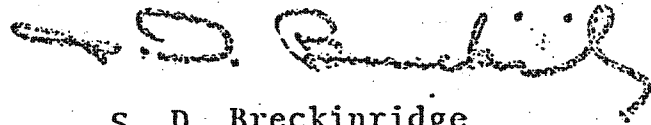
6. He asked about Casasin's file. Everything had been agreed about his interview in Paris, but as a former employee his file had been retired to Archives and had to be retrieved. It was now in and would soon be available. As the HSCA investigator was not planning travel for some time yet, there was time to handle this.

7. He asked about the Proenza file. I said that I had offered to brief Blakey either at the Agency when he next appears there, or at his office. I felt that when he understood the nature of the case, and what it wasn't, he would understand why it was not relevant. I said we didn't know why they were interested in Proenza, so had to guess at it. She had been recalled to Cuba shortly after the assassination of President Kennedy, which may have interested them, but we knew why she was recalled. He wanted to be briefed, and I declined in favor of waiting to brief Blakey.

8. I took the occasion to speak again, as had been done several times before in both writing and orally, that there is a need to bring some order to the requests from HSCA. We knew there was a loss of interest in some requests--material had been untouched for months after it had been made available. At the same time, as time constraints grow, his young men are getting excited and each feels that his current request should receive priority over others. In the absence of stated priorities, we simply have to work on the earlier requests in order to prevent a back-log accumulating; this will impair responsiveness

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to bona fide current priority requests. He acknowledged the presentation of the problems but made no statement (as is customary).



S. D. Breckinridge

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