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R297

The United States Senate

Helms

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Report of Proceedings

Hearing held before

Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental
Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities

Friday, June 13, 1975

Washington, D.C.

(Stenotype Tape and Waste turned over
to the Committee for destruction)

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EXECUTIVE SESSION

- - -

Friday, June 13, 1975

- - -

United States Senate,
Select Committee to Study Governmental
Operations with Respect to
Intelligence Activities
Washington, D. C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:12 o'clock a.m., in Room S-407, The Capitol, Senator Frank Church (Chairman), presiding.

Present: Senators Church (presiding), Morgan, Hart of Colorado, Baker, Goldwater, Mathias and Schweiker.

Also present: William Miller, Staff Director; Frederick A. O. Schwarz, Jr., Chief Counsel; Curtis R. Smothers, Minority Counsel; and Charles Kirbow, William Bader, Michael J. Madigan and David Aaron, Professional Staff Members.

- - -

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 The Chairman. I am going to ask Fritz Schwarz if he would
3 give us a short rundown on what it is we intend to focus on
4 in the questioning today, what we expect to cover, what we hope
5 to get, and anything, I suppose, Mr. Smothers, that you would
6 like to add, just to give us a sense of direction in connection
7 with the proceedings this morning.

8 Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Helms was Bissell's Deputy during the
9 period that the Bay of Pigs was planned. He apparently was
10 kept pretty much out of that, that is both consistent with what
11 he said yesterday and with what the written record appears to
12 show.

13 He took over as Deputy Director of Plans in the winter of
14 1962 and remained in that position essentially until he became
15 the head of the Agency in 1966.

16 The first thing that I think that we should cover with
17 him is to go through his perspective on what was happening
18 with respect to Cuba generally without getting to the assassina-
19 tion question. On that he's going to say, I believe, based on
20 interviewing him yesterday and what he said to the Rockefeller
21 Commission, that there was continuing intense pressure to do
22 something about Castro or get rid of Castro or overthrow the
23 Communist government in Cuba.

24 I think he will say that in that connection, in effect,
25 anything goes. Or, as Senator Goldwater put the question the

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other day, there were not any limitations. But it's going to be worth a little bit exploring with him and understanding what he means. Does he mean that the CIA could have dropped bombs, could have blown up ships in the harbor? What does he mean by anything goes and what does he mean by there were no limitations?

When we come to the subject of assassination, I think you will see his testimony kind of bounce back and forth. On the one hand, he is going to be saying, well, anything goes, and that is something. On the other hand, he's going to be saying, I think, well there really wasn't anything going in the assassination area.

He will admit that he knew about Mr. Roselli; he will admit, I believe, that he, indeed he and his man Harvey took over Roselli. But I believe you'll find the testimony, based on what he said to the Rockefeller Commission and what he said yesterday, quite vague on that subject.

We will turn on that subject before too long to the 1967 memo which is the most complete description of the events in connection with Castro. He had that prepared because President Johnson asked him to brief President Johnson on the allegations about Castro that were appearing in the Press. Then Johnson on his own added Trujillo and Diem.

Senator Baker. Is this the Drew Pearson article?

Mr. Schwarz. Yes, which President Johnson had been

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1 personally told about and had been told additional details
2 on.
3 I think he will say the memo is accurate. We will discuss
4 what he did after the memo was written telling people to destroy
5 certain documents relating to the memo. We will have to take
6 him through the parts of the memo which say he decided or he
7 agreed with Harvey's decision not to brief McCone. But that is
8 stated on three occasions in the memo. I think he will testify
9 either he remembers no such thing. That is what he said
10 yesterday and what he said to the Rockefeller Commission.
11 Moreover, I think he's going to disagree with McCone's
12 testimony about McCone's attitude toward assassination, and
13 at least say that he never heard McCone express any doubts about
14 assassination, A, and B, that if McCone had such doubts he would
15 have heard them.
16 Senator Baker. What's he going to say, Fritz -- well, I
17 thought you were finished. Go ahead.
18 Mr. Schwarz. Another thing on Castro. On the general
19 subject of disclosures to President, I have a book on mail
20 opening which we should not get into the details of but is
21 relevant in this sense, in the so-called Huston Plan which he
22 and J. Edgar Hoover, Gayler and Bennett, General Bennett,
23 signed there was a flat statement, and this was in June 1970,
24 that mail opening has been discontinued that was signed by him
25 and submitted to President Nixon. In fact, the mail opening

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project lasted into 1973 in New York and was just starting on his authority in San Francisco at the very time he was writing President Nixon saying it had been discontinued.

That is worth having him explain.

The Chairman. Has he explained that to you previously?

Mr. Schwarz. He didn't, because we didn't have this in mind until afterwards. That is essentially it on the Castro.

The Chairman. What did he say on the question of Presidential authority in assassination?

Mr. Schwarz. Well he puts it in this sense, Senator. Anything goes, and we knew the President wanted the government overthrown.

The Chairman. Nothing more specific?

Mr. Miller. I disagree. If I might, I think this might help, Fritz.

Yesterday in the discussion we followed the theme that was raised by Bissell without stating where -- in fact, we did express the notion of plausible denial.

Mr. Schwarz. Yes, we should discuss that with him, what does it mean and so forth.

Mr. Miller. And we came baldly out with the question, could this have happened without the President's approval. And I think, it is my impression and there may be other gradings on this, because he was very careful in his answer, was he did not think so. The President and the Attorney General were aware

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of these things and the pressure of the times -- this is where he is very good -- he talks about the intense desire to do something about Cuba, 90 miles off the coast and so on, that there was pressure, very intense pressure within the government to mount operations and get things done.

Senator Goldwater. Would you yield at that point?

Mr. Miller. Yes, sir.

Senator Goldwater. I think it will be very helpful to this Committee if we could, in some way, have Mr. Helms explain the philosophy that is wrapped up in the President knowing or not knowing. This isn't confined to this Committee, this is international and I think they have to protect the President. And when Bissell said in effect, yes, I would lie, I would do it to.

Mr. Miller. He got into that question yesterday.

Senator Goldwater. If we could develop that philosophy, because I don't think enough of the staff or enough of the members have ever been exposed to that kind of thinking. In other words, is it better to have one man assassinated or have to go to war and all of us get back into the business of killing thousands.

Mr. Schwarz. He certainly says that there was intense pressure and he explicitly said that there were no limitations expressed with regard to that pressure. On the specific of assassinations, he said that may have been discussed as an

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1 option but he is very fuzzy when you get down to was it
2 actually discussed.
3 Mr. Smothers. What is very helpful, I think, and we spent
4 some time with him yesterday, on simply going through his
5 impressions of how Mongoose developed and how he had come to
6 the feeling that he articulated very clearly that there was no
7 doubt in his mind about what his marching orders were about
8 what they wanted done, they being the President on down.
9 We talked about the question of the various sources of this
10 kind of impression, meetings he had with Cabinet people, meetings
11 that Mr. McCone would have, his conversations with McCone.
12 While not explicit, it is very clear that all of these meetings
13 appear to him to be consistent.
14 I think the other thing that may be very helpful for us
15 to try to get a close look at is the nature of the coordination,
16 again as reflected by Mongoose. Here we have a pulling together
17 of essentially all of the government agencies in an effort to
18 get a task done, and if we focus on something like, one, the
19 Attorney General's involvement, it appears as he said yesterday
20 that the whole concept of the Special Group Augmented was to
21 allow for the Attorney General's input, and also to provide
22 for the stewardship of Lansdale who, for the first time, whose role
23 becomes a little clearer here as we look at why Lansdale comes
24 out of nowhere.
25 I think if we really pursue the question of how this

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1 coordination effort looked, it will probably give us the best
2 insight on the authority then.
3 I think I also found interesting yesterday his attitude
4 toward the Mafia people. He clearly talks about them as just
5 another asset, but his attitude -- and correct me if I'm wrong
6 here -- was more or less to pooh-pooh it. Here was something,
7 it was wild-eyed, it probably will never work, but it's something
8 we'll throw against the wall. And I think left us with the
9 impression, okay, let him go out and try it. But, you know,
10 nobody really expects anything to come of this, and he is
11 particularly pooh-poohed when he talks about what was expected
12 of Roselli. And I believe he finally ended up using the term
13 zilch as to what they would get out of that effort.
14 But I think probably the most valuable thing he can do for
15 us is to give us some of the impressions, some of the feelings
16 about what was going on in that timeframe. I don't think he's
17 terribly specific as to saying what.
18 Senator Baker. May I ask a question, Mr. Chairman, and I
19 think a way to get him in here is not to leave him out there
20 with Dan Schorr too long. Tell me about his frame of mind,
21 his attitude.
22 Does he seem apprehensive, evasive? Is there any point
23 in us thinking while examining the witness, what is he holding
24 back, if anything? Is there any necessity, I think, to think
25 about the possibility of immunity?

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1 Mr. Miller. I think the attitude that, number one, he
2 stated, I mean this is the statement, that he is going to
3 respond to any question by the Committee fully. That was his
4 intention declared.
5 Secondly I think that he feels that twenty-five years, his
6 twenty-five years of service to the government is under attack
7 now. He stated that it is his belief that everything he has
8 done in government has been under direct order or lawful
9 authority.
10 Senator Schweiker. From the top, Bill?
11 Mr. Miller. Yes, he was very heated on that point at one
12 point. I think it would be well worth, you know, pressing this
13 button.
14 So I think it is a mixture of saying you must understand
15 the times. Helms himself was acting under lawful authority or
16 direction.
17 Thirdly, he wants to explain to the Committee why he did
18 things and so on. I must say that yesterday, trying to hold
19 him onto a question was difficult.
20 Mr. Schwarz. He is a very, very intelligent witness,
21 and if you ever want to pin the man down on precise facts, he
22 knows very well how to make that difficult.
23 Mr. Miller. I think the way you can draw the most infor-
24 mation out of him is asking him in the context of the times,
25 the procedures by which things were done, and he tells more

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about in fact through impressions, he gets more precise information out by which he calls impressions than if you ask him specific questions.

Senator Goldwater. Well let me back up. I know this fellow very, very well, and he is very touchy on the subject of his years of service to the government.

The Chairman. All right, let's have him in.

Mr. Schwarz. The only document that on its face -- only folder that on its face is not self-explanatory are a bunch of handwritten notes. Those are his notes, I think, for the purpose of briefing President Johnson on the subject.

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(Mr. Helms entered the hearing room at 10:28.a.m.)

The Chairman. Mr. Helms, would you please stand and be sworn?

Do you swear that all of the testimony you are giving in these proceedings will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

The Chairman. Mr. Schwarz will begin the questioning.

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TESTIMONY OF MR. RICHARD HELMS

Mr. Schwarz. Just some procedural matters, Mr. Helms. As we discussed, you know you have a right to counsel?

Mr. Helms. Yes, thank you.

Mr. Schwarz. And you have your constitutional rights, as we discussed yesterday. And you also have the right to stop and obtain counsel if you want, do you know that?

Mr. Helms. Thank you.

Mr. Schwarz. You joined the Agency at its outset, is that right?

Mr. Helms. Yes, Mr. Schwarz.

Mr. Schwarz. And you had been in the OSS before that?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I was in the OSS and then I went on to the, what was later known as the SSU in the State and War Departments. Then I was in the CIG and when the CIG was subsumed in the CIA, I went to the CIA which had been set up under the National Security Act of 1967.

Mr. Schwarz. And you were on the operational side of the Agency or the clandestine side, is that right?

Mr. Helms. Yes. I started in what was known as the Office of Special Operations and that later became the clandestine service. And I was in that until 1965.

Mr. Schwarz. Moving to the late '50's, were you the Deputy Director for Plans?

Mr. Helms. No, I didn't -- let me see, I became Deputy

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1 Director for Plans in early 1962.

2 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

3 Were you the second in command in the Plans section?

4 Mr. Helms. Yes. I had the title of Chief of Operations

5 which was the number two.

6 Mr. Schwarz. And you reported to Mr. Bissell?

7 Mr. Helms. I reported first to Mr. Wisner and then to

8 Mr. Bissell.

9 Mr. Schwarz. And then when Mr. Bissell left in the winter

10 of '62 you left his place as the Deputy Director for Plans?

11 Mr. Helms. That is correct.

12 Mr. Schwarz. And you stayed in that job until you became

13 DCI, or did you have an intervening job?

14 Mr. Helms. No, I was Deputy Director of Central

15 Intelligence which was a job that I received in I think it was

16 April of 1965.

17 Mr. Schwarz. At about the time Admiral Rayburn took

18 over?

19 Mr. Helms. Exactly the same time.

20 Mr. Scwharz. And then you succeeded Admiral Rayburn as

21 DCI?

22 Mr. Helms. That is correct.

23 Mr. Schwarz. And you held that job until the winter of

24 1973?

25 Mr. Helms. I think it was very early in '73.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. At that point, you went to your present
2 post, which is Ambassador to Iran?
3 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.
4 Mr. Schwarz. All right.
5 Would you recount for the Committee, turning to the country
6 of Cuba, your understanding of the relationship between the
7 United States government and Cuba, starting with Mr. Castro's
8 takeover and running up to the time you became DCI. And when
9 I say relationship, I don't mean the formal diplomatic sense,
10 but in the sense of what was the United States government
11 interested in accomplishing as far as the government of Cuba
12 was concerned.
13 Mr. Helms. Well, this recital may be somewhat impression-
14 istic because I have not gone into any details about dates.
15 In fact, I don't recall right now what year it was that Castro
16 took over, in the real sense. When was that?
17 Mr. Schwarz. '59.
18 Mr. Helms. '59.
19 After he took over there was no doubt that President
20 Eisenhower's Administration regarded that development as a most
21 unfortunate one, and starting early on, various thought was
22 given to how this takeover of Cuba by a Communist could be,
23 how the balance could be redressed.
24 You remember there was some trouble, I believe, down in
25 Columbia at the time. One of our Secretaries of State went

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down there, at which time -- this was before Castro took over -- but at which time he was identified specifically as a Communist and there was a very real feeling in the Eisenhower Administration that having a Communist regime 90 miles from the shores of the United States was a most unwelcome development.

These thoughts led to the project which over time has come to be known under the rubric of the Bay of Pigs. It was certainly not known as that when it began and it was begun as a project to organize Cuban exiles, Cubans who had been exiled by Castro from Cuba or had fled of their own volition, into a brigade trained in guerrilla tactics, the objective being to land in Cuba in the hope that with this show of force, those Cubans still there who were against Castro would rise up and implicit in this scheme was that if the invasion force got into any serious trouble, or conversely if they had a good chance of making it, they could probably rely on American military support or American support of some kind.

In any event, you all know the history of the Bay of Pigs. It failed, it was a traumatic experience. I want to say for anybody who was serving in the Central Intelligence Agency in those days it was very traumatic. But it did fail. I think some 90 people lost their lives in the brigade, four Americans or five Americans -- please don't hold me to those details -- I guess about a hundred on the other side and about 1200 of the brigade were taken prisoner which led, if you will recall,

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later to a very complicated series of negotiations to free these prisoners or at least to free some of them.

You will recall also, because I think we must put in this element that it was President Eisenhower under whom the original concept of mounting a guerrilla operation against the island came into being, but by the time the execution of the operation was to take place, President Kennedy had come into office. Therefore this project had been at work under two Presidents.

It has been said since -- I don't know if this is relevant to our discussion this morning -- that one of the reasons for this misfortune was that President Kennedy had been in office such a short time that he had hardly had a chance to get ahold of the government apparatus before this thing was presented to him and mounted and off it went. And this was pretty tough on him and pretty tough on everybody involved.

Subsequent to the Bay of Pigs, obviously there was a licking of wounds and a sort of regrouping, and then as I recall it, sometime in late 1961, I guess -- the Bay of Pigs as I recall was in April of '61 --

Mr. Scwharz. April of '61.

Mr. Helms. So this would have been in the fall, like October or November.

We were instructed to -- at least the Agency was instructed to get going on plans to get rid of Castro by some device which obviously would have to be covert because nobody had any

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1 stomach anymore for any invasions or any military fiascos of
2 that king.
3 The Chairman. Mr. Helms, could you be more specific on
4 this particular point?
5 You say that in the fall of '61 after the regrouping and
6 the licking of wounds, the Agency received instructions to get
7 on with a plan to get rid of Castro.
8 Now just from whom did these instructions come and what
9 was the nature of the instruction. Can you be more precise
10 about this?
11 Mr. Helms. Sir, I am not very helpful in this period here
12 for the simple reason this came to me second or maybe third
13 hand, and it did not involve me particularly.
14 The Chairman. At the time, what was your position? In
15 the fall of '61?
16 Mr. Helms. I was Chief of Operations or the Deputy
17 Director for Plans. In other words, it was a number two job.
18 The Chairman. Second in command of covert operations?
19 Mr. Helms. Yes.
20 The way this had been worked, Mr. Bissell had come in
21 as Director of Plans, having been in the Agency and having been
22 the agent, if you remember, of U-2 operations and that kind,
23 and he brought those things with him into the job of the DDP
24 and he spent a good deal of time prior to the Bay of Pigs
25 working on that.

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1 In other words, it was a big operation for an organization
2 for the CIA. In retrospect, far too big. So let's not shilly-
3 shally with the words about that.
4 I think he spent a great deal of time on it, and my role
5 was to try and take care of what remained of the world.
6 Therefore, I was absorbed outside, obviously on the fringes of
7 this, but not involved in the decisions or how it was to be
8 done or who was doing what or anything of that kind.
9 So it was -- as I say, we go downhill into, I think it
10 was late 1961 or early 1962 and I'd have a hard time putting
11 my finger on exactly when, Mr. McCone had by that time become
12 Director. And as I recall it, this was the first time that I
13 was sort of brought into Cuban operations. And he indicated I
14 should interest myself more on this that we had to build up
15 in order to conduct a larger effort.
16 And this then began. Then later, somewhat later, I
17 became Deputy Director, I think it was in February, and then
18 obviously these things came generally under my aegis.
19 We set up sort of a task force in order to work on these
20 Cuban problems.
21 Mr. Schwarz. Was Mr. Harvey the man in charge?
22 Mr. Helms. Mr. Harvey was then put in charge of that
23 sometime in this time frame.
24 I'm sure in the documents it shows what it was called,
25 Task Force W or something of that kind sticks in my mind, but

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1 that may b: wrong.

2 Then later, and I don't know anymore in terms of time,

3 but a bit later, I believe, General Lansdale was brought in

4 to head up this Cuban effort.

5 Senator Schweiker. Within the CIA?

6 Mr. Helms. No, sir, I'm sorry. I'm not being very

7 specific, Senator Schweiker, I'll clear that up right now.

8 In the CIA, we were informed that General Lansdale, who

9 was working in the Department of Defense in an office which I

10 think at that time was headed by General Erskine(?), it was

11 an office in the Department of Defense which was dedicated to

12 supporting covert operations and actions of the Central

13 Intelligence Agency. That was one of its functions, among

14 others, I have no doubt, but that was one of them.

15 But in other words, it was the point at which the CIA in

16 these matters plugged into the Department of Defense. My

17 recollection is that the proposition at first was that General

18 Lansdale was going to organize a whole organization underneath

19 himself, sort of outside of other existing departments and

20 agencies to work on this Cuban operation.

21 But in any event, that was a very short-lived idea because

22 I think Mr. McCone objected to putting, sending his people out

23 of the Agency to be under somebody else's command. I think

24 the State Department objected. So that died aborning.

25 So the result was that General Lansdale became a sort of

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1 Chief of Operations, Chairman of the Committee, if you'd like,
2 which would sit down at the table with representatives of
3 State and I guess Defense and CIA and I think USIA was also
4 involved, to mount what you could only refer to, I think,
5 properly as a governmental approach to the Cuban problem, in
6 other words, to organize all of the facilities of the govern-
7 ment. And I remember that the FBI was brought in, and even
8 the Customs and the Coast Guard and so forth.
9 The Chairman. This Committee operated under the policy
10 direction of the 54/12 Special Group?
11 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir, but Mr. Chairman, in those days,
12 that famous Committee was called the Special Group, so for the
13 purposes of this timeframe, that is what it was called.
14 There came into vogue the term Special Group (Augmented)
15 which meant that when the Special Group was sitting on projec-
16 involving Cuba it became Augmented. Otherwise, it stayed the
17 Special Group. And when it was Augmented, it had added in
18 representatives of USIA, I think, other representatives of
19 the Department of Defense and State, the Attorney General
20 principally -- that was one of the reasons it was called
21 Augmented, because normally he wouldn't have been involved in
22 any of these things.
23 Mr. Schwarz. Was the code name Mongoose used for that
24 operation?
25 Mr. Helms. Yes. When this needed a code name, I think as

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1 I recall it it was a code name contributed by the Agency. I
2 don't know who thought it up, but -- so this became known as
3 Operation Mongoose.
4 And Operation Mongoose I believe -- now this is the best
5 of my recollection -- stayed in existence until the Cuban
6 missile crisis in the fall of 1962 at which time it was disbanded
7 in that form.
8 Mr. Smothers. Mr. Ambassador, before we get away from
9 Lansdale who was, as you say, in charge of operations, do
10 you know, or do you have any impressions as to who Lansdale
11 reported to, what was the line of authority that he responded
12 to with respect to the Special Group?
13 Mr. Helms. Well, Mr. Smothers, it was my impression at
14 the time that he had been put into the job by the Attorney
15 General. Now I don't have this firsthand, I was not there when
16 he was given the assignment, but this was my understanding.
17 You will recall perhaps that General Lansdale had had
18 quite a rich experience in political action and political
19 warfare. When he worked for the Central Intelligence Agency
20 he had been in the Philippines and had helped to organize
21 the fighting against the Huks and after that he moved to
22 Vietnam and was instrumental in setting up the Diem government
23 from the chaos that existed before that.
24 So he had substantial credentials for, if you want to
25 say, a political warrior, and I have no doubt that it was that

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reason that he attracted the attention of the powers that be.

Mr. Smothers. At this time, was the Attorney General chairing the Special Group Augmented at this time?

Mr. Helms. I believe so. After all, he would have been the senior official. I think he was, yes.

Mr. Smothers. So was it your impression that he was sort of setting the tone for the group's action or activity?

Mr. Helms. Oh, yes, sir, there wasn't any doubt about that. He was very much interested in this and spent a great deal of time on it.

Mr. Schwarz. We want to come back to those particulars, but would you continue with your answer as to what the United States government was trying to do about Cuba?

You had reached the missile crisis which was in October of 1962 and the missile crisis was resolved by some kind of an understanding between Chairman Khruschev and President Kennedy. Do you know the nature of that understanding?

Mr. Helms. I don't know anymore about it than anybody would have known from reading the papers at the time. I was not privy to any inside information.

Mr. Schwarz. Some kind of combination; the missiles were removed.

Mr. Helms. The IR-28's were removed.

Mr. Scwharz. Now, after that, what happened to the efforts of the United States government to overthrow the Cast

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1 regime after the missile crisis and up to the time you became
2 DCI in 1965 or '66?
3 Mr. Helms. You remember that after the missile crisis --
4 and I think I'm right about this, and I would appreciate it
5 Mr. Chairman if there's anybody in the room, where I get my
6 historical facts wrong, would correct me, because I have no
7 interest in trying to get this all messed up. This is just my
8 best recollection.
9 The Chairman. We understand.
10 Mr. Helms. There was quite an operation in the Organization
11 of American States after the missile crisis to organize a
12 combined American approach to isolating Cuba. And I believe
13 it was out of these deliberations at the OAS at that time
14 that came the economic embargo of Cuba. But also, there were
15 various sanctions which the United States government was
16 trying to work out.
17 I don't know if I'm using the right word here, now, but
18 they certainly would like to have punished Castro for the
19 Cuban missile crisis because I think if I remember the temper
20 of those days, there were a lot of lumps in people's throats
21 all over the United States when they realized how close a call
22 we had had on this really extraordinarily daring operation
23 of Khruschev's to insert those missiles there secretly and
24 have them pointing down the throats of Americans.
25 So in those days, the temper of getting after Castro was

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1 a real one. I mean, people had their heart in it, I must
2 say, and there didn't seem to be much disposition on the part
3 of the Congress or the American people to cabal with doing
4 anything that was possible to punish this man.
5 The Chairman. That was particularly true after the
6 missile crisis?
7 Mr. Helms. This is my point, this is my point.
8 Mr. Schwarz. So not only the multilateral efforts through
9 the OAS, as you described, but what might be called the
10 unilateral efforts by the United States to take covert action
11 against Mr. Castro to overthrow continued after the missile
12 crisis.
13 Mr. Helms. They did indeed. As I say, Operation
14 Mongoose, as I recall it, disappeared, but it simply was
15 replaced by a continuing effort on the part of the CIA to
16 mount harrassment operations and so forth against Cuba.
17 The base in Miami from which these operations were
18 conducted was continued in being, and it continued in being
19 for two or three years thereafter, but on a somewhat declining
20 scale, because first, the operation, I must confess, was not
21 very successful. I mean, there were some things done and some
22 good intelligence acquired, but as far as the sabotage -- and
23 if I may call it, the rough stuff was concerned, it was not
24 very effective. The Russians had moved in to Cuba, into the
25 Cuban security service and had done a rather astonishing job

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of bringing the Cubans into the twentieth century when it came to security and counterintelligence. And they ran it with a very skilled hand, so they were constantly rolling up and arresting these various operations, landings and air drops and all the rest of those things. So that I am sad to say it was a rather unsuccessful show in the end..

Mr. Schwarz. Did these efforts continue up to the '65, '66 time frame?

Mr. Helms. It seems to me it was still going in '64, yes I'm relatively certain they were continued to the '65 timeframe on a somewhat reduced scale. It was after that, I believe, or around this time that we began to ask for some relief from this responsibility because Vietnam was picking up in those days and there was a need for manpower that understood paramilitary activities and things of this kind, not only in Vietnam, but in Laos, so that the Agency was running short of effective manpower in this field.

Therefore the Cuban effort dropped off as interest in Cuba tended to drop off and cool and interest in Vietnam built up.

Mr. Smothers. Well, I think in terms of, we're talking about these efforts, Mr. Ambassador, and those responsibilities. I think what we want to do is try to get ahold of what those efforts and responsibilities were.

Would it be fair to say that it was your understanding

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of Mongoose that the task was to get rid of Castro by any means without limitations, not limited to overthrow?

Mr. Helms. Well, my distinct recollection at the time was -- I perhaps phrased the injunction on us in a very simplistic American language which you could use other words, but it was to get rid of Castro or the Castro regime in Cuba, let's put it that way, and no limitations were placed on the means. In fact, I never recall having been told by anybody don't do this, don't do that, don't do the other thing.

Mr. Smothers. Let me ask then what do you feel you could do at that time? Did that feeling change any as this moved?

Mr. Helms. Well, I think this is reasonable to state, and I hope this is responsive to your question. The perceptions of the Administration, and I say, also, I believe the Congress and the American people, as reflected by the Administration, as those things intensified on two or three occasions in connection with Cuba, obviously the extent of the means that one thought were available, obviously increased too.

In other words, the pressure was pretty intense, and I remember vividly it was very intense. And therefore, when you go into the record, you know, you find a lot of very nutty schemes there and those nutty schemes were born of the intensity of the pressure. And we were quite frustrated.

Mr. Smothers. Well just try to trace that pressure as it develops and subsides for us. I think that would be

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1 helpful.

2 Mr. Helms. Well I think you find it building up to the
3 Bay of Pigs and you have a crescendo and you have the aftermath
4 of the Bay of Pigs and things lying quiet. Well, there's a
5 great concern about the prisoners, what's to be done about them
6 and so forth. And then at the end of the year, '61, you find
7 the intensity building up again where it was very strong at
8 the end of '61 and '62.

9 We then go along into that period, if you will recall, into
10 the summer of '62 when those first reports were coming out about
11 missiles in Cuba, and you remember -- I forget which Senator
12 it was that had some inside information --

13 Senator Mathias. Senator Keating.

14 Mr. Helms. In any event, that began to get very edgy.
15 And then we came into the missile crisis itself which I guess
16 was the hottest moment at all in intensity. No doubt about it,
17 it was white heat.

18 And then that continued on for some time until it
19 gradually began to taper off. I would have thought -- well, it
20 lasted pretty much through '63, because I can still remember
21 meetings about how are we doing with economic warfare, have
22 we turned off the oil deliveries, what are we doing about taking
23 care of bus deliveries. I think the Leyland Bus Company in
24 Spain wanted to sell some buses to Cuba and we did everything
25 that we could to stop the sale and so forth.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. Well, is that the kind of thing -- that the
2 process worked? Reading the Mongoose files -- and see if this
3 was a fair summary of the process -- there were intensive
4 meetings, frequent meetings and a great deal of pressure to
5 have action occur.
6 Mr. Helms. Mr. Schwarz, I think the record will show
7 if I'm not mistaken that those meetings were attended by very
8 high level members of the government.
9 Mr. Schwarz. And the pressure to have something accom-
10 plished was being put on the Agency in other places of the
11 government by the Attorney General, the Secretary of State,
12 the head of the Defense Department and so forth.
13 Now, at meetings there would be discussions or there was
14 discussion of various plans and options, is that right?
15 Mr. Helms. Yes.
16 The Chairman. Did Mr. Helms attend the meetings of the
17 Special Group Augmented?
18 Mr. Helms. Mr. Chairman, I am sure that I must have. I
19 did not do it with any great regularity, because it is my
20 recollection that normally Mr. McCone was the Director who was
21 a member of the Committee would usually take the task force
22 chief with him to the meetings. I must have attended some of
23 them, certainly, but I was not necessarily a regular
24 attendant.
25 Mr. Schwarz. But at the ones you did attend, there would

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1 be discussions of specific operations and plans, for example,
2 blowing up -- we talked yesterday to sabotage a copper mine or
3 some mine in Cuba. Do you remember that?
4 Mr. Helms. Well I think there were various sabotage
5 operations. I remember one against an electricity plant that
6 was supposed to be, have the web for all of Cuba. And it was
7 a major operation waged against that.
8 Mr. Schwarz. And those specifics were discussed first
9 as plans and then as matters that were authorized, as you
10 understand it, both from attendance at the meeting and your
11 understanding of the meetings?
12 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.
13 Mr. Schwarz, I think to give you -- to not only confirm
14 what you say, but to give you the picture -- this Special
15 Group Augmented was the place that the task force chief and
16 everybody else went to say we're planning this, we're ready to
17 go, we'll go at midnight tomorrow night, no, it's been called
18 off, no, we go back and so forth. So they were in the picture
19 almost on a daily basis.
20 Mr. Schwarz. In detail, and on a daily basis.
21 Mr. Helms. That's right.
22 Mr. Schwarz. Was, to your knowledge, the subject of
23 assassinating Castro authorized in that fashion at any of those
24 meetings?
25 Mr. Helms. I don't know that a plan to assassinate Castro

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1 was authorized in any formal way like that. These schemes --
2 and I call them schemes -- would have taken place in the
3 context of doing what you could to get rid of Castro, and the
4 difficulty with this kind of thing, as you gentlemen are all
5 painfully aware, is that nobody wants to embarrass a President
6 of the United States discussing the assassination of foreign
7 leaders in his presence. This is something that has got to
8 be dealt with in some other fashion.
9 Even though you use euphemisms you've still got a problem
10 and under our system of government, a President is elected for
11 four years normally and he's not like a Prime Minister who
12 can be thrown out on a moment's notice because of something
13 that has gone astray. So that this Special Group was the
14 mechanism that was set up earlier on to use as a circuit
15 breaker so that these things did not explode in the President's
16 face and that he was not held responsible for them.
17 Now when President Eisenhower took responsibility for the
18 U-2 flights, that was on his own -- for the U-2 flights -- that
19 was on his personal option. He wasn't obliged to do that. In
20 other words, he had his mechanism to blame it on, if he wanted
21 to. All those people could be fired.
22 The Chairman. Mr. Helms, this makes it all the more
23 important to recognize in what you saw and in understanding,
24 this makes it all the more important for the Committee to know
25 whether, within the Special Group Augmented which was in charge

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1 of the general effort against the Castro regime and which
2 approved these various schemes whether that group specifically
3 took up the matter of assassinating Castro as such and authorized
4 an assassination of Castro as such?
5 Can you tell us, do you know?
6 Mr. Helms. The only thing I can contribute is what you
7 have here in a document, a discussion which took place in a
8 meeting which I did not attend. And the aftermath of that
9 meeting, if I was aware of what -- what I now learned is that
10 Mr. McCone went to see Mr. McNamara who said --
11 this but that doesn't mean he didn't do it, but I don't recall
12 ever having been told by Mr. McCone that any attempts on Castro's
13 life were out of bounds, they were not to be done. I do not
14 recall this.
15 I must say that Mr. McCone had given me my job, he had
16 promoted me to be Deputy Director of Plans. We had a very
17 good relationship, a very good working relationship. I saw
18 him constantly on a daily basis, I felt warmly toward him, and
19 therefore I would not have done something he asked me not to
20 do. And I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, if I may just while
21 we are at this point, that in my twenty-five years in the
22 Central Intelligence Agency, I always thought I was working
23 within authorization, that I was doing what I had been asked
24 to do by proper authority and when I was operating on my own
25 I was doing what I believed to be the legitimate business of the

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1 Agency as it would have been expected of me.

2 And therefore I don't want to leave in anyone's mind in

3 this room that I ever regarded myself as an unguided missile

4 or that I had authorities or powers that were exercised in my

5 own right. And therefore, whatever things may have occurred,

6 or whatever it may seem in 1975 looks poor on the record, I can

7 only say that I felt that I was acting always under orders,

8 and when I read in the Washington Post the other day, Helms

9 Johnny-on-the-spot, that I always seemed to be around where

10 the illegalities came around, I must say it seemed rather

11 poor.

12 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, we have a live quorum now

13 and I have a question or two in that connection.

14 The Chairman. May I just ask one follow-up question?

15 I personally have never suspected that you operated except

16 as you understood you should within the chain of authority.

17 Our endeavor is to determine as best we can what that chain of

18 authority may have been on the specific matter of assassination.

19 When you say that Mr. McCone, with whom you worked very

20 closely, never told you that assassination was out of bounds or

21 gave you any reason to think that this was so, did that -- or

22 that suggests a corollary question.

23 Did Mr. McCone ever expressly tell you, in so many words,

24 that assassination was within bounds and we should proceed, or

25 the Agency should proceed, with assassination plans?

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1 Mr. Helms. Mr. Chairman, I don't recall his ever having
2 put it in anything as specific as that.
3 The Chairman. I see.
4 Senator Schweiker. Mr. Chairman, just following this
5 point, we have some other documentation or testimony to the
6 effect that on a couple of occasions relating to the Cuban
7 situation, you decided with someone not to brief Mr. McCone on
8 a couple of occasions, and obviously you must have had a good
9 reason or authority for doing that, and I just wondered what
10 that route was and why that happened?
11 Mr. Helms. That is a perfectly good question, Senator
12 Schweiker. I believe what we're talking about was the -- an
13 occasion which shows up in an investigative report that I
14 asked to have made in the Agency in 1967, that Mr. Harvey said
15 we had talked about a plan he had to use a gangster named John
16 Roselli and that I had agreed not to brief Mr. McCone.
17 I frankly don't recall having agreed to this, but since
18 I have no reason to question Mr. Harvey's word either, in this
19 question, I have been going through my surmises since and these
20 are surmises, that Mr. Harvey was the former agent of the FBI.
21 He had served there for many years and he came to me and said
22 he wanted to see what he could determine about Underworld
23 links with Cuba through Roselli since Roselli had been involved
24 with the Agency earlier on in an effort against Cuba in
25 connection with other gangsters and so forth.

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My recollection is that I had very grave doubts about the wisdom of this, but he tried to convince me that he had been in the FBI a long time and handled these matters and so forth. And as I recall it, we had so few assets inside Cuba at that time that I was willing to try almost anything. But the thing did not loom large in my mind at that time. I was enormously busy with a lot of other things, taking over a new job. Mr. McCone was relatively new in the Agency and I guess I must have thought to myself, well this is going to look very peculiar to him and I doubt very much this is going to go anyplace, but if it does, then that is time enough to bring him into the picture.

I believe that's the --

Senator Schweiker. Do you recall any other situations where you might not have briefed Mr. McCone?

Mr. Helms. I don't recall any other situations. As I say, Senator Schweiker, I used to see him every morning. We used to get together after our staff meetings, so we saw each other almost on a daily basis.

Now obviously he didn't need a full briefing on everything that we were doing, but he certainly was up to date on the things he was interested in knowing. I reported to him regularly and Mr. McCone, if I might say so, was a good executive. He knew how to run organizations. There was no doubt about it. And he was an insistent and pretty tough

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1 Chief. So I don't want to get a picture of the man today at
2 age 73 who's still pretty sprightly, but in those days he was
3 mighty sprightly, and he had a mighty glinty blue eye and, if
4 it would divert the Committee at all, when he was really going
5 after you and most seriously he never raised his voice, he
6 never seemed to be the slightest bit irritated, he simply
7 would start the conversation by saying, I am totally dissatis-
8 fied and then he would go on from there.
9 Well, I got totally dissatisfied with Cuba and I got
10 totally dissatisfied with China and there were various others
11 during this period, but we saw each other regularly.
12 And I want to say, Mr. Schweiker, because I don't want to
13 leave any misimpression in your mind, that is my best recreation
14 of something that happened a long time ago, but there was no
15 attempt on my part to keep something from Mr. McCone per se
16 because I told him everything.
17 Senator Schweiker. Again, I gather you felt that what was
18 happening here was in accordance with the Special Group's
19 policy and plans and while you didn't regard it as a feasible
20 alternative, it fell within the framework of what you understo
21 the policy at the time was?
22 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.
23 The Chairman. We'll take a five minute recess for the
24 vote and then we will come back, Mr. Schwarz.
25 (A brief recess was taken.)

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Chairman Church. The hearing will come back to order.

Mr. Schwartz.

Mr. Schwartz. We previously marked three documents relating to Mongoose as Exhibits 1, 2 and 3, and we will come back to those in a moment.

Would you turn, Mr. Ambassador, to Exhibit 5, which is a single piece of paper previously furnished to you, dated May 23, 1967. It is in all of the folders of the Senators. It is a memorandum for the record from J.S. Earman, subject, "Report on Plots to Assassinate Fidel Castro," dated May 23, '67?

Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Earman was Inspector General?

Mr. Helms. Yes, he was. Mr. Earman had previously been Special Assistant to Mr. Allen Dulles and then he was made Inspector General. Unfortunately he is now deceased.

Mr. Schwarz. And you asked him to prepare a report on plots to assassinate Fidel Castro?

Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you do that because of requests you had received from someone else?

Mr. Helms. Yes. My recollection of asking the Inspector General to look into these matters resulted from, I believe, a request from President Johnson. I believe thatthere not only had been at that time a column by Drew Pearson but I

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1 belive that Drew Pearson had spoken privately to the President
2 about the subject mater of that column and the President asked
3 me about the facts and I said, well, I would have to try to
4 ascertain them, and it was a result of that that I asked the
5 Inspector General to get into this matter, and I realized that
6 memory gets very foggy with time but my impression was I asked
7 him to do a good worst case detailed investigation so that when
8 it was finished I could reasonably assure the President of what
9 the facts were.

10 And just to finish this off, I do recall going to the
11 President later after this material had been given to me and
12 briefing him orally about the contents.

13 Mr. Schwarz. The report that was submitted to you you
14 read before going to the President?

15 Mr. Helms. Yes.

16 Mr. Schwarz. And you have a copy of the report in front
17 of you, do you not?

18 Mr. Helms. Is this it here?

19 Mr. Schwarz. It is intended to be a tab relating to Mr.
20 Castro.

21 Mr. Helms. Yes sir. This looks like ti anyway.

22 Mr. Schwarz. The report was, as far as you knew the
23 facts, a good job, an accurate job?

24 Mr. Helms. I don't recall that I went over this report.
25 I noticed that in the early part of the report there are a

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1 couple of notations in my handwriting. I have no recollection
2 anymore of what they were or the reason for them. I believe that
3 I used this report as a fact-finding report. I don't have
4 any recollection of having gone over it in detail for accuracy,
5 particularly, except to the extent this was the best they were
6 able to get out of the various people they interviewed, but
7 it satisfied my requirement because it set in proper perspec-
8 tive the assertions which Drew Pearson was making. It separated
9 them and enabled me to explain to President Johnson what had
10 been going on.
11 Mr. Schwarz. All right, in that connection, Mr. Reporter,
12 would you put in front of Mr. Helms the previously marked
13 Helms Exhibit 6, which are Mr. Helm's handwritten notes, and
14 the previously marked Helms Exhibit 7, which is page 118 from
15 the study.
16 These again are both in the Senators' folders.
17 Page 118 of the study is headed "The Drew Pearson Story?"
18 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.
19 Mr. Schwarz. And it has two columns. It published the
20 details and the facts as we know them?
21 Mr. Helms. Yes sir, I have them now in my hand, Mr.
22 Schwarz.
23 Mr. Schwarz. It is in your folders.
24 Now, turning first to your notes, is it your belief
25 that those notes were prepared in order for you to brief the

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President?

Mr. Helms. Well, at this late date I can't say that with any finality but they must have been for some reason and I think that was probably why I did it. They look like the kind of thing that are those reminders out of a report that you wanted -- a point you particularly wanted to make for some reason or another, which has now long since blown out to sea. But I have no reason not to accept the thesis that maybe this is what these notes were.

Mr. Schwarz. The notes carry the story through mid-63, you will see in the middle of the page of your handwritten notes.

Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you tell, to the best of your recollection, President Johnson that, according to the 1967 study, the efforts to assassinate Fidel Castro had continued into President Johnson's Presidency?

Mr. Helms. I just can't answer that, I just don't know. I can't recall having done so.

What was it -- after he became President? Refresh my memory, if you will. You say they continued into his Presidency? Which episodes were those?

Mr. Schwarz. The AMLASH episode, Mr. Cubela. In any event, the 1967 study indicates that in President Johnson's Presidency efforts were made by the CIA to supply guns to the

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1 Cuban person known as AMLASH, in code, and Cubela in actuality.
2 Mr. Helms. I think I can't point to somebody else whose
3 perceptions might be more accurate than mine. I don't think
4 that one would have approached the AMLASH thing as an
5 assassination plot against Castro. I think that one would have
6 approached that as an extension of our efforts to set up some
7 kind of opposition group to Castro inside Cuba of which Cubela
8 was, I guess, our prime opportunity, and that the pressures,
9 as I recall it, for guns and things of that kind all came from
10 Cubela himself, they didn't come from the Agency. This wasn't
11 something we were trying to set up. This was something Cubela
12 was trying to set up. He hated Castro and wanted to get rid
13 of him.
14 Mr. Schwarz. The Agency facilitated that by helping
15 him get guns; is that right?
16 Mr. Helms. I think the number of people we tried to
17 give guns to in the history of these Cuban operations was
18 multitudinous.
19 Mr. Schwarz. But you did give guns to Mr. AMLASH or --
20 Mr. Helms. If the record shows that we did.
21 Mr. Schwarz. And you just don't remember whether that
22 was disclosed to President Johnson -- it occurred during his
23 Presidency?
24 Mr. Helms. I don't recall it, but I can as I sit here
25 today, I can see why it wouldn't have occurred to me to do it.

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Mr. Schwarz. All right, now, would you look at Exhibit 7, which is the two-column --

Senator Goldwater. Could I ask a question?

Did the CIA ever do anything to try to find where these leaks came from?

Mr. Helms. Which leaks were those?

Senator Goldwater. To Pearson, to be able to write his column.

Mr. Helms. At the time this review was made, Senator Goldwater, and I think that it appears in the back of it someplace, because that is what refreshed my memory -- this is many years later. I am not saying I remember all of these things just cold as that. But from reading this and trying to remember concrete the circumstances of the time, there was an effort made to figure out who might have done this, and I think it may well be that this is one of the reasons I have got these names up in the top of these handwritten notes of mine -- it might have been the lawyer, Ed Morgan, it might be Roselli, it might be Maheu, or Garrison, who was out in Los Vegas, with Maheu and some of the others. In other words, I think that is what this note could very conceivably, the top one, refer to. It was for me to indentify to President Johnson where this might have come from.

Senator Baker. Meaning that you were listing the people who might have had access to this information?

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Mr. Helms. I am sorry, I can't see very well with my glasses.

Mr. Kirbow. He has Exhibit 6.

Mr. Helms. These names here just at the top where the first line is Morgan, Roselli, Maheu, Garrison, March in Las Vegas.

Senator Baker. Yes.

Mr. Helms. At the very top. Those names conceivably could have related to my effort to identify to President Johnson where the leak came from. Underneath I see Morgan, and Jack Anderson, and in those days Jack Anderson was a principle assistant to Drew Pearson, I believe, and he knew Ed Morgan. That was probably a possibility where the information could come from. But I don't know to this date with any accuracy.

Senator Goldwater. Did you ever chase it down?

Mr. Helms. No farther than that, Senator Goldwater.

I want to say that, since you have asked the question, that leaks to newspapers have been an albatross around my neck for so many years and have gotten me obviously by hindsight in more trouble than any other single thing and I don't know of anytime except on one or two occasions when there was really a pretty accurate research of who had done the leaking, but nothing was ever done about it.

Mr. Schwarz. Can we go to the summary headed "The Drew

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Story Published Details and the Facts as We Know Them.

Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

Mr. Schwarz. Exhibit 7.

Mr. Helms. Right.

Mr. Schwarz. And does everybody have that in front of them? It is page 118 of the study. The page is on its side.

All right, now, would you read the summary and state whether it does in fact accurately reflect the facts as you understood them at that point, or as you understand them now?

Mr. Helms. Well, as I look this over I think it is not only simplistic but I don't think it really accurately reflects all of the facts.

I would be hard pressed to tell you in specific instances where it went wrong, but I noticed this business about hired assassins and lone survivor and so forth. I don't recall anybody having any hard information this was the case. I don't know that anybody ever demonstrated those men ever got to Cuba. And the CIA hatched a plot to knock off Castro. I think this is using Drew Pearson's language, if I am not mistaken, because I can't imagine any Inspectors using language like that.

Mr. Schwarz. But the right column is your Inspector's language?

Mr. Helms. That is right. And I think they are doing their best to identify to me in the most simplistic and over-

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simplified terms what their investigation allegedly showed about these Drew Pearson allegations. But as I look at the facts as we know them I think that they, too, are incomplete.

Maybe some of the other witnesses canflesh out some of that for you. But let's, for example, say Roselli informed Harvey presumably on the basis of information from Verona that a team of three men was inside Cuba. That was never demonstrated and I can only say that based on Verona's track record and Roselli's track record, those are not very good witnesses.

Mr. Schwarz. Let's take the pills question, which is under the heading of unpublished details. The unpublished detail, that is the detail which was given to President Johnson informally, by Mr. Pearson. Is that your belief?

Mr. Helms. I guess so. I honestly don't know.

Mr. Schwarz. The first unpublished detail, pills were sent to Cuba for use in the assassination, and your Inspector General's staff said with respect to that, summarizing their investigation, true. At least we were told by Roselli that the pills were sent in during Phase I and again in Phase II.

Phase I was the pre-Bay of Pigs operation, is that right?

Mr. Helms. That is right.

Mr. Schwarz. And Phase II was the operation that occurred or allegedly occurred while you were Deputy Director for Plans: is that right?

Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. Now, is it so that the CIA was told that
2 pills wer sent in during Phase II?
3 Mr. Helms. My recollection of this is that there is
4 pretty good evidence that the pills got as far as Florida; that
5 the evidence is most unsatisfactory they ever went any further.
6 Mr. Schwarz. Did you authorize at least their getting
7 to Florida?
8 The purpose of the pills was to kill Castro?
9 Mr. Helms. I believe they were poison pills and I don't
10 recall necessarily on this day approving them, but since
11 Harvey alleges to have them and says that he took them to
12 Miami, I must have, I must have authorized them in some fashion.
13 Mr. Schwarz. And the study also says that guns were
14 supplied during Phase II for the purpose of assassination of
15 Castro?
16 Mr. Helms. Mr. Schwarz, that Phase II with the Rosselli
17 and Verona so far to me ended up, if I may use the vernacular,
18 zilch. I don't believe that any of these things were done.
19 There was never satisfactory evidence adduced that these people
20 were playing fair with us. They were taking money and all the
21 rest of it. Nothing ever came of it and I am quite prepared
22 to believe to this day it was a cock and bull story.
23 The Chairman. But, Mr. Helms, that really avoids the
24 point. Whether they carried through as they represented they
25 would is quite a --

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Mr. Helms. I realize that is true.

Chairman Church. You did and the CIA did engage them for the purpose of assassinating Castro, and pills were supplied and guns were supplied for that purpose. The fact that they failed to do it or may not have carried through is quite a different question.

Mr. Helms. I understand.

Mr. Schwarz. Let's look at the other item under unpulished details. The item is quotes "There was a meeting at the Department of State at which the assassination of Castro was discussed"-- the conclusion of your Inspector General and his taff was true;"the subject was raised at a meeting at State on 10 August 1962, but it is unrelated to any full attempts to assassination", then they describe the Lansdale memo that we have discussed previously.

But do you agree with their statement of true and that it was unrelated, or not?

Mr. Helms. I just don't know anymore. But there is no reason for me to question the documents, and if the documents indicate that this was the case, I am prepared to accept it.

I think I ought to make a distinction between what I personally remember and what is in the documents; but I have no reason to fight the question.

Mr. Schwarz. As of that time, August '62, Mr. Harvey was under you, he was on your staff?

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1 Mr. Helms. He was under my jurisdiction. In other words,
2 he was a part of the Deputy Director for Plans Office.
3 Mr. Schwarz. And he was specially assigned to Cuba?
4 Mr. Helms. He was head of the task force which was tied
5 into the larger Government Operations under Lansdale.
6 Mr. Schwarz. You knew that he was working with Mr.
7 Roselli, didn't you?
8 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.
9 Mr. Schwarz. Now, Exhibit 2, which was previously put
10 before you, is Mr. Harvey's memo to you of August 14, '62, and
11 it is also in all of the Senator's folders.
12 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.
13 Mr. Schwarz. Now, he refers there to the August 10
14 meeting and to the fact that Mr. Lansdale had issued after
15 that a memorandum which stated that a planning document should
16 be prepared, including in the case of CIA plans for the liqui-
17 dation of leaders, is that correct?
18 Mr. Helms. Yes.
19 Mr. Schwarz. Now, as of August '62, you were aware, as
20 you just testified, that Mr. Roselli and Mr. Harvey were in
21 touch, and Mr. Roselli had been retained for the purpose of
22 accomplishing assassination, is that right?
23 Mr. Helms. Well, I am not cavilling with this but I don't
24 have the record in front of me. I thought by August of '62,
25 any concerted efforts of Roselli had pretty well died, hadn't

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1 they?

2 Mr. Schwarz. No.

3 Mr. Helms. Am I wrong about this? I am just asking for

4 the facts.

5 Mr. Schwarz. The 1967 study demonstrates that Mr.

6 Roselli stayed active, stayed in the employ of the CIA, until

7 June of '63.

8 Mr. Helms. Was he ever --

9 Mr. Schwarz. And stayed active at least until December

10 '62.

11 Mr. Helms. I don't mean to argue with you. Was he ever

12 in the employ or did he agree to work for nothing?

13 Mr. Schwarz. I think you are quite right. He was

14 associated with you.

15 Mr. Smothers. Maybe it would help if we got some feel-

16 ing about what stayed active is?

17 Mr. Helms. I didn't understand.

18 Mr. Smothers. I was saying just to Mr. Schwarz maybe

19 some indication of the perception of stayed active, one

20 helpful to you in your recollection of these events. I am

21 not so sure we know what you mean by that in terms of Roselli's

22 activities.

23 Mr. Schwarz. You want to know those details we ought to

24 look at the study itself.

25 Mr. Smothers. The witness has indicated no recollection

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1 of that.

2 Mr. Helms. I think what I was trying to say, as best I
3 recall this, the Roselli effort petered out and although he
4 stayed associated with Harvey and Harvey was in touch with him,
5 it was not a very long continued active and I use the word
6 active in the sense that the man was pushing, prodding, hauling
7 in efforts to get something done. It didn't seem to me it
8 lasted very long. It was pretty quiescent for quite a long
9 time.

10 Mr. Schwarz. Would you look at page 52 --

11 Mr. Helms. Yes, gladly.

12 Mr. Schwarz. -- of the study. At the bottom of 51 it
13 indicates, referring to the time between September '62 and
14 January '63 -- it states that in December or January '62, '63,
15 Mr. Roselli made a payment of $2700, or payment was made to
16 Mr. Roselli of $2700.

17 Mr. Helms. I am finding the place now. I am sorry,
18 between December and January.

19 Well, then, then it was going on, okay. That clarifies
20 it. Something was going on or alledgedly going on.

21 Mr. Schwarz. Now, to the best of your recollection, at
22 of 1962 meeting of the Special Group that has been discussed,
23 the August 1962 meeting, in which Mr. Lansdale after asking
24 that plans be developed for liquidation of leaders, did Mr.
25 Harvey disclose to the membership of the Special Group, or any

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member of it, that actual efforts were underway to assassinate Castro as opposed to the request to look at that as an option or plan?

Mr. Helms. I don't know. I wasn't at the meeting. I was never told that this occurred. I don't know of any paper that supports it. But I am sure maybe Mr. Harvey will remember.

Mr. Smothers. What was your relationship with Mr. Harvey? Did you select him?

Mr. Helms. I think I did. I think I did. I know that there was some discussion at the time he was selected of trying to find someone who was a hard-hitting officer to head up this Cuban effort, and I certainly, if I didn't, actually was not the one who first suggested it, I certainly approved the selection. I just don't remember anymore. It is likely that I might have picked him. I just don't remember those details. But it is silly of me to say flatly, yes, I selected Harvey because I just don't remember the exact chain of circumstances. But I ceratinly accepted him for the job, which is all your are trying to find out, isn't it?

Mr. Schwarz. Was he working closely with you or was he working more closely with the Director or with Lansdale?

Mr. Helms. No. Before he got this job in charge of the Cuban task force he had been the head of a staff known, as I recall it, Chief of FID, which meant that he was in charge of a staff in the Foreign Intelligence Staff inside it, whose

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100 percent function was to mount operations against embassies and installations of foreign powers overseas, to acquire codes and ciphers by surreptitious entry. That was the one function this staff had.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you know about the so-called Executive Action or the portion of that assignemtn which alledgedly related to a capability to kill or assassinate foreign leaders?

Mr. Helms. Well, in reviewing this, these papers, I noticed that there was something called ZR RIFLE, which established and was referred to as an Executive action capability, which is a pretty fancy title for one man who was to constitute a cpability in being, as I understood it, under Bissell's instruction. If you needed somebody to carry out murder I guess you had a man who might be prepared to carry it out.

Senator Baker. A Presidential hit man?

Mr. Helms. Some kind of hit man.

Mr. Schwarz. Is that something you are reconstructing from having read the record?

Mr. Helms. No, I remember ZR RIFLE thing. I remember more particularly my desire to get this whole idea put to rest and see if we could use that man in some other way usefully, and he was eventually terminated two or three years later. I don't remember his name. I don't remember his nationality. I don't remember the details about him at all. But I don't

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end msl
nash fls

like the whole idea so I finally phased it out.

1 Senator Baker. Could I ask a question, just briefly?

2 Do I understand from the tenor of these remarks that

3 ZRRIFLE really wasn't a big thing in the agency, in your

4 view, and you never thought much of it?

5 Mr. Helms. No.

6 As a matter of fact, it was a tiny little thing and I

7 noticed, Senator Baker, in one of the pages here that Mr. Har-

8 vey said that he got this involved in his mind with some of the

9 things he was trying to do on Cuba. I have no recollection of

10 that whatever.

11 Senator Baker. Mr. Bissell indicated we ought to make

12 a clear distinction between the general effort to "eliminate

13 Castro or dispose of Castro," and the ZRRIFLE effort at

14 assassination of Castro.

15 Mr. Helms. In most minds those lines never crossed.

16 Senator Baker. Sir?

17 Mr.Helms. In my mind those lines never crossed. This

18 man was the ZRRIFLE fellow, I believe, was in Europe.

19 Senator Baker. Thank you.

20 Mr. Schwarz. Maybe this is confusing and you could

21 clear it up.

22 On page 38 of the study it states, after describing

23 executive action -- it states the following -- "The project

24 named ZRRIFLE first appears in the files in May '61, although

25 the first recorded approval is dated February 1962. The new

1 DDP (Helms) on that date authorized Harvey by memorandum to
2 handle the project on a special basis. Accounting for expendi-
3 tures was to be by general category and on Harvey certification.
4 The initial approval was for 14,700, consisting of 7200 for
5 Q. J. Winn's annual salary and 75 for operational expenses".
6 Then, it describes ZRRIFLE as ostensibly to develop
7 capability for entering safes and for kidnapping couriers, that
8 it was separate from the operation against Castro until
9 November 15, '61, and that on that date Harvey discussed with
10 Bissell application of the ZRRIFLE program to Cuba.
11 Now, first, did you, as it says here, authorize Harvey
12 to handle the ZRRIFLE project on a special basis?
13 Mr. Helms. I guess Imust have. But may I explain
14 what I think undoubtedly was involved?
15 In the clandestine services we had a very careful
16 bookkeeping system that all monies had to be allocated against
17 specific projects and by proper authority because, as you
18 Senators will remember, that when the Agency was set up under
19 the National Security Act of 1947, and then later Central
20 Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, there were authorities given
21 to the Director of Central Intelligence for use of unvouchered
22 funds and certification to the use of those funds had to come
23 from the Director by law. And so every Director as far as I know,
24 certainly with Mr. McCone and with me, we had a very care-
25 ful bookkeeping and auditing system inside the Agency to be

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sure when the year was over we knew where almost every single dollar literally had gone during the year, so when we signed the certification this had been used for proper purposes we had some reason to believe it had been used for proper purposes. So, you could have a project of a man getting a salary unless somebody authorized the establishment of the piece of paper which gave the salary and gave the circumstances and so forth and signed off on it.

Normally in most projects there was a clearance procedure but with a sensitive project, and this would have been a sensitive project, there was an exception made to the general rule so that a specific officer could sign off on the use of the money.

Have I made that clear? I want to be sure I have.

sure I have.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you understand ZRRIFLE as having one or two purposes?

Mr. Helms. I don't recall any more.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you understand that it had as one of its purposes a capability to assassinate foreign leaders?

Mr. Helms. Well, I think that Harvey would have played fair with me and said this was something Bissell asked me to set up and we have got it here and here is this man and so forth.

Yes, I don't think there was any doubt about it, but

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1 there is a great deal of difference between establishing a
2 capability and using it.
3 Senator Baker. On that point, though, was it also in the
4 contemplation of the parties, as we lawyers are fond of saying,
5 that ZRRIFLE had a capability for the assassination of Cas-
6 tro?
7 Was that discussed?
8 Mr. Helms. Never that I heard of, Senator Baker, as
9 best I recall these circumstances.
10 In other words, you see, there is a passage in here which
11 says that these two lines cross. This finds no place in my
12 recollection.
13 Senator Baker. Thank you.
14 Senator Schweiker. The point on thephysical lines of
15 authority you just descibed, to pay people under your
16 vouchered system, then would the CIA issue checks to these
17 people or was it done by cash as a rule, or how did that
18 voucher follow-up occur under physical control?
19 Mr. Helms. We did it variously. Sometimes actual
20 cash was passed to a sensitive agent.
21 For example, you might pay him in Indian rupees, then the
22 man who passed the money would sign in the office a certifi-
23 cation under the cryptonym of this operation saying on such and
24 such a day he passed X Indian rupees to agent so-and-so.
25 Senator Schweiker. Who would give him the cash?

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1 Who would dispense that cash?

2 Mr. Helms. In each station overseas there was either
3 a finance officer whose full time job was finance, if
4 it was a large station, or another officer who had a part-
5 time job of keeping the accounts for that station.

6 So, when the auditors went around there was also
7 somebody who could present to them the books for that station
8 of exactly how much money had been expended in the previous
9 month, and we were enormously scrupulous about this thing.

10 I think you will find if you get the auditors from
11 the Agency down you will find a very good job was done on
12 the protection of the funds of the United States.

13 Senator Schweiker. Thank you.

14 The Chairman. All right, Mr. Schwarz.

15 Mr. Schwarz. Would you return again to Exhibit 7, the
16 two-column thing?

17 Mr. Helms. Exhibit 7?

18 Mr. Schwarz. The two-column thing -- Drew Pearson at
19 the top.

20 Mr. Helms. Okay, right.

21 Mr. Schwarz. Now, you have already talked about the
22 first entry which says the CIA had a plot to knock off Castro.
23 Let's talk about the second entry, the published details
24 are Robert Kennedy had approved an assassination plot in the
25 right-hand column. Your staff states not true. He was briefed

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on gambling syndicate phase one after it was over. He was not briefed on phase 2."

Was that correct? Is that correct, as you understand it?

Mr. Helms. I don't know of my knowledge that Robert Kennedy was ever asked to specifically approve an assassination plot. That he was briefed on gambling syndicate phase one is certainly true, and the record shows that.

I don't recall about phase 2. I don't recall briefing him myself on it. Whether anybody else may have briefed him or not I don't know. But out of my resources and my recollection I don't recall his having been briefed on it.

Mr. Smothers. Would it be necessary for him to be briefed on phase 2?

Mr.Helms. I would have thought not, sir.

I think I would probably have a more specific recollection if I had gone and done it.

Mr. Smothers. Are you saying then that he was sufficiently involved in the activities and intentions of Special Group Augmented that he would have known about phase 2?

Mr. Helms. Not necessarily. He might have. He might not have. But I think that Harvey kept phase 2 pretty much in his back pocket.

Mr. Smothers. on Phase 1, then, with respect to what you believe would have been the state of the Attorney General's knowledge, would he have known about the assassination plot,

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1 would this approval have taken place with his concurrence?

2 Mr. Helms. I don'tknow, sir. The phase 1 business is

3 something I had almost nothing to do with and got into

4 rather late in the game and my perceptions would be of no

5 assistance to you, I don't think.

6 The Chairman. These questions are important to the

7 Committee because the documents suggest and the testimony, if

8 you correctly remember it, seems to suggest that when Mr.

9 Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, was informed about phase 1, it was

10 done in the past tense -- the documents bear that out --

11 and phase 1 had in fact been terminated.

12 So, well, the briefing related to that phase of the

13 operation which has been terminated?

14 Mr. Helms. That is right.

15 The Chairman. We don't know whether Robert Kennedy was

16 ever advised of the so-called phase 2 part?

17 Mr. Helms. No, sir, I don't. And I must say that the

18 presumption based on the papers I have seen within the last

19 two or three days, would indicate that he was not, but I

20 don't know this for sure.

21 Senator Goldwater. I am wondering out loud does it

22 make any difference?

23 The Chairman. Well --

24 Senator Goldwater. I think there is a lot to this

25 business of I don't care whether Robert Kennedy ordered it

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1 or Bill Rogers ordered it or knew about it, it is done and gone,
2 and we know I think quite a bit about the total operation.
3 But I don't think it is fair to try to assign by this
4 line of of questioning blame..
5 The Chairman. That isn't the purpose of the questioning,
6 I don't think, Senator. It is to determine how these things
7 worked, what the line of authority may have been, and if it
8 is true that assassination plots can be carried out without
9 the specific knowledge of the highest people in the govern-
10 ment, this Committee ought to know that and we ought to
11 consider whether that is tolerable.
12 That is the reason for the questioning.
13 Mr. Schwarz. Could we pursue --
14 Senator Baker. Before you do I think both Senator
15 Goldwater and you are correct in a way but I think we need to
16 refine that point a little more because I think it will be
17 helpful in our further evaluation of this witness' testimony
18 and our general undertaking.
19 It may be that the facts will not yield up the conclu-
20 sion on whether the President or the Attorney General at any
21 point in time knew of these undertakings. It may be that
22 the most we can do is indulge in conjecture or surmise. We have
23 three alternative possibilities, it seems to me, that are
24 relevant to the inquiry of this committee, and the problems
25 that we will make.

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1 One, the President did know and was preserved in
2 deniability and it cannot be established. I doubt that we
3 reach that conclusion.
4 Two. That we are not sure but that the force of
5 circumstances, operating procedures, intuition, but better
6 still expert testimony from those who were in the committee
7 probably know, it is unlikely someone would have acted without
8 authority or, three, that the CIA was acting on its own in an
9 irresponsible way in matters of extraordinary importance.
10 The Chairman. Yes.
11 Senator Baker. To the extent that we focus on
12 two or three it is important. To the extent we focus on one
13 and try to strain desperately to find out Robert Kennedy or
14 John F. Kennedy knew or didn't know is not important, but I do
15 think it is terribly important to ask Mr. Helms, and with
16 your permission I am going to ask him right now, whether or
17 not in any situation that he knows of in conjunction with any
18 assassination efforts against Fidel Castro, whether ornot
19 he or anyone he knows of in the CIA acted in a way that he
20 would conceive as being beyond their authority and
21 beyond the instructions they received from some authority?
22 Mr. Helms. Sir, I believe to this day that in these
23 actions we were taking against Cuba and against Fidel Castro's
24 government in Cuba, that they were what we had been asked
25 to do.

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1 In other words, we had been asked to get rid of Castro,
2 and as I said a little earlier, there were no limitations
3 put on the monies, and we felt we were acting well within
4 the guidelines that we understood to be in play at this parti-
5 cular time.
6 Senator Baker. Then in view of that answer it seems
7 to me that the further inquiry of this committee, of the
8 further deliberation of this committee at this point
9 ought to be whether or not we ought to at this time even
10 up lines of communication between the ultimate civil author-
11 ity of the U.S. and the intelligence community so there is
12 an expressed and provable line of authority or whether it
13 functions adequately in its present format.
14 Senator Hart of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I am sorry.
15 I was taking a deposition.
16 Mr. Helms. Good morning, Senator Hart.
17 Senator Hart of Michigan. You tell us that it is your
18 impression that nothing done with respect to Castro by the
19 Agency was done without authority.
20 Do I understand that correctly?
21 Mr. Helms. It was done within the guidelines of
22 appropriate authority. In other words, we felt that we were
23 operating as we were supposed to operate, that these things
24 if not specifically authorized at least were authorized in
25 general terms.

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1 Senator Hart of Michigan. I am uneasy with that and
2 not at all critical either.
3 Does it mean that you understood that the highest
4 authorities of government were anxious that the Castro
5 government fall and that in some fashion Castro go away?
6 Mr. Helms. Senator Hart, I think you put it very well.
7 Senator Hart of Michigan. All right.
8 Now, do you assume from that, that being the general
9 authority, that there was nothing you had to check back with,
10 like the sinking of a Soviet ship in Havana harbor, or napalm-
11 ing the island or assassinating Castro?
12 Mr. Helms. Sir, before you came in I was explaining
13 the interrelationship between the operational officials
14 and the Special Group and our efforts to find out if that was
15 satisfactory to run a raid against a refinery or whatever
16 the case might be.
17 In other words, there was a great deal of interplay
18 here for permission, reports on success, reports on failure,
19 and so forth.
20 The Chairman. That is what makes it so puzzling, if
21 I may, Senator Hart, because you say there was a great deal of
22 interplay with respect to certain projects like the attempt
23 against a copper mine or something of that kind. But there
24 appears to have none, no interplay at all we can tie down
25 with respect to the most sensitive project of all, the

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assassination of the Cuban leader.

YOu say with respect to that that you weren't told not to do it and you weren't told in so many words to do it, but you understood that that was within the peramoters of the general policy?

Mr. Helms. Yes.

The Chairman. Now, it is quite hard for me to understand how you go back and check constantly with the Special Group on ordinary sabotage operations but you have apparently no such communication with the Special Group on an assassination plan against the Cuban leader.

Can you explain that?

Mr. Helms. I understand your puzzlement and I don't know whether I can satisfactorily put the matter to rest in your mind. I will do my best.

The item that seems to loom large in this I.G. report is the use of John Roselli in phase 2.

As I testified earlier this morning, as best I can recall the circumstances at the time, I did not have much hope for what Roselli might be able to do but I was prepared to have Harvey work with him to see if there were lines that the underworld had into Cuba.

Now, I realized that even in retrospect the poisoned pills look very bad and I must say that they don't look very good to me today as I look at them. But I have to say

in all fairness and honesty that in the perceptions of the time people were losing their lives in raids, a lot of people had lost their lives at the Bay of Pigs, agents were being arrested left and right and put before the wall and shot, and that, therefore, this operation of Roselli's with the pills would seem to me to be a very feeble operation under the best of circumstances and indeed turned out to be one.

Frankly, at the time it didn't loom large and that is not because I don't have any moral judgment or because I am a cynical know-nothing, it was simplybecause in the perceptions of the time and the things we were trying to do this was one human life against many other human lives that were being lost.

The Chairman. Even in the perception of the times, when you engaged elements of the Mafia to perform and operation for the CIA, that if it had worked out as hoped would have resulted in the assassination of Castro, then you tell us that you didn't bring it to the attention of Mr. McCone because you didn't think that it was that important, and that he had any particular need to know about it.

That strikes me as being very strange. I should think that if there was one thing that the Director of the CIA did have need to know would be a connection with the Mafia.

Mr. Helms. Well, sir --

The Chairman. As you know --

1 Mr. Helms. Mr. Chairman, let me say that there had
2 already been one connection with it which unfortunately I
3 say that you say this is all strange. I agree it sounds strange
4 and I regret it and I think that at a different time and
5 under different circumstances I would have wanted no
6 relationship with the Mafia, but as I say, we were struggling
7 very hard in those days to find anybody that had any connec-
8 tions into Cuba and this was just one that I just didn't
9 feel I could say 100 percent no to until it demonstrated there
10 was no such connections.
11 They never developed, they never turned into anything.
12 The whole thing went down the rat hole. But I must say that
13 in the hindsight of 1975, and even at that time, I regret
14 it very much. That is all. But I can't give any
15 other explanation than the one I have given you. It is the
16 only one I have got.
17 Senator Mathias. When Mr. Bissell was here I think I
18 asked him whether the job of communicating with superior
19 authority was one of protecting superior authority, and
20 specifically the President, protecting him from knowledge and
21 at the same time informing him, which is a difficult and
22 delicate job, and he agreed that that was really the diffi-
23 culty.
24 And you this morning have said that in advising a
25 President or very high authority of any particular delicate

subject, that resort was had to you euphemism.

Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

Senator Mathias. Now, what emerges, and I want to satisfy if my perception of this is right what emerges is leadership within the Agency of men who knew each other very well, who could communicate virtually without words. Is that correct?

Mr. Helms. That is correct.

Senator Mathias. And to take a case in point, Mr. Bissell and Mr. Allen Dulles, as an example, was it generally considered that Mr. Bissell was Mr. Dulles' heir apparent in the period '60-61?

Mr. Helms. That is an interesting question. I hadn't thought about that for a long time but I wouldn't be surprised if you are correct. I think there was some talk about that.

Senator Mathias. Perhaps what is more important, did Mr. Dulles and Mr. Bissell consider they had that relationship?

Mr. Helms. I think they did.

Senator Mathias. And living in that kind of a relationship to each other, did they have a sort of confidential relationship in which they could share things almost without words?

Mr. Helms. I wouldn't be surprised.

Senator Mathias. And was it in fact probably the way that they communicated on subjects such as the one the Chairman

has raised, the question of an assassination, potential in general and specific assassination attempt on Castro?

Mr. Helms. I think that Allen Dulles did know about that Mafia thing. I think his Deputy Cabell knew about it, too, didn't he? I think so.

Senator Mathias. Obviously this is not the kind of subject that urbane and civilized men would particularly want to dwell on, and so they spoke about it as little as possible?

Mr. Helms. That is ceratinly true. I don't think that even in the perceptions of the times with all the pressures and so forth that the moral drawers of the people involved were dropped. I think we were just trying to get on with a very toubh job and there were certain aspects of it we didn't like at all, but I realize that the Chairman's problem here about this matter is a real one and I wish that I could come up with something more specific about actually recalled conversations, but I don't remember them. On the other hand, you see, I don't hve any recollection either that I was being delinquent here. I was inflagrante delicto,or whatever it is. I thought I was getting on with the job and may I say that --

Senator Mathias. If I can proceed with a couple more points.

This sort of doctrine of plausible denial which was perceived to be, and I assume is still perceived to be the operational doctrine in the Agency to protect Presidents, we

have explored how Mr. Bissell and Mr. Dulles might have communicated without words. How about how, to your knowledge, did Mr. Dulles communicate in those serious matters with President Eisenhower?

Mr. Helms. I think that probably Mr. Dulles dealt with these matters the way I subsequently did when I became Director and dealt with them, which was to discuss with the President something you felt you couldn't discuss with anybody else, then discuss with his immediate assistants those things which seemed to be proper for them to help you out with, go to the Secretary of State when you needed him, go to the Secretary of Defense when you needed him, and Mr. Dulles did go to Andy Goodpaster when he could be of help, or Gordon Gray when you thought he was one who would be of assistance. And my recollection of Mr. Dulles is that being the astute gentleman he was I think he kept his lines clear all over town. As best I recall it, I think there was a time when he didn't have these lines so clear with some Senators about some missiles, but other than that I think hekept his lines pretty clear.

Senator Mathias. Do you think he had the capacity to communicate directly with President Eisenhower on anything he felt the President had to know?

Mr. Helms. No question about it.

Senator Mathias. How about the Kennedy brothers?

Mr. Helms. Well, I think that Mr. Dulles had -- well,

I think Directors have always had access to the President if they want to insist on it. I think there has grown up a little bit of an impression that this is not the case, but each Director has to decide how he is going to work for the President and the President obviously is the first one to decide how he is going to do it. Then you get into a course of dealing and I think every person that works in the Executive Branch becomes aware of the enormous burden on a President's time, so you don't take things to him that you really don't think you have just got to take to him, but Mr. McCone, I don't know how much he saw President Kennedy, but I think he saw a good deal of the Attorney General both professionally and socially.

Senator Mathias. Maybe it is even more important to explore how President Kennedy and Attorney General Kennedy would want to express themselves in these delicate areas.

To your knowledge, did they have any inhibitions in talking to either Mr. Dulles or Mr. McCone?

Mr. Helms. Not that I ever heard of. In fact, I used to go to the Attorney General with specific intelligence problems on which I needed assistance. I used to deal with him directly. He was very accessible.

Senator Mathias. And direct?

Mr. Helms. And very direct.

Senator Mathias. You didn't need to use your euphemisms?

Mr. Helms. Mr. Chairman, may I go off the record for just one second?

Chairman Church. Surely.

Mr. Helms. This has nothing to do with your inquiry.

(Discussion off the record)

Senator Mathias. You have already described to some extent how you dealt personally with President Johnson.

Was there ever any doubt in your mind that you weren't getting through to President Johnson or that he wasn't getting through to you in a clear way?

Mr. Helms. No sir. In the first few months that I was Director I had a bit of a problem as to how I was going to communicate with President Johnson, but as a result of some circumstances surrounding the June War of 1967 I began to see him quite regularly because I became a member of what was known as the Tuesday Luncheon Group and when I did not see him there, which was a small group where one had opportunity if necessary to speak to him privately, I saw him frequently in National Security Council meetings and also meetings having to do with the Middle East, with Vietnam, and things of that kind. So that I heard, I think I was quite familiar with President Johnson's views, in answer to your question.

Senator Mathias. And he with yours?

Mr. Helms. Yes sir, I believe so.

Senator Mathias. How about President Nixon?

TOP SECRET

Mr. Helms. My dealings with President Nixon were not frequent at all. I dealt with him almost entirely through Mr. Kissinger, who was his Assistant for National Security Affairs. I used to see President Nixon in the National Security Council meetings but I think the number of private talks, including having some staff member there during the time that I served him, could be counted on the fingers of one hand, I doubt it came even to the end of the fingers of one hand.

Senator Mathias. Did you as a result of this lack of personal access ever have any question about whether the policy you were executing was in fact Presidential policy?

Mr. Helms. I didn't have any doubts about it, Senator Mathias, because Dr. Kissinger and General Haig were both very articulate fellows and they were able to get these views across, and when on two or three rather important occasions President Nixon in National Security Council meetings told me what he wanted done on certain things in front of the others, that made it very clear, so I never had the feeling that because there was a different relationship with President Nixon I didn't know what he wanted. I felt I did know what he wanted.

Senator Mathias. Did Presidents indulge in euphemisms as well as Directors?

In this connection, historically, you can think of

TOP SECRET

Mr. Helms. I don't know. I found in my experience that Presidents used the entire range of the English language from euphemisms on the one extreme to very explicit talk on the other.

Senator Mathias. Let me draw an example from history. When Thomas A Beckett was proving to be an annoyance, as Castro, the king said who will rid me of this man. He didn't say to somebody go out and murder him. He said who will rid me of this man, and let it go at that.

Does that kind of --

Mr. Helms. That is a warming reference to the problem.

Senator Mathias. You feel that spans the generations and the centuries?

Mr. Helms. I think it does, sir.

Senator Mathias. And that is typical of the kind of thing which might be said, which might be taken by the Director or by anybody else as Presidential authorization to go forward?

Mr. Helms. That is right. But in answer to that, I realize that one sort of grows up in tradition of the time and I think that any of us would have found it very difficult to discuss assassinations with a President of the United States. I just think we all had the feeling that we were hired out to keep those things out of the Oval Office.

Senator Mathias. And yet at the same time you felt that some spark had been transmitted, that that was within the

the permissible limits?

Mr. Helms. Yes; and if he had disappeared from the scene they would not have been unhappy.

Senator Baker. Do you think that is good practice or bad practice?

Senator Goldwater. It is the only practice.

Mr. Helms. Senator Baker, that is an awfully hard question to answer.

Senator Baker. Isn't that what we are up against?

Mr. Helms. I think it is what you are up against and I think in a Christian country like the United States of America which is a Democracy, and so forth, this question of killing people is a prime moral issue.

The Chairman. That indeed is the ultimate question. The techniques are secondary.

Mr. Helms. A prime moral issue and, therefore, I think that if it comes to be felt by this Committee or otherwise that things like this and perception of the present day should be put on a different plain or handled in a different manner, I could find no objection.

Senator Hart of Colorado. Mr. Ambassador, several paragraphs back, prior to Senator Mathias' questions, you used a term twist, the term guidelines. That seems to me to be a fairly specific term.

In the period of '61-62 that we are dealing with here,

what wre those guidelines and where did they come from. Try to tie this philosophical discussion down a little more closely?

Mr. Helms. Well, sir, I think that, as we were saying a bit earlier, and I think, sir, before you came in, the general effort in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs and then in the latter part of that -- let me start again, because you were not here to go through this.

Senator Hart of Colorado. I think I have been here all morning.

Mr. Helms. But this was very early on. Well, anyway, I am sorry. I got Senator Hart confused, I am sorry.

The general injunction was to get rid of Castro.

Senator Hart Of Colorado. That came from the Oval Office of the White House?

Mr. Helms. Well, it certainly came to me who was down in the organization from what I would have regarded as constituted athority. In other words, it came down the proper chain, if you want to put it that way, from my Director to the man above me and to me.

Senator Hart of Colorado. Get rid of Castro?

Mr. Helms. Yes sir. As I said earlier, there were no limitations put on the means. And the effort to do that was presided over by this Special Group, Special Group Augmented, which I explained earlier.

1 Senator Hart of Colorado. Yes.

2 Mr. Helms. And when I used the word guidelines,
3 unfortunately I am not a lawyer and sometimes I get into words
4 that convey different meanings to lawyers than they do to us
5 lay folks. I am just referring to the kind of thing you saw
6 in this memorandum of General Lansdale's that here we are going
7 to do psychological warfare, political, military, economic and
8 so forth. That was what I was referring to as guidelines.

9 Senator Hart of Colorado. But you would admit, and even
10 though I thinkwe have established, the Chairman has established
11 that the purpose of this Committee is not to find a smoking
12 gun or point a finger at a villain, what we are after is how
13 these things get started, how they are directed and controlled,
14 and whether, as Senator Mathias was pursuing, whether people
15 at the top want to know specifically what is happening. But
16 the Buck does have to stop somewhere in terms of carrying out
17 what is the explicity purpose of a mission. Orders to be given,
18 contracts have to be signed, money has to be authorized.
19 Somebody has to do those things. And I think that is what we
20 are all trying to pin down, at this time, under those
21 circumstances, who was doing those things.

22 And I think the counsel may have been touching one point
23 or another on the $100,000, for example, to the Mafia contacts.

24 Mr. Helms. $150,000? Which era was this?

25 Mr. Schwarz. That was the amount of money authorized

1 for Phase I. Not in fact paid but authorized.

2 Senator Hart of Colorado. This was a time when the

3 Ambassador was occupying?

4 Mr. Schwarz. Second in command to Mr. Bissell.

5 Mr. Helms. I know nothing about that operation so I

6 don't know how it was funded. This is why I was asking. I

7 wanted to get straight in my own mind what some of this money

8 was.

9 Senator Hart of Colorado. That is all.

10 Mr. Helms. May I contribute something, please?

11 The Chairman. Yes, certainly.

12 Mr. Helms. As a result of my experiences through the

13 years, when I became Director I had made up my mind that this

14 option, if you want to put it that way, of killing foreign

15 leaders, was something that I did not want to happen on my

16 watch. My reasons for this were these:

17 There are not only moral reasons but there are also some

18 other rather practical reasons.

19 1. It is almost impossible in a Democracy to keep

20 anything like that secret. If you will examine human behavior

21 you will find that the toughest nut one day six years later

22 may become just a weakling running for cover, looking for

23 assistance somewhere. I think it would be almost impossible,

24 if I may put it that way, to keep such a thing secret for any

25 protracted length of time. Somebody would go to a Congressman,

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his Senator, he might go to a newspaper man, whatever the case may be, but it just is not a practical alternative, it seems to me, in our society.

Then there is another consideration which comes into this. That if you are going to try by this kind of means to remove a foreign leader, then who is going to take his place running that country, and are you essentially better off as a matter of practice when it is over than you were before? And I can give you I think a very solid example of this which happened in Vietnam when President Diem was eliminated from the scene. We then had a revolving door of prime ministers after that for quite some period of time, during which the Vietnamese Government at a time in its history when it should have been strong was nothing but a caretaker government, constantly. In other words, that whole exercise turned out to the disadvantage of the United States.

So when one looks at the scope of this thing this is why I am contributing the time. After all there is no sense in my sitting here with all the experience I have had and not sharing with the Committee my feelings this day. It isn't because I have lost my cool, or because I have lost my guts, it simply is because I don't think it is a viable option in the United States of America these days.

Chairman Church. Doesn't it also follow, Mr. Helms -- I agree with you what you have said fully -- but doesn't it

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also follow on the practical side, apart from the moral side, that since these secrets are bound to come out, when they do, they do very grave political damage to the United States and the world at large? I don't know to what extent the Russians involved themselves in political assassinations, but under their system they at least have a better prospect of keeping it concealed. Since we do like a free society and since these secrets are going to come out in due course, the revelation will then do serious injury to the good name and reputation of the United States.

Would you agree with that?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I would.

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes, I would.

2 The Chairman. And finally, if we reserve to ourselves the
3 prerogative to assassinate foreign leaders, we may invite
4 reciprocal action from foreign governments who assume that if
5 it's our prerogative to do so, it is their prerogative as well,
6 and that is another danger that we at least invite with this
7 kind of action, wouldn't you agree to that?

8 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

9 The Chairman. And in that connection, going back to this
10 same Drew Pearson story on Exhibit 7 --

11 Mr. Helms. Yes, I have it here.

12 The Chairman. I call your attention to the item in the
13 middle of the page where Pearson asserted, "Castro learned
14 enough at least to believe the CIA was seeking to kill him.
15 He is reported to have cooked up a counterplot against
16 President Kennedy," and then on the facts as the IG report
17 summarizes them, we read, "This reportedly has come out in the
18 Garrison investigations. It also was stated by Castillo in
19 the Philippines under direct interrogation. We have no inde-
20 pendent confirmation of any sort. Note that Garrison met with
21 Roselli in Los Vegas in March, 1967."

22 Our testimony to date indicates that Castro did learn of
23 these assassination attempts. Now just exactly what he learned
24 is not entirely clear but the fact is that he did learn, and
25 this of course always raised the suspicion of whether he was

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1 thus furnished with a motive to strike back.

2 Well, who has -- Senator Morgan?

3 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, I cannot believe, sir, that

4 there couldn't be some commenatary from the witness on a matter

5 of such grave sensitivity as you just suggested.

6 The Chairman. Do you have any comment?

7 Mr. Helms. I have no comment, because I have never had

8 brought to my attention any convincing evidence that Castro did

9 have a plot against any of our leaders.

10 The Chairman. Yes.

11 Senator Baker. Any convincing evidence?

12 Mr. Helms. Well, see here, this might be called evidence

13 on this sheet of paper, and if you say evidence, I say any

14 convincing evidence.

15 Senator Baker. Do you have any other nonconvincing

16 evidence?

17 Mr. Helms. No.

18 Senator Baker. But quite apart from the evidence, and I

19 think the Committee is without any such evidence, my comment

20 went to motive only. I found it extraordinary when Mr. McCone

21 testified that the CIA did not supply the Warren Commission with

22 information relating to its own assassination attempts against

23 Castro, which attempts preceeded the assassination of

24 President Kennedy.

25 Can you enlighten us in any regard with respect to

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1 why --

2 Mr. Helms. No, sir.

3 The Chairman. -- these disclosures were not made to the

4 Warren Commission?

5 Mr. Helms. If you want me to make a surmise, Mr. Chairman,

6 I would be glad to try that, but I have no independent recol-

7 lection of why.

8 The Chairman. You did not participate in that decision?

9 Mr. Helms. No. My job with respect to the Warren

10 Commission was to answer inquiries from the Commission and try

11 to get together the material that they needed for their inves-

12 tigation and I spent a great deal of time on this, but I don't

13 remember the question arising about our own operations and

14 their effect on these matters. But somehow there lingers --

15 The Chairman. Well, can you tell us why that lingers, even

16 if you must surmise why the CIA didn't feel obliged to volunteer

17 information of this kind that does run to the question of

18 motive to the Commission that was investigating the assassina-

19 tion of the American President?

20 Mr. Helms. Well, there was such -- I mean, after all,

21 the Castro government in Cuba and the Kennedy government in

22 the United States, had been at daggers drawn over the Cuban

23 missile crisis and it was fully public information that there

24 was absolutely no love lost between the two. The Bay of Pigs

25 had been attempted, Castro was certainly aware of that. He

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1 was aware of all the circumstances surrounding the missile
2 crisis and as I say, I don't know whether he became aware of
3 any plots to get rid of him, but he must have known that this
4 was going on nonstop among Cuban exiles and backed by the
5 United States government.

6 As I said, his Soviet intelligence advisors were running a
7 pretty good line into the Cuban exile community in Florida and
8 I'm sure they must have known pretty well what was going on.
9 So having said that, that contributes to the temper of the
10 time, and when the Warren Commission's investigation was going
11 on, I had the impression and there are a lot of the staff
12 around who could confirm or straighten it out, that the Warren
13 Commission was well aware of efforts to get rid of Castro and
14 that this was taken into consideration in their deliberations.

15 The Chairman. Senator Morgan?

16 Senator Morgan. Mr. Chairman, I have two or three
17 matters.

18 Mr. Helms. Good morning, Senator Morgan.

19 Senator Morgan. Let me -- Mr. Helms, you were getting
20 material together for the Warren Commission, you say, and at
21 that time you knew of the assassination plots that had been
22 against Castro, did you not?

23 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

24 Senator Morgan. And you did not think it important to
25 give that to the Warren Commission?

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1 Mr. Helms. Well, Senator Morgan, I was not the Director
2 at that time.
3 Senator Morgan. Well you were gathering material.
4 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir; I was following about orders and
5 requests and I was asked to get together this material but I
6 certainly was not asked to go and testify before the Commission.
7 Senator Morgan. But I'm asking you now if you were
8 gathering the material and you had known for about three years
9 that there were assassination plots and yet you did not think
10 it important to give this material to the Warren Commission.
11 That is correct, isn't it?
12 Mr. Helms. Well, the way you phrase the question, you
13 say I didn't think it was important, I am not trying to fence
14 with you, sir, I am trying to put the circumstances as I
15 understood them at the time. I don't recall that I was A,
16 either instructed or it occurred to me to cover with the
17 Warren Commission the precise details of the Agency's operations
18 not because I made a significant judgment not to do this, but
19 as I said just a moment ago, my recollection at the time was
20 that it was public knowledge that the United States was trying
21 to get rid of Castro.
22 Senator Morgan. Well, you know, Mr. Ambassador, I don't
23 want to argue with you, but this is what disturbs me about
24 your testimony is that you assume, you thought it was public
25 knowledge, we never can pin anything down. And you were not ...

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1 that time just an employee of the CIA. You were in the top
2 echelon, the management level, were you not?
3 Mr. Helms. Yes, I was, Senator Morgan.
4 Senator Morgan. And you had been a part of the assassina-
5 tion plots against Castro?
6 Mr. Helms. Well, you know --
7 Senator Morgan. Well this much is true. Is that true,
8 that part? You were -- in that regard, you participated?
9 Mr. Helms. I was aware that there had been efforts made
10 to get rid of him by these means.
11 Senator Morgan. And you were charged with furnishing
12 the Warren Committee information from the CIA, information you
13 thought was relevant?
14 Mr. Helms. No, sir. I was instructed to reply to
15 inquiries from the Warren Commission for information from the
16 Agency. I was not asked to initiate any particular thing.
17 Senator Morgan. Well what I understood you to say to
18 give information. In other words, you weren't asked for it,
19 you didn't give it?
20 Mr. Helms. That's right, sir.
21 Senator Morgan. You know also, as one of the leaders of the
22 CIA, that Oswald had called the Cuban Embassy in Mexico shortly
23 before the assassination?
24 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, we provided that information.
25 Senator Morgan. You provided that, but did you not then

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1 think it was necessary for you to come forward with this
2 other information that there had been assassination plots?
3 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, I'm sorry, I didn't.
4 Senator Morgan. No one followed up on the telephone calls,
5 or the information that Oswald had contacted the Cuban Embassy
6 beyond the information that was supplied to you by some other
7 government?
8 Mr. Helms. I don't know sir, anymore, but I thought at
9 the time Oswald's visit in Mexico City had been investigated to
10 the maximum extent possible both by the FBI and the CIA.
11 Senator Morgan. Mr. Helms, this is the thing that
12 bothers me. Everybody seems to think this, or presume this.
13 Is there anyone who would know whether or not it had been
14 investigated, beyond just --
15 Mr. Helms. Yes. I think Mr. Rankin, who was the Chief
16 Counsel of the Warren Commission would know.
17 Senator Morgan. I'm talking about the CIA following up
18 on Oswald's call.
19 Mr. Helms. Well, it might be possible to find out who was
20 the chief in Mexico City at that time, and the extent to which
21 he actually did these jobs. I think with the degree of
22 specificity which you raised, and quite properly, I think you
23 would have to get someone who was actually physically present
24 at the time, and I don't recall anymore who was our Chief of
25 Station in Mexico.

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1 Senator Morgan. Well, Mr. Ambassador, I will ntate my
2 concern and then go on to my other two questions.
3 It concerns me that the CIA knew that Oswald had called
4 the Cuban Embassy and that this information was furnished to
5 the Warren Commission, but as far as I have been able to
6 ascertain from questioning others, there was no effort made on
7 the part of the CIA or anyone else to pursue Oswald's call
8 beyond the fact that we received some information
9 that they had intercepted a telephone call, which --
10 certainly he was not going to say anything on the telephone of
11 any consequence. And then knowing that, that if the Warren
12 Commission was never furnished information about the Castro
13 assassination plot, I am not one who seen a bugger behind ever-
14 tree and I have never questioned the Warren Commission's
15 finding until this information comes out, and I think somehow
16 that we need to pin that down.
17 You have said three things this morning that disturb me.
18 You said you understood that you were to get rid of Castro and
19 that was your understanding.
20 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.
21 Senator Morgan. Then you said there were no limitations
22 put on the means.
23 That seems to imply to me that murder or assassination
24 was an accepted means when you said there were no limitations
25 put on the means. Is that the way you understood it?

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1 Mr. Helms. That is the way I understood it.

2 Senator Morgan. And that had been in the past been an

3 accepted practice of getting rid of anyone unwanted?

4 Mr. Helms. Well, I don't recall, sir, any comparable

5 effort, at least during my time, to change another government.

6 Certainly there were changes at times and there were operations

7 affecting changes, but I don't recall anything that was

8 comparable in its effort.

9 Senator Morgan. But, sir, it seems to me that there were

10 no limitations put on the means, that you imply that assassina-

11 tion was an accepted practice.

12 Mr. Helms. Well, Senator Morgan, I am not a lawyer. Let

13 me rephrase what I was trying to get across.

14 I was not to the best of my recollection, ever instructed

15 not to do some specific thing with respect to the injunction

16 to get rid of Castro.

17 I realize there are a lot of things that would have been

18 implausible within the range of rational sense, that one would

19 not try, so I didn't mean by phrasing it that way that I would

20 drop an atomic bomb or do something silly like that. I was

21 simply trying to get across the fact that nobody ever told me

22 that raids and providing guns and putting in people to try and

23 get rid of the whole operation of Castro wasn't a perfectly

24 legitimate way. In fact, I understand it was.

25 Senator Morgan. In fact you understood it was?

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes.

2 Senator Morgan. Why did you understand it was?

3 Mr. Helms. Because I was asked to get rid of him.

4 Senator Morgan. And to get rid of him, you understood that

5 to mean that killing would be an acceptable way?

6 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

7 Senator Morgan. Well, let me tie it in, Mr. Chairman, with

8 one final question. I won't impose on the Committee's time any

9 more.

10 In light of your previous statement that this is a

11 Christian country and that this Committee has to face up to the

12 prime moral issue of whether or not killing is an acceptable

13 way, I believe you said words essentially to that effect.

14 In light of that statement, and that that statement was true

15 at the time, don't you think it would have taken affirmative

16 permission or authority to kill rather than just saying it was

17 not eliminated from the authority or you were not restricted

18 by that?

19 This is a thing that concerns me about the CIA. The thing

20 that I want to know is, is killing a part of the CIA's

21 normal activities? If it is, then I think the American public

22 may want to abolish it.

23 If you were carrying out specific authority from higher

24 up then I think I would look at it in a different light.

25 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, killing was not part of the CIA's

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policy. It was not part of the CIA's armory. As a matter of fact, I don't know of anybody that was killed by the CIA in the sense that you speak about it, where somebody went out and actually killed a human being starting from here to get to the individual.

I won't say that in some of the limited wars in Southeast Asia people weren't killed, but in this Castro operation, and I realize you are pressing me very hard, and I accept this, I have testified as best I could about the atmosphere of the time, what I understood was desired, and I don't want to take refuge in saying that I was instructed to specifically murder Castro, but that this was getting rid of Castro, if he had been gotten rid of by this means that this would have been accepted or acceptable to certain individuals, maybe not to the country at large, I don't know. But I wasn't running these things in those days and I was just doing my best to do what I thought I was supposed to do.

Senator Morgan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't pursue it further.

The Chairman. Senator Hart?

Senator Hart of Colorado. Just one question. I just might observe for the record on the last issue there were four that have been discussed, Trujillo, Lumumba, Diem and Castro. We're three for four, so whether we did it ourselves or not, three of them met rather violent deaths.

1 During your watch as either Deputy Director of Plans or
2 Deputy Director of the CIA or as Director of CIA, there were
3 a number of troubling political leaders around the world, and
4 I'm going to name several and in the case of each of them, I
5 wish you would consider whether you, during this time, in any
6 of those three capacities you've participated in, overheard,
7 speculated about or participated in gossip concerning the
8 possible assassination of any of them, Mr. Sukarno, Mr. Nasser,
9 Mr. DeGaulle, Mr. Allende, Mr. Arafat, Mao Tse-Tung?
10 Mr. Helms. I don't recall discussing assassination of
11 any of them.
12 Senator Hart of Colorado. Or overhearing anyone else
13 discussing the assassination?
14 Mr. Helms. No, sir, not to the best of my recollection,
15 did not.
16 The Chairman. It looks like we're not going to finish
17 this morning with the questioning. Could you come back at
18 2:00 o'clock, Mr. Helms?
19 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.
20 The Chairman. That will give us a chance to get some
21 lunch.
22 Senator Hart, I think?
23 Senator Hart of Michigan. I just wanted to clear up,
24 Mr. Ambassador, an earlier comment of yours. It has to do
25 McCone and Phase II and Harvey.

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1 Now, my notes have it you said that you did not tell
2 McCone about Phase II because you really were letting Harvey
3 go off on a mission that didn't have any prospect of success.
4 Mr. Helms. Well, Senator Hart, may I just refine that a
5 little bit?
6 I honestly didn't recall that Mr. McCone was not informed
7 and when I was told that there was evidence that he wasn't
8 informed, I was trying to scratch my head as to why I didn't
9 tell him at the time and my surmises are the best I can come
10 up with. I am really surprised I did not discuss it with
11 him at the time. My relations with him were good, and so my
12 surmises are just the best I'm able to do in 1975 over an
13 episode that took place that many years ago.
14 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, would the Senator yield?
15 Is it your impression that you did tell him?
16 Mr. Helms. No, it isn't my impression that I told him, at
17 least I don't have any impression, unfortunately. This is
18 blank.
19 Senator Baker. Go ahead.
20 Senator Hart of Michigan. There is a note in the
21 Inspector General's file there, page 11, that "Harvey added
22 when he briefed Helms on Roselli he obtained Helms' approval
23 not to brief the Director."
24 Do you find that? It's at the very bottom.
25 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir, that is the sentence to which I

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1 referred.

2 Senator Hart of Michigan. What is your present memory

3 of this session?

4 Mr. Helms. That's what I meant.

5 Senator Hart of Michigan. All right, you've explained

6 it.

7 What motive would Harvey have had, to your surmise, to state

8 as he has?

9 Mr. Helms. Asking me to do it and to get my agreement,

10 you mean?

11 Senator Hart of Michigan. That you agreed that the

12 Director not being informed.

13 Mr. Helms. In other words, what was his motive for asking

14 that? I don't recall that. I believe he's going to testify

15 before this Committee, isn't he, in which event maybe he recalls

16 or has some notes from the time. I'm sorry, sir, I don't

17 remember what his motive was.

18 The Chairman. But you have no reason to think that if this

19 is in fact his testimony that it was not the case?

20 Mr. Helms. I don't think it was, Senator. I think that

21 must have had something to do with, you know, the conditions at

22 the time or something.

23 Senator Hart of Michigan. Well, my point -- this is a

24 minor point, but if you thought you had authority to go from

25 hell to breakfast in terms of getting rid of Castro, what was

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1 the concern about keeping McCone in the dark?

2 Mr. Helms. I think -- Senator Hart, I think Harvey will

3 be able to clear this up better than I, but I think that it

4 probably would have had to do with the fact that it was a

5 Mafia connection and Mr. McCone was relatively new to the

6 organization and this was, you know, not a very savory effort.

7 And it wasn't -- I mean, I am not seeking refuge and saying that

8 this was a good idea. As I said a moment ago, I very much

9 regret the whole exercise.

10 Senator Schweiker. Mr. Chairman, I'll wait until we get

11 back.

12 The Chairman. All right.

13 We'll adjourn until 2:00 o'clock this afternoon.

14 (Whereupon, at 12:48 o'clock p.m., the Committee recessed

15 to reconvene at 2:00 o'clock p.m. the same day.)

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AFTERNOON SESSION

(2:05 p.m.)

Senator Hart of Michigan. The Committee will be in order.

I believe that Mr. Schwarz may have questions.

Did any member of the Committee care to direct any questions to the Ambassador at this time?

Senator Baker. A little later.

Senator Hart of Michigan. Mr. Schwarz?

TESTIMONY OF RICHARD HELMS -- Resumed

Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Ambassador, I would like to see if we could get all in one place the testimony concerning Mr. McCone.

Now, as I heard the testimony this morning, you had four explanations for why you might not have briefed Mr. McCone about the efforts to assassinate Mr. Castro. Let's see if we could discuss each one of them in turn. Can we do that?

Mr. Helms. Surely.

Mr. Schwarz. All right.

I think your first explanation, your first testimony on it was that the matter was only exploratory, or that it wasn't clear that anything was actually going to happen.

Mr. Helms. I believe that. Yes, that certainly is part of it.

Mr. Schwarz. Now, if you would look at the study on page 49 --

Mr. Helms. Yes, I'm at page 49.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. Now, that is a long section that comes
2 under the heading, April, 1962. That heading is on page 41,
3 just so we're sure what time we're talking.
4 Mr. Helms. Yes.
5 Mr. Schwarz. Page 41, April '62.
6 Mr. Helms. Yes.
7 Mr. Schwarz. Okay.
8 Now apparently in April 1962 some poisoned pills were given
9 to a Cuban exile leader through Mr. Roselli. Is that right?
10 Mr. Helms. I don't know that from my own resources. It is
11 alleged. I don't know whether they were or not.
12 Mr. Schwarz. Well, the study shows that to have happened.
13 Mr. Helms. The study shows this.
14 Mr. Schwarz. And at the same time the study shows that
15 rifles were given to a Cuban exile, right?
16 Mr. Helms. Yes.
17 Mr. Schwarz. Now, assuming those facts to be true, at the
18 point that poisoned pills had been handed to a person, it was
19 no longer so that the matter was only exploratory, was it?
20 Mr. Helms. No, I think that one could say that something,
21 you know, was being put in train there.
22 Mr. Schwarz. Looking at page 50, the study indicates that
23 Mr. Harvey was told that the pills were actually in Cuba, at
24 the bottom of page 50, and indeed had been taken into the
25 restaurant regularly used by Mr. Castro. Is that so? The very

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1 bottom of page 50.

2 Mr. Helms. Of page 50?

3 Mr. Schwarz. Yes. The last sentence on page 50. Maybe

4 if you read it into the record --

5 Mr. Helms. Yes, I see. "Roselli reported that the pills

6 were in Cuba and at the restaurant reportedly used regularly

7 by Castro."

8 We only have Roselli's word for that, I would like to

9 point out.

10 Mr. Schwarz. Yes, but it was given to Mr. Harvey, right?

11 Mr. Helms. I beg your pardon?

12 Mr. Schwarz. It was reportedly given to Mr. Harvey.

13 Mr. Helms. Roselli said.

14 Mr. Schwarz. The word was given to Mr. Harvey.

15 Mr. Helms. Yes.

16 Mr. Schwarz. And Mr. Harvey stated that he regularly

17 reported to you on the Cuba matter and indeed you would have

18 expected him to report to you, wouldn't you?

19 Mr. Helms. That's right.

20 Mr. Scwharz. Now again, assuming that he did report to

21 you, it certainly was no longer a matter that was exploratory,

22 was it?

23 Mr. Helms. (Nods in the affirmative.)

24 Mr. Schwarz. Now, according to your best recollection,

25 at that point did you brief Mr. McCone?

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1 Mr. Helms. I do not recall having done so and I don't
2 recall why I did not.
3 Mr. Schwarz. Okay.
4 A second point that you made about not briefing Mr. McCone --
5 and this was towards the end of your testimony in the morning --
6 was that the effort involved the Mafia.
7 Mr. Helms. That was a surmise now that since he was new
8 in the organization and this was a sort of dubious thing that I
9 guess what I was trying to say was as my perception of it is
10 recreated now that I felt that there ought to be a lot more
11 solid than just going to him and saying we've been in touch
12 with a fellow in the Mafia to see if we've got Underworld links
13 to Cuba.
14 Mr. Schwarz. So it had nothing to do with his attitude
15 towards using the Mafia?
16 Mr. Helms. I was unaware of any attitude he may have
17 had.
18 Mr. Schwarz. Now he testified in response to this line of
19 questioning that if he had been told that there was an assassi-
20 nation effort underway, he would have stopped such an effort.
21 Now, is that, in your judgment, correct?
22 Mr. Helms. I don't know, sir.
23 Mr. Schwarz. Do you have any judgment on it?
24 Mr. Helms. The reason I say I don't know, Mr. Schwarz,
25 is that elsewhere Mr. McCone states that he went to see Mr.

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1 McNamara in connection with this August 1962 affair and told
2 Mr. McNamara that he wouldn't have anything to do with this,
3 but I have no recollection and I don't believe he ever said
4 anything to me about his not wanting to have anything to do
5 with it.

6 Mr. Schwarz. And you were close to Mr. McCone in that
7 period? You were his Deputy for Plans?

8 Mr. Helms. I saw him almost daily.

9 Mr. Schwarz. And is it your belief that if he had made
10 any such statement to Mr. McNamara that he would have come to
11 you and told you about it at some point?

12 Mr. Helms. I just don't know why he didn't, but I don't
13 recall any such statement. And as I said, and I would like to
14 repeat it, Mr. McCone had given me my job, he had promoted me,
15 I felt close to him, I felt loyal to him, and I would not have
16 violated an instruction he gave me if I could possibly have
17 helped it.

18 Mr. Schwarz. But in any event, it is your best judgment
19 that he did not indicate that he was opposed to assassinations?

20 Mr. Helms. Not to me.

21 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

22 Then I think this morning in discussing the question of
23 whether or not you advised Mr. McCone, in another portion of
24 your testimony you made the point that the general instruction
25 was to get rid of Castro, number one.

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes. Get rid of the Castro government,
2 including Castro, but get rid of the whole business.
3 Mr. Schwarz. Number two that that general instruction had
4 no limitations placed upon it.
5 Mr. Helms. Well to say no limitations is not proper.
6 It did not have any specific limitations, but the rule of reason
7 would have prevailed that if somebody had some bright idea of
8 putting an atomic bomb in Cuba, I certainly would have regarded
9 that as well outside the permissible parameters and that it
10 would have either have been stopped or it would have to have
11 been taken to higher authority or something.
12 Mr. Schwarz. But is it your testimony that -- now let us
13 take one of the things that the record suggests was actually
14 attempted, which was to poison Mr. Castro by pills supplied
15 from the CIA to a Mafia person to a Cuban exile leader and
16 ultimately to be put in his food.
17 Is it your testimony that that activity was within the
18 bounds of the general understanding that efforts were being
19 made to get rid of the Castro government?
20 Mr. Helms. It is my recollection that the answer is
21 affirmative.
22 Mr. Schwarz. And what is that based on?
23 Is it because -- how do you decide under what you said is
24 a rule of reason, how do you distinguish now or how did you
25 distinguish then between accepted activity within the general

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1 instruction and activity that you felt you could not have
2 taken?

3 Mr. Helms. Well, you see, sir, we're having -- at least
4 I'm having a difficult time here, because we have one episode
5 in a long string of activities relating to Cuba that because it
6 involves the specific word assassination or the elimination of
7 an individual looms large in this investigation. I understand
8 that and I understand the reasons for it. But the fact of the
9 matter remains that with all of the other things that were going
10 on at that time, I can only say to you as best I can recall
11 it, that this seemed to be within the permissible part of this
12 effort.

13 People were being killed in raids and various other ways
14 and I can only say that bad as it may sound I don't have any
15 recollection of thinking, well, Lord, this is well outside
16 anything we were being permitted to do.

17 Mr. Smothers. May I raise a question here?

18 Mr. Ambassador, you indicated, and have throughout your
19 testimony, that essentially you felt you had your marching
20 orders, that you had a fairly accurate understanding of what
21 the Special Group, the Director and other persons who may have
22 been involved here in the leadership element wanted done. Is
23 that correct?

24 Mr. Helms. I thought so.

25 Mr. Smothers. Is it also your understanding that Mr. McCone

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as the Director had his marching orders and he understood what they meant?

Mr. Helms. Yes, because many of my marching orders came from Mr. McCone who got his marching orders elsewhere.

Mr. Smothers. Is there any doubt in your mind that he had a substantial familiarity with what you were doing?

Mr. Helms. There's no doubt in my mind.

Mr. Smothers. Knowing him as you did and working with him, is there any idea in your mind that he disapproved of what you did and the undertakings in this connection, that he would have indicated to you that he was totally dissatisfied?

Mr. Helms. I would have thought so, Mr. Smothers, because he was a precise man and a very forceful man, and when he disagreed, he said so and a man of very high intelligence.

Mr. Smothers. Could you imagine himself as Director in a situation where he was at odds with the desires of the President or the Special Group?

Mr. Helms. Well, it's an interesting point you make, because theoretically this would not be the case, but there was a situation in which he got himself very much on the other side of the fence from the President and that was over the question of whether there were missiles in Cuba or not, or whether the Russians were putting missiles in Cuba.

And he stuck to the line that they were putting

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1 them in when almost everyone else in the Federal government was
2 saying they were not putting them in and wouldn't be putting
3 them in and he turned out to be right.
4 And I think in all fairness to Mr. McCone, I think it's
5 fair to be said that he made himself slightly unpopular with
6 the President for having been right.
7 Mr. Smothers. This is a fairly small group we're talking
8 about. Had he been hearing a different drummer from the Presi-
9 dent and those that the President wanted, that the Special Group
10 wanted, do you think you would have been aware of the fact that
11 he was doing something other than that which had been
12 sanctioned?
13 Mr. Helms. I do, Mr. Smothers, because I think all of us
14 working on this thing thought that we were going to the same
15 drummer, walking, marching to the same drummer.
16 Mr. Schwarz. Is it now your testimony that Mr. McCone
17 was aware of the assassination efforts against Castro?
18 Mr. Helms. No, it is not my testimony, I haven't changed
19 it. I just wanted to answer Mr. Smother's question. I'm not
20 changing --
21 Mr. Schwarz. Well I'm not suggesting that you're changing
22 your testimony. I just want to make sure what it is.
23 Is it your testimony that to the best of your knowledge
24 Mr. McCone was aware of assassination attempts against Castro?
25 Mr. Helms. I don't know whether he was or not, Mr. Schwarz.

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1 Mr. McCone is an honorable man. He has done his own testifying,
2 and all I can say is that I do not know specifically whether
3 he was aware or not. I only can recall that he did not tell
4 me that he was against it.
5 Mr. Smothers. Was totally dissatisfied?
6 Mr. Schwarz. Well, it is confusing, and Mr. Harvey
7 stated in 1967 that for some reason, not explained, but for
8 some reason, he decided and you agreed not to brief Mr. McCone
9 about the efforts to assassinate Castro.
10 Let's see if we can come at that in a slightly different
11 direction.
12 Can you think of any reason why Mr. Harvey would say that
13 if it were not true?
14 Mr. Helms. No, I do not really know why he would say it
15 if it were not true.
16 Mr. Schwarz. All right, now --
17 Mr. Helms. Or if he did not believe it to be true.
18 Mr. Schwarz. Recognizing that this may be a question on
19 which you are not sure, what is your best judgment as to
20 whether Mr. McCone knew about the attempts to assassinate
21 Castro?
22 Mr. Helms. I have a hard time, this thirteen or so years
23 after the event, believing that when Mr. McCone was involved
24 in all of these meetings about trying to get rid of Castro that
25 he could have ruled out in his mind that somebody might take a

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1 shot at him, or kill him in some fashion or other. I just
2 cannot believe that that was not a considered part of the
3 risks inherent in the operation we were undertaking.
4 Mr. Schwarz. Okay.
5 Now, let's turn to May, 1962 for a moment.
6 You knew, in May '62, that there was an ongoing relation-
7 ship with the Mafia, with Mr. Roselli, is that right?
8 Mr. Helms. Yes.
9 Mr. Schwarz. And you knew -- whether or not you thought
10 that was likely to succeed, you knew that it was an effort
11 which involved an attempt to assassinate Mr. Castro?
12 Mr. Helms. Well, in any event, I was in touch with the
13 Mafia. I knew that we were in touch with the Mafia.
14 Mr Schwarz. But you did know also that the purpose of
15 being in touch with the Mafia was to attempt to assassinate
16 Castro?
17 Mr. Helms. Well, maybe it wasn't all that clear in May
18 1962. This record is being made, you know, we're digging
19 kind of a trench here by repetition, and I am not sure it's
20 fair that we dig that trench.
21 Mr. Schwarz. Well, let's just say that the 1967 record
22 shows that Harvey was told by Roselli that pills had been taken
23 to Cuba for the purpose of assassinating Castro in May of 1962.
24 We have gone over that before.
25 Mr. Kirbow. Mr. Chairman, would the General Counsel yield

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1 for just a moment?

2 I have listened to the testimony from this morning and

3 this of this afternoon and in all fairness I cannot agree that

4 that is what the witness said this morning. He has repeatedly

5 this afternoon disavowed any personal knowledge of what the

6 purpose, or that there were any pills delivered, or to whom.

7 And I think that among us attorneys the best evidence of what is

8 on the record is the document itself.

9 If he has no personal knowledge, I don't think we should

10 subject the Ambassador to trying to authenticate a document

11 about which he has and professes no personal knowledge. I think

12 we put him in a position that is untenable in this regard.

13 I think that he has made it as clear as he could this

14 afternoon that he had no personal knowledge of those events,

15 that if Mr. Harvey said so, he believes that Mr. Harvey probably

16 told the truth at that time.

17 Senator Hart of Colorado. Well, with all respect, I would

18 like Counsel to continue the final question.

19 Mr. Schwarz. The document we're talking about was a 1967

20 study and it was prepared for you so that you could brief

21 President Johnson and did you ever tell anybody you thought

22 there was something wrong about that, about the document, or

23 that it was inaccurate?

24 Mr. Helms. No, as I testified this morning, Mr. Schwarz,

25 I don't recall studying the document 100 percent from the

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1 standpoint of the accuracy of it, every sentence. I was trying
2 to relate it to some information which I had been given, which
3 it appeared in a newspaper to try and sort out the facts so
4 that I could report to President Johnson certain events which
5 occurred at certain places in time, and I do not recall that
6 I ever went over this document line by line to check on the
7 veracity of it, and I certainly never went behind the
8 Inspectors -- in other words, I didn't talk to the people
9 individually concerned whom they had interrogated.
10 Mr. Schwarz. But you don't recall telling anybody that
11 there was something wrong with it.
12 Mr. Helms. No, I don't recall doing that.
13 Mr. Scwharz. Now the document indicates that in May 1962
14 pills were in Cuba. Now, assuming that was so, the reporting
15 chain was that Mr. Harvey was expected to report to you, is
16 that right?
17 Mr. Helms. Yes.
18 Mr. Schwarz. And your assumption is that Mr. Harvey
19 as a good lieutenant, did report to you, is that right?
20 Mr. Helms. Well he was reporting quite regularly what was
21 going on. Whether he reported everything or not, I obviously
22 don't know.
23 Mr. Schwarz. But is it your expectation that he would
24 have reported a matter like the pills being in Cuba?
25 Mr. Helms. I would have thought so.

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Mr. Schwarz. Now, you knew in May 1962 that there was a problem involving the Justice Department and a Las Vegas matter involving Mr. Maheu and Mr. Giancana, did you, and Mr. Rosselli?

Mr. Helms. Yes.

Mr. Schwarz. And you knew that the Attorney General was briefed about that matter?

Mr. Helms. I was told subsequently that he was.

Mr. Schwarz. Well, turning to page 65 of the document prepared for you --

Mr. Helms. Yes, I have it.

Mr. Schwarz. -- in the second full paragraph, it reads: "Harvey states that on 14 May he briefed Mr. Helms on a meeting with the Attorney General, as told him by Edwards. Harvey, too, advised against briefing Mr. McCone and General Carter and states that Helms concurred in this."

You have no reason to doubt the accuracy of that?

Mr. Helms. It says that I didn't concur.

Mr. Schwarz. It says that you did concur.

Mr. Helms. In the recommendation. I don't have any idea why I wouldn't have wanted him briefed if the Attorney General had been briefed. I don't understand this to this day and I don't -- I have nothing specific to say to challenge the accuracy of it, but I don't remember going along or being consulted in this fashion, and I realize that it makes me look very guilty, the words that are here, but I do not recall this

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1 conversation. And it seems odd to me only because, if the
2 Attorney General had been briefed on something it would seem
3 very logical that it would be very important to brief the
4 Director at that time on the same thing.
5 Mr. Schwarz. Now Mr. Houston, who was the General Counsel,
6 confirmed also that to the best of his recollection the Director
7 was not briefed at his testimony here.
8 Would you look at Exhibit 4 now, which is a memorandum
9 from Mr. Helms to the Director dated August 16, 1963, subject
10 Sam Giancana.
11 Senator Mathias. Would Counsel tell us what page it is?
12 Mr. Schwarz. This is a separate document in your folders
13 of this morning. It is dated August 16, 1963. It has a number
14 of attachment, including a memo for the Attorney of May '62.
15 Now did you send that memo to Mr. McCone who was the
16 Director in August 1963?
17 Mr. Helms. Yes, I would have thought so. It is signed
18 with my initials and it is directed to him.
19 Mr. Schwarz. Was that sent because of a newspaper article
20 that indicated some connection between the CIA and the Mafia?
21 You were asked about that.
22 Mr. Helms. I think so. Something generated it.
23 Mr. Schwarz. Now Mr. McCone has testified and the 1967
24 study states that this was the first occasion on which Mr. McCone
25 was advised of the CIA's use of the Mafia. Does that accord

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1 with your recollection?

2 Mr. Helms. I don't know. I say here, I assume you're

3 aware of the nature of the operation. I must have had some

4 reason for the assumption.

5 Mr. Schwarz. Yes. He stated in that connection that you

6 and he had a conversation on this day about it. Do you recall

7 that?

8 Mr. Helms. No, but maybe that's what generated the

9 memorandum.

10 Mr. Schwarz. Can we consider the attachment, which was

11 May 14, 1962 and purports to be a memorandum for the record

12 prepared by Sheffield Edwards reflecting the conversation

13 between himself and Robert Kennedy and Mr. Houston, the General

14 Counsel of the CIA?

15 Mr. Helms. That is what it appeared to be, and if Mr.

16 Houston has testified to this, he's an honorable man, I would

17 accept that.

18 Mr. Scwharz. All right.

19 The memorandum on May 14, 1962 describes the project as

20 being completed, refers to it in the past tense.

21 Do you know why the Agency submitted to the Attorney General

22 a memorandum purportedly reflecting a briefing given to the

23 Attorney General which described the operation as in the past

24 tense when the documents indicate that in fact it was ongoing,

25 indeed ongoing during that very month?

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Mr. Helms. I am not at all familiar any longer with what causes this confusion. I hope that Mr. Harvey can straighten it out when you talk to him, but I am not able to tell you whether this operation was ongoing, whether it had really been stopped, whether it had been fairly stopped, whether there was fun and games going on between the officers involved as to, we will create a fiction that it stopped or go ahead with it. I just don't recall any of those things at all, I am sorry to say, and I think anything I say would be unhelpful.

tape 3b

Mr. Schwarz. All right.

At any point after you became Deputy Director of Plans and up to the point that you left that job to assume your higher job, did you instruct the Agency to in effect stand down from ongoing efforts to assassinate Mr. Castro?

Mr. Helms. I don't recall whether there was any time at which anything specific like that was said. As the operation was reduced in intensity and reduced in scope, my recollection is that we were continuing with a certain few operations of which this gangster business was not one of them. I realized that Harvey was in touch with Roselli for some time, but I do not have any impression any longer that after the first few months there was any real substance to this.

As a matter of fact, I have toothis day wondered if there's any substance to it from the very beginning.

Mr. Scwharz. Well, let's leave out the Mafia question.

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1 The question I asked was, did you at any time instruct the
2 Agency to stand down from the effort to assassinate Mr. Castro?
3 Mr. Helms. On Cuba?
4 Mr. Schwarz. Yes.
5 Mr. Helms. I don't recall having done so in any such
6 specific terms.
7 Is there anything in the record which indicates that I
8 did?
9 Mr. Schwarz. Well, I'm asking you whether you did.
10 Mr. Helms. I don't recall having done anything that
11 specific about it.
12 Mr. Schwarz. Now the record demonstrates that in the fall
13 of 1963 the Agency prepared -- and when I say the record, I
14 mean the 1967 study.
15 Mr. Helms. Yes.
16 Mr. Schwarz. The Agency prepared a poison pen, a Papermate
17 pen with a little syringe in it that could be used through
18 poison to accomplish an assassination?
19 Did you authorize that activity?
20 Mr. Helms. I don't recall authorizing it, and it seems
21 to me -- is this referring to the Cubela business?
22 Mr. Scwharz. Yes.
23 Mr. Helms. He's the one who was trying to find various
24 means of getting rid of his arch-rival, Mr. Castro. The record
25 does show that such a pen was taken to Paris, but I believe

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1 the facts are that this was never taken in the hand of Mr.
2 Cubela anyplace. He simply did not accept it.
3 Mr. Schwarz. But the Agency prepared it for him, did it
4 not?
5 Mr. Helms. It was taken to him, I believe.
6 Senator Morgan. Mr. Schwarz, could I interrupt?
7 Who was Mr. Cubela? Was he actually in the Cuban Army?
8 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir. He was, if not the titular head,
9 at least he was one of the leaders of a group which had been
10 opposed to Batista but was not the same group which Castro
11 headed. In other words, this was another group that wanted to
12 get rid of Batista, but also was intensely interested in taking
13 over Cuba for itself.
14 Senator Morgan. Was he still in the Cuban Army at the
15 time all of this was going on?
16 Mr. Helms. I can't recall, sir, whether he was actually
17 in the Army or not, but he was certainly living in Havanna and
18 he had a post and was well-known to Mr. Castro.
19 Senator Morgan. Well now, this morning you referred to the
20 fact, talking about the mood at the time --
21 Mr. Helms. Yes.
22 Senator Morgan. -- that Castro awas lining everybody up
23 against the wall and shooting them. They never did shoot him,
24 did they?
25 Mr. Helms. I understand that he was pardoned in the end --

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not pardoned, excuse me. I believe that you're a lawyer and I'm not. I think the word is, he was supposed to go before the firing wall and Castro, I believe, put him in jail instead.

Senator Morgan. Were you ever satisfied as to who he was really working for?

Mr. Helms. I have never been satisfied with any of these operations as to exactly who was working for whom. If it was ever a frustrating time in my life, it was trying to get these Cubans to do the things they said they were going to do.

Senator Morgan. Excuse me. I just wanted to clean up that one point.

Mr. Scwharz. And after the November '63 meeting, at which at least he was offered a poison pen, and poison for it, did the Agency arrange to supply him with guns as well?

Mr. Helms. I don't know. I think that all through the Cubela period, there were requests from him for guns of various kinds, I think there were efforts made to provide -- lay down caches in Cuba. This is an ongoing preoccupation of providing caches of arms and explosives and so forth to various groups that we though might have some possibility of mounting an operation.

I wouldn't question that he had asked for guns and maybe in the end he was able to get some. Somehow, if my memory of reading this is correct, he was later put in touch with a fellow named Artime who was a Cuban in Florida, and the two were sort

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of set to work together.

Is it not true that when he eventually did get some guns or something he got them from Artime rather than the CIA case officer?

Mr. Schwarz. And that the CIA arranged that that would happen.

Mr. Helms. Well, I think they put the deal together, but I don't know whether the Agency actually arranged it or not.

Mr. Schwarz. But Cubela was an agent -- now agent may be the wrong word -- Cubela was a person with whom the Agency had contact.

Mr. Helms. That's right.

Mr. Schwarz. And Cubela was a person for whom the Agency prepared a poison pen and some poison.

Mr. Helms. Well, I think I would like -- my perception of what happened under those circumstances is an accurate one. The Agency volunteered this piece of equipment rather than his having specifically asked for it.

Mr. Schwarz. And the purpose, if he had accepted, was to assassinate?

Mr. Helms. Was to take care of a request from him that he had some device for getting rid of Castro, for killing him, murdering him, whatever the case may be.

Mr. Scwharz. Would you turn in that connection to the Appendix to the report which is a letter dated March 7, 1966

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1 from yourself to the Honorable Dean Rusk, Secretary of State.

2 Mr. Helms. Yes, I have it.

3 Mr. Schwarz. Okay.

4 That is a letter referring to Mr. Cubela's arrest, isn't

5 it, by the Cuban government?

6 Mr. Helms. Yes, the arrest of Cubela Secades and Ramon

7 Tomas Guin Diaz.

8 Mr. Schwarz. After their arrest, and based apparently upon

9 some judicial proceedings, the Cuban Press alleged that they

10 had been in contact with the CIA in efforts to assassinate

11 Castro.

12 Is that right?

13 Mr. Helms. Yes, I guess. Is this what the Press said?

14 Because I notice that the sentence that you're coming to, I

15 assume, is the one that says the Agency said was not involved

16 with either of these.

17 Mr. Schwarz. Why don't you read that into the record?

18 Mr. Helms. "The Agency was not involved in either of

19 these two men in a plot to assassinate Fidel Castro as claimed

20 in the Prensa Latina news release, nor did it ever encourage

21 either of these two persons to attempt such an act."

22 Mr. Schwarz. The question is, was that true when you

23 made that comment to Mr. Rusk?

24 Mr. Helms. Well, interestingly enough, when I read that

25 just recently, certainly my recollection was that he was not

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1 encouraged to do it, he was the one that was doing all of the
2 requesting and asking and pushing and so forth with respect to
3 this issue. But it seems to me that in light of all the
4 information which is in the 1967 memorandum, this is an inaccurate
5 statement.
6 Yesterday, I called up the man who recommended my signature
7 underneath there, Mr. Karamessines, and asked if he had any
8 recollection of why we had stated the thing this way, and he
9 said he didn't know either. And it may be until we conducted
10 that investigation somewhat later we didn't have the facts
11 straight, or maybe we had the facts straight then, but we did
12 not have them straight later.
13 In any event, this is not truthful in the light of the '67
14 memoranda and I don't know why and he does not know why.
15 Senator Baker. Is that Tom Karamessines?
16 Mr. Helms. Yes.
17 Mr. Schwarz. Now, Mr. Fitzgerald was the man who worked
18 for you, Desmond Fitzgerald?
19 Mr. Helms. Yes, he succeeded Mr. Harvey on these Cuban
20 operations.
21 Mr. Schwarz. And he is now dead?
22 Mr. Helms. He's dead.
23 Mr. Schwarz. Was he someone who had a close personal
24 relationship as well as a professional relationship with you?
25 Mr. Helms. Yes, he did, and he did also with the Attorney

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1 General. He was a Harvard College graduate and Harvard Law
2 School graduate, and I believe they had some things in common,
3 but I certainly knew him and saw his family frequently.
4 Mr. Schwarz. All right.
5 Now, if we both look at pages 88 and 89 of the report,
6 under the date October 29, 1963 --
7 Mr. Helms. 88 and 99?
8 Mr. Schwarz. Pages 88 and 89.
9 Mr. Helms. I am there.
10 Mr. Schwarz. Our copy has a number of blanks of names.
11 Mr. Helms. Yes.
12 Mr. Schwarz. Could you read into the record what appears
13 under that date entry? And if you want to use a code name for
14 someone instead of an actual name, I don't object if the
15 Committee doesn't object.
16 Mr. Helms. Where do you want me to start reading?
17 Mr. Schwarz. Under the entry 29 October 1963.
18 Mr. Helms. "Desmond Fitzgerald, then Chief SAS who was
19 going to Paris on other business arranged to meet with Cubela
20 to give him the assurances he sought. The contact plan for
21 the meeting, a copy of which is in the AMLASH file has this
22 to say on the cover. 'Fitzgerald will represent self as
23 personal representative of Robert F. Kennedy who travelled to
24 Paris for specific purpose meeting Cubela and giving him
25 assurances of full U.S. support with a change of the present

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1 government in Cuba.' According to Fitzgerald, he discussed the
2 planned meeting with the DDP (Helms) who decided it was not
3 necessary to seek approval from Robert Kennedy for Fitzgerald
4 to speak in his name."

5 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

6 First, do you recall that conversation with Mr. Fitzgerald?

7 Mr. Helms. No, I do not recall the conversation.

8 Mr. Schwarz. Are you able to cast any light upon the
9 meaning of the statement purportedly made by you that it was
10 not necessary to seek approval from Robert Kennedy for Fitzgerald
11 to speak in his name?

12 Mr. Helms. I don't think that's the way I would have
13 phrased it if I had been asked at the time, and this meeting
14 did indeed take place. What I would like to say was, that
15 given this Cuban of his standing and all the history of the
16 relationship of trying to find someone inside Cuba who might
17 head a government and have a group to replace Castro.

18 This was so central to the whole theme of everything we
19 had been trying to do, that I find it totally unnecessary to
20 ask Robert Kennedy at that point, should we go ahead with this.
21 This is obviously what he had been pushing, what everybody had
22 been pushing for us to try to do, and it is in that context that
23 I would have made some remark like this.

24 It wasn't that I was being smart or tricky or hiding
25 anything. I just thought this is exactly the kind of thing

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1 I had been asked -- he's been asking us to do, let's get on
2 with doing it.
3 Senator Morgan. Mr. Chairman, if I may ask a question,
4 mainly for the purposes of making a note in the record, Mr.
5 Ambassador, it would be fair to assume then that if Mr.
6 Fitzgerald carried out the instructions of advising the Cuban
7 that he was there as a representative of Robert Kennedy that--
8 to assume that Castro -- or if he in fact was working for
9 Castro -- thought that the Kennedys had ordered his assassina-
10 tion, whether or not they were aware of it or not, would it?
11 Mr. Helms. Sir, when you spoke to me a moment ago about
12 dealing with these Cubans and who they were working for, and
13 so forth, I don't know and I don't recall that as of this
14 particular point there seemed to be any doubt that Cubela wasn't
15 representing what he claimed to represent, which was a man who
16 would like to take Mr. Castro's place.
17 In other words, I do not recall that we would have thought
18 that he was reporting to Castro on his connections with U.S.
19 agents in Paris.
20 Senator Morgan. One other point.
21 He at one time was arrested and confessed?
22 Mr. Helms. But that is later.
23 Senator Morgan. But at least this was information that
24 was given to him, was that Robert Kennedy knew what was being
25 done?

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Mr. Helms. You know, it's a peculiar thing, Senator Morgan, I don't -- I am not familiar enough in detail with all of the files and telegrams and so forth at the time, but it seems to me that what Cubela subsequently admitted to when he was try was the latter phase of the operation. I don't know that he really went back to the beginning of the operation and covered all of these things. So that this particular contact might not necessarily have been in his confession, I believe.

Now if I'm wrong, would one of you straighten me out?

Mr. Schwarz. Well, I think one thing is worth saying.

According to the reports that the CIA got, Mr. Cubela confessed to an effort to assassinate Castro, but according to the reports they got, he did not confess to the involvement of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Senator Morgan. Mr. Chairman, one point I was trying to make for future reference was that if he was in fact double agent, then we did lead Castro to believe that it was a plot, that the Kennedys knew of it, whether they did or not. That is the point I wanted for the record.

Senator Baker. I think you might also, for future reference, point out that according to newspaper accounts, at least, Castro claims to have known and claims to be in a position to supply us information about it.

Mr. Schwarz. Although I'm not sure he's put a date on it, but he has said that.

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Senator Baker. I wonder how we could go about doing that. I wonder what he does know.

Senator Morgan. How about you as the Chairman of a delegation go down there.

Senator Baker. No, I would yield to you.

Senator Morgan. Well, I apologize for taking the Committee's time, but for me this is really a very crucial point, because I cannot see how a man who had access going in and out of Havanna to France and all of these other places, I really don't see how we could have trusted him that much. Of course, I know you have to trust somebody, and I think if this is a very real possibility, then we ought to pursue it, and look at it as we go along in the investigation.

Mr. Schwarz. How about as a general problem, Mr. Helms, how do you know when someone says they're a double agent that they're not a triple agent, or do you?

Mr. Helms. This is one of the most difficult and tricky aspects of secret intelligence work, and there isn't anybody who's been in it very long who hasn't been tricked once, twice maybe many, many times. And you just start each time afresh taking the same chances and hazards that you took the time before. And I must confess that it's a most extraordinarily frustrating business.

Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, may I ask Mr. Helms a question in that respect?

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It has no doubt happened, but could you give me some estimate of how many times we have pretty good evidence that say the KGB infiltrated the CIA?

Mr. Helms. Well, Senator Baker, I don't know of any place where the KGB successfully infiltrated the CIA. Certainly we found traces of efforts, but may I just say, which I think will answer your question, during the years that I was Director, hardly a day passed when I walked into the office that I didn't wonder if that was going to be the day when somebody was going to come up with the fact that there was somebody in that building who had been recruited by the Soviets. I mean, this is the nightmare of a Director of Central Intelligence.

Senator Baker. I don't mean to be spectacular and I'll ask you one more question in that respect.

The rumor is rampant in the Cloakrooms of the Congress that there were KGB penetrations of Congressional offices, or KGB electronic intercepts of Congressional conversations while you were DCI or otherwise. Do you have any information on either one of those things?

Mr. Helms. No, sir. I never saw any reports on that. At least that I can recollect, Senator Baker. I should be careful about being categorical.

Senator Baker. I understand. I understand.

Mr. Schwarz. Were you aware in the fall of '63 that, I guess peace feelers is the wrong word, but there was effort

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underway to try and reach some kind of accomodation with Mr. Castro?

Mr. Helms. In '63?

Mr. Schwarz. Yes, in the fall of '63.

Mr. Helms. I don't recall that. I thought -- when was the prisoner exchange? When did that take place? In other words, the negotiations to get the prisoners of the brigade out of Cuba in exchange for medicines and so forth?

Mr. Schwarz. I think that they were in their height in '62 and early '63. The tractors and the drugs, and so forth.

Mr. Helms. But I don't recall these peace feelers.

Mr. Schwarz. Well, let's see if one thing will trigger a recollection in your mind.

Do you recall the name of a French journalist, Jean Daniel who was in Cuba in the fall of '63, allegedly carrying messages of good will to Mr. Castro?

Mr. Helms. On whose behalf?

Mr. Schwarz. On the behalf of the United States government.

Mr. Helms. I don't recall it, sir. I think the name Jean Daniel I have heard, but I do not recall him in this capacity.

Mr. Schwarz. I have just got one more question on the fall of '63.

The record shows that a crash effort was made to produce a poison pen and a poison to be used in it which could be given to

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1 Cubela which would be used to assassinate Castro, and it was
2 under Mr. Fitzgerald's direction.
3 Now, did you know about that?
4 Mr. Helms. I can't remember. I have tried, and the reason
5 I say this, that I cannot remember, is that when I saw it in the
6 report, I thought, that's odd, I don't recall any such thing.
7 So I'm sorry, I just cannot be helpful about it.
8 The only thing that I did check up on was that he never
9 took the pen. I've done this within the last forty-eight hours.
10 The record was not particularly clear on this, it didn't seem
11 to me, and I thought, well, this is a key point and I happened
12 to realize there was somebody in Washington whom I thought might
13 know and I just checked.
14 Mr. Schwarz. Who was that person?
15 Mr. Helms. A man named Samuel Halperin.
16 Mr. Schwarz. I was planning to move on to Lumumba, unless --
17 are there more matters on Mr. Castro?
18 Senator Morgan. Mr. Chairman, is the Ambassador, are
19 you going to be back Monday, or --
20 Senator Hart of Colorado. I would only add one remark to
21 the record, pursuant to Senator Morgan's observation, that is
22 Cubela needn't have been a double agent to have created the
23 impression in Mr. Castro's mind that the Kennedys themselves
24 were behind this assassination attempt, if he just caved in
25 under interrogation himself and he believed he was receiving his

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orders from them, the same effect would be achieved.

Senator Morgan. Or if he had just talked to one of his friends as we talked this morning, he can't keep a secret, he undoubtedly was talking to somebody in Cuba.

Senator Mathias. I think Senator Morgan might have gotten the point, just a little boasting.

Senator Morgan. That's right. It's logical the man would have done a little boasting.

Senator Schweiker. I have one question on Castro.

Mr. Helms, if in fact Castro did know of these plots, and it's hard for me to understand that he did not, given all the facts that we have seen, might this not have precipitated a climate hounded by the Bay of Pigs that really fostered the Cuban missile crisis that made Castro go out looking for ways to get even with us? Is not that a real possibility, that if in fact we did know of our attempts to kill him?

Mr. Helms. Yes, but -- I had always understood that the Cuban missile crisis was something that was generated by the Soviets and their desires and that they approached Castro to do this. Maybe his willingness to go along might have been affected by it, but there cannot be the slightest doubt that Castro, when he came to power, must have been keenly aware that the American government was very antipathetic to him in every conceivable way.

Senator Schweiker. Well, just as you were describing a

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1 moment ago, your frustration and period of unhappiness of
2 being unable to deal with Castro and the Castro regime, it would
3 seem to me that you put it on the other foot and that kind of
4 bitterness and hostility on the receiving end would certainly
5 engender all sorts of brainstorming and thinking how to get
6 even and the Soviets come in and say, well, we'd like to put
7 missiles in, and it would just seem to me that the assassination
8 attempts, therefor, may well have helped to trigger it, compoundedby
9 the Bay of Pigs, and going back to the point you made earlier
10 about you wondered about the futility of assassination attempts,
11 I wonder about the equal and opposite reaction -- the law of
12 physics, for every action there is an opposite and equal
13 reaction -- by our assassination attempts or indirect involvement
14 or direct we certainly set up ourselves for a whiplash foreign
15 policy that could trigger a nuclear war. I think there are some
16 real dangers from this.
17 I am glad to hear you say your earlier statement, but it
18 just seems to me it could well have taken place right in the
19 Cuban missile crisis itself.
20 You would agree, I would assume, that if in fact he found
21 out we were trying to kill him, it certainly would have made
22 him rather receptive to the Russian offer of missiles, I would
23 assume.
24 Mr. Helms. Sir, I would think it would be fair to say that
25 Fidel Castro was aware that there were hundreds of Cuban exiles

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who would have been delighted at the opportunity of disposing of him, let alone of the United States government. I think he was keenly aware that he was a target twenty-four hours a day.

Senator Schweiker. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator Morgan. Mr. Helms, one other observation and then I'm going to leave, and I apologize for doing it, but since we aren't taking notes, the only way I know to jog my memory later on is to put it in the record.

If on the very day that the President was assassinated, we were talking with Cubela in Paris and telling him that the pen was being given to him with the full knowledge of Robert Kennedy, it would seem clear to me that sometime in prior negotiations that it would have been conveyed to him that Robert Kennedy had knowledge of what was going on, whether -- I'm not saying Kennedy did or not, but I'm saying it's fair to assume that Cubela thought that Kennedy was a part of it, and therefore even in boasting or as double-agent for some time prior to the Kennedy assassination, may very well have dropped the word that they were involved.

Mr. Helms. Sir, before I answer this question, this meeting Fitzgerald had was when?

Senator Morgan. Was on the day the President was assassinated.

Mr. Schwarz. The poison pen was offered on November 22, the Fitzgerald meeting is in the latter part of October.

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Mr. Helms. I see, it's two or three weeks before.

Mr. Schwarz. But the poison pen was passed on November 22.

Senator Morgan. That would have been the day that Fitzgerald would have advised him.

Mr. Schwarz. There were two meetings at least with Cubela. The first meeting is Fitzgerald giving him the advice of the U.S. government is behind him --

Senator Baker. Well, make sure we get the record straight here. Someplace in this file, I saw the breathless statement that the very day that President Kennedy was shot in Dallas, we were in Paris offering some sort of assistance to somebody.

Mr. Schwarz. It's just that there are two different meetings, Senator. There's one -- that day is the day the poison pen --

Senator Schweiker. A preliminary meeting and a passing meeting.

Mr. Schwarz. That's exactly right.

Senator Morgan. How long was the preliminary meeting before the passing meeting?

Mr. Schwarz. It was 29 October '63.

Senator Morgan. In other words, it was about a month before the actual passing, so that makes my suspicions even more.

Mr. Helms. But in the month before, I don't think we should go beyond what's written down here, because we've got to

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1 accept something as our series of facts. Cubela did not know
2 what he was going to get in the October meeting at the time
3 that he met with Fitzgerald in October.
4 Senator Baker. He knew he was going to get something.
5 Mr. Helms. Well, in other words, he didn't know whether
6 he was going to get anything or not.
7 Mr. Smothers. If we consider this meeting to be the
8 possible source of information against Kennedy, mightn't we be
9 a little bit off the track?
10 Isn't it true, Mr. Ambassador, that Mr. Kennedy had himself
11 indicated that he desired contact with a Mafia source? Hadn't
12 he put out a search for Mafia people that might be of help?
13 Mr. Helms. Well, at one time that's correct, he suggested
14 we might have a look at Underworld figures and so on. I'm not
15 sure exactly in what part of the Mongoose or subsequent
16 operations this came up, but I believe at one time in connection
17 with the Cuban task force activities there was a case officer
18 actually assigned pursuant to the suggestion to check in New
19 York, Chicago, places like that and see if there were any
20 Underworld figures who had ties into Cuba.
21 Mr. Smothers. So pursuant to Mr. Kennedy's request, a
22 CIA case officer actually began a search for the Underworld,
23 the Mafia contacts?
24 Mr. Helms. Underworld contacts, I'm not sure they were
25 Mafia or not.

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Mr. Smothers. But persons who had had prior dealings in Cuba?

Mr. Helms. That is my recollection.

Some of these facts, I think if you want to run them down, his recollection is much better than mine, you might try Mr. Halperin or some of the people who were intimately involved in the day to day work of this task force who are still alive. I mean, Harvey is one, but maybe someone from the staff to talk to --

Senator Baker. Which Halperin is this?

Mr. Helms. It's Samuel Halperin. It's not anybody who's known to you. He's now retired from the Agency, but he was involved in these activities.

Mr. Schwarz. Is he the case officer who was assigned on the Mafia case, is that what you're saying?

Mr. Helms. No, he was not. He was in the operation, but he recalls this.

Mr. Schwarz. He recalls the name that you just said?

Mr. Helms. Yes.

Mr. Schwarz. What was the name of the case officer?

Mr. Helms. I don't know. As a matter of fact, the reason I don't know is that he was giving me, when we chatted about this for a moment, he was laughing and gave the nickname that the case officer was given, and I don't remember what his real name was.

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Mr. Schwarz. What was the nickname?

Mr. Helms. I have even forgot that. Machiola, or Fagiole, or some strange Italian name tying into the Mafia business.

Mr. Smothers. Do you recall, Mr. Ambassador, about the timeframe of this request? How long before the events that we're talking about now in October or November of '63 did this occur?

Mr. Helms. I don't know. I don't know at what period in the span this matter came up. I'm sorry, I don't.

Mr. Smothers. Do you recall during what phase of the deliberations in the Special Group it might have come up?

Mr. Helms. No, I don't. Please, I think honestly you would be much better advised to ask him and pursue it with him. Maybe he will remember, but I cannot help.

Mr. Smothers. But at the time of your meeting with Fitzgerald, it was your understanding then that you weren't saying anything different from what Mr. Kennedy's desire's were, Robert Kennedy's?

Mr. Helms. Well, this seemed to us to be -- this Cubela business, if it were real and he had the courage that he claimed to have, it was what we had been looking for all of this time, of a fellow that constituted an asset inside Cuba who was able to move in the streets of Havanna, had friends, associates, supporters, who might be of some real use to us. And this killing business, which was on his mind, and his desire to get

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1 rid of Castro this way, was no part of our plan.

2 Actually, if I recall this, and the Cubela case is one I

3 do vaguely refer to, you know -- well, we would not only get

4 good intelligence from him, he was the asset we were looking for.

5 We didn't want him to blow himself or blow anything else by

6 getting involved in something like this and have it fail. We

7 wanted him to stay in place.

8 Mr. Smothers. And I think what you're saying is that with

9 respect to your advise to Fitzgerald regarding the need to tell

10 Mr. Kennedy, were you simply exercising a management kind of

11 judgment simply saying you don't need to go to him with?

12 This is something I'm sure he's in agreement with?

13 Mr. Helms. Sir, as best as I can recall this kind of

14 thing, Fitzgerald and I having both of us talked to Robert

15 Kennedy at various times, this would have been the kind of a

16 conversation where we would have agreed that, isn't this what

17 this has all been about. I mean, do you really want me to go

18 to all of the trouble to go down to the Department of Justice

19 and go over the same ground again here. Go ahead and say that

20 from the standpoint of political support, the United States

21 government will be behind you if you are successful. This had

22 nothing to do with killings. This had only to do with the

23 political action part of it.

24 Mr. Smothers. Let me go back for a moment if I might to

25 another instance where we raised questions about the failure to

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advise.

Mr. madigan. Let me ask one question on this specific point.

Mr. Ambassador, do I understand what you are really saying with regard to your meeting with Fitzgerald about his meeting with Cubela, is that you felt you had pre-existing, ongoing authority to indicate that the government was behind such an action, therefore you had no need to check it specifically and reiterate it?

Mr. Helms. I think I felt so sure that if I went to see Mr. Kennedy that he would have said yes, that I don't think there was any need to.

Senator Hart of Michigan. Was such an action -- your question was intended to mean what?

Mr. Madigan. It was intended to mean the Ambassador felt he had pre-existing authorization to indicate that the government was interested in dealing with Cubela and that Cubela was the type of person that when Fitzgerald --

Senator Hart of Michigan. Dealing with respect to what? A change in government, or assassination?

Mr. Madigan. I think actually --

Mr. Helms. A change in government, Senator Hart. This is what we were trying to do.

If I may point out --

Mr. Madigan. Would that necessarily exclude assassination,

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1 Mr. Ambassador?

2 Mr. Helms. May I include again that Major Cubela's
3 desire for these weapons and this desire of his to hit Castro
4 by murder or killing was not part of our desires at all. This
5 was going to ruin our whole plan, if he insisted on this. And
6 I think you'll find if you get all of the telegrams, you'll
7 find that there was an enormous amount of temporizing with this
8 fellow to keep him on the team, to keep him working away at the
9 job, but to try and persuade him that this was not the way to
10 go about it.

11 I think this has to show in the record, because Cubela
12 AMLASH must have loomed reasonably large in this whole Cuban
13 operation because it was one of the few live ones we got ahold
14 of.

15 Mr. Schwarz. You mean you wanted him as a spy or a source
16 of information as opposed to a killer?

17 Mr. Helms. We wanted him as a spy, as a political action
18 agent. We didn't want him to go around killing people.

19 Senator Baker. What did you give him the pen for?

20 Mr. Helms. Because he was insisting on something and this
21 was a temporizing gesture rather than giving him some kind of
22 a gun he had asked for, as I recall.

23 The question was how do you keep this fellow on the track,
24 how do you keep him going with you. He keeps insisting he
25 wants this, he wants that, he wants the other thing, and

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1 we want you to go back and do X.

2 Senator Baker. Let me back up and take a run at this for

3 just about thirty seconds.

4 Mr. Helms. Certainly.

5 Senator Baker. How many plans do you know of in the

6 Agency that were mounted to assassinate Fidel Castro?

7 Mr. Helms. I don't have any way of coming up with any

8 other than the ones we have discussed.

9 Senator Baker. Well, how many is that? Can Counsel tell

10 me? Nine is the figure that comes to mind.

11 Mr. Schwarz. I would say a lot, Senator.

12 Senator Baker. Well, let's see. There was the poison in

13 the diving suit. There was the depilatory to make his beard

14 fall off. There were the arms caches, the explosive sea shells,

15 the cigars, the poison pills, the rifles --

16 Mr. Schwarz. The poison pen.

17 Senator Baker. -- the poison Papermate ballpoint. I

18 don't know how many that is, but there are a great number. But

19 there was no question on earth that they were to kill Fidel

20 Castro, is that true?

21 Mr. Helms. But, sir, the diving suit never went anyplace.

22 It was never put in anybody's hands. It was just an idea that

23 somebody had.

24 Mr. Schwarz. But it was bought and the poison was put

25 inside it.

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Mr. Helms. Yes, but it never left the laboratory in Washington, D.C.

And the shell, this was a cock-eyed idea from the outset. This was the highly intensive imagination of a fellow who thought, well why wouldn't this be a great idea, but a totally impractical thing. I mean, I cannot call that a plot.

Senator Baker. But there are others, let's not call it a plot, call it playing with fire, if you want to, but it's sort of a dangerous thing to do even, just to contemplate with any official sanction of an organization, killing someone else.

It doesn't make any difference really how far it went. The point I'm trying to make is, it seems to me a long jump from nine plans to kill Fidel Castro by assassination to saying that we gave the poison pen to a fellow not to kill him, but it was to placate him.

Mr. Helms. Well, maybe I read these words wrong, and maybe my recollection at the time is imperfect. But I thought that this operation was really designed to not only get information through Major Cubela, but to try and organize a political action operation inside Havanna and at no time was it the idea of his case officers, or those people in the chain behind, to use him to assassinate Castro. These ideas came from him and he kept raising them at these meetings.

Am I wrong? The telegrams must show something. Do you have the telegrams from that period?

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Mr. Schwarz. To characterize the record is very hard. The Ambassador is right.

Senator Schweiker. Well, Mr. Ambassador, isn't what you're saying again and again, as I listen to you on the subject, sure you scratched some of these on the drawing board, sure you scratched a few more after you left the door and sure you scratched a few more after they left for Paris and sure you scratched a few more here, but if you had thought that one of them would have worked then it would have been go, and that really is what the issue here.

I mean everytime you say you scratched something or it didn't get out of the bottle, we didn't let the horse out, only because it was either hairbrained, dimwitted or numbskulled, not because that wasn't the objective. So it becomes a little bit irrelevant to me whether it was scratched here or there. If your objective was go and you had a good plan you would have gone, but you didn't have a good plan.

Isn't that what you are telling us?

Mr. Helms. Sir, I thought that all of this testimony indicated we thought that these things we were trying to do were within what we had been told to do.

Senator Schweiker. But every time we pin you down on one of these other plots, you discount it and in essence say, well that really doesn't count, when in fact it does count. The only thing that didn't count was that it probably wasn't

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1 workable so you discarded it. That is where we have trouble
2 communicating.
3 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, I didn't realize I was making any
4 trouble. I thought that what we were trying to do was to use
5 me for my perceptions of what I thought the truth was at the
6 time. I'm doing my best.
7 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, if the Senator would yield,
8 I apologize for injecting a discordant note into otherwise I
9 think a very, very cooperative session and I think the best way
10 to get us back on the track is for me to ask this question, if
11 I may.
12 Was it in your view the general policy of the government
13 of the United States as proposed to be implemented by the CIA
14 to kill Fidel Castro?
15 Mr. Helms. I believe it was the policy at the time to get
16 rid of Castro and if killing him was one of the things that was
17 to be done in this connection, that was within what was
18 expected.
19 Senator Baker. And without, as you say, digging the trench
20 by repetition, you felt that the Agency was acting fully within
21 the scope of its authority as understood by the Agency?
22 Mr. Helms. Yes, Senator Baker, that is my perception.
23 Senator Baker. Thank you.
24 Senator Hart of Michigan. Did you ever obtain clearance for
25 any one of the nine, six, ten or twelve that we talked about?

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1 Mr. Helms. I don't know what -- I know, sir, this Cubela
2 operation must have been a part of the Special Group delibera-
3 tions because it went on so long and it went through various
4 phases, and I don't know whether you have those records or not,
5 but I would have thought that it would be there, and every
6 aspect of it I would have thought would have been in there.
7 Is this not the case, Counsel?
8 Mr. Madigan. We haven't gotten those records.
9 Senator Baker. I understand we have requested those
10 records, Mr. Helms, but we haven't received them.
11 Could you give us any advice on where we might find those
12 records?
13 Mr. Helms. I don't any longer know under whose aegis those
14 are. Those were, I think, at one time National Security work
15 or regarded as that. Whether they were stored in the National
16 Security Council files or the Agency files, I don't know.
17 Senator Baker. Thank you, sir.
18 Mr. Schwarz. Did you look at any of them in preparing for
19 this testimony?
20 Mr. Helms. No. I don't even know where they are,
21 Counsel.
22 Mr. Schwarz. After President Kennedy was assassinated on
23 November 22, 1963 and President Johnson took over, the record
24 indicates some efforts through Mr. Cubela continued.
25 Now, did the Agency regard whatever marching orders they

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had obtained prior to the death of President Kennedy as still being valid and operative after the death of President Kennedy?

Mr. Helms. This is not very clear to me at this stage. A lot of the same officers were serving President Johnson as they served President Kennedy, and I don't -- I can't recall anymore whether there was any specific issue about whether this was taken up with President Johnson at any meeting or any session. If it had been, I would have thought there would have been records someplace.

Mr. Schwarz. And you have no recollection of President Johnson either being advised or authorizing continuing efforts, is that right?

Mr. Helms. But you see, the Special Group would have continued to consider these matters, and I would have assumed that whoever was chairing the Special Group would have in turn reported to the President, which was the usual practice.

Mr. Schwarz. Well, did the Special Group, after November 22, 1963 take any action either to authorize or to suspend or in any way to focus on the question of whether the United States government was still seeking to assassinate Mr. Castro?

Mr. Helms. I don't recall, sir.

Senator Schweiker. Why don't we go ahead with the others?

Mr. Schwarz. To Lumumba.

Senator Hart of Michigan. Are there any further questions on Castro?

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Mr. Schwarz. You remember Mr. Lumumba?

Senator Baker. Let me ask one question. I hate to bring it up, but I can't resist, since the Ambassador is here and will not be back anytime soon.

To advert to another unhappy period in our life, to go back to the Watergate hearings, and particularly to the White House tapes, there was a conversation recorded on those tapes which was released dated June 23, 1972 which was of general interest, but one of the things in that tape was a remark attributed to President Nixon having to do with the cooperation of the CIA and saying, in effect, that we've done a lot of things, or protected Helms from a lot of things.

Do you have any idea of what he's talking about?

Mr. Helms. I have never known, Senator Baker, I have ever gotten any personal courtesies from President Nixon that I was aware of. I don't know that he ever interceded for me anyplace that I know of except to the extent that as President of the United States and in connection with my official duties he might have supported a request I had for some assistance in Laos for some money or something of this kind.

But when I read that on that tape I could hardly believe my eyes, because I had no idea what he was referring to.

Senator Baker. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Schwarz. I wonder if before turning to Lumumba we could pick up something relating to your relationship with

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President Nixon since that has been raised.

The Senators each have a book headed mail opening.

I have placed before Mr. Helms the cover two pages and pages 29 and 30 from a document entitled "Special Report, Interagency Committee on Intelligence Ad Hoc" dated June, 1970 showing on the second page that you signed that report prepared for the President.

Now is that the report that is referred to as the so-called Huston Plan?

Mr. Helms. If you say it is, I have no reason to quarrel with it. I just don't remember the official name of that report, and certainly if it says I signed some report here, and that's the report, then let us agree that it is.

Mr. Schwarz. And you do recall, we talked about it this morning, that there was an effort in the summer of 1970 that resulted in a document of this sort, right?

Mr. Helms. Yes.

Mr. Schwarz. Okay.

Now, that was prepared at the request of President Nixon for advice on whether there were threats that were not adequately being met by the intelligence community and whether there were restrictions on the techniques available to the intelligence community that might be changed to make it more efficient, is that correct?

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Mr. Helms. My recollection of what they were directing their attention to was improved and more effective information developed on domestic affairs in the United States on not only dissidents but penetrations of foreign intelligence services and activities of foreign intelligence services, and so forth. I don't say that other things aren't covered in the report but my recollection of what the whole purpose of the exercise was to try to improve coverage in the domestic field.

Mr. Schwarz. And in that connection to tell the President whether there were certain restrictions on the ability of the intelligence agencies to operate that might be lifted: is that right?

Mr. Helms. Yes, it strikes me that what he had asked for originally was for a wide-ranging report on all of the things that got in the way of improving this domestic coverage from the FBI and NSA and so forth so he could consider what these various obstacles were or were considered to be, such as laws and traditions and things of that kind.

Mr. Schwarz. One of the techniques which the Committee, including yourself focussed on, was the one called mail coverage; is that right?

Mr. Helms. I assume so. Yes, we have a heading here mail coverage, right.

Mr. Schwarz. And --

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1 Mr. Helms. That is part of, a larger part of the
2 document. It is (C) and I don't have (B) and (A), what came
3 before it.
4 Mr. Schwarz. I think breaking and entering and cer-
5 tain kinds of code restrictions on the NSA.
6 Mr. Helms. I see.
7 Mr. Schwarz. Mail coverage was divided into two
8 types, covert and routine; is that right?
9 Mr. Helms. This is what it says. I must say these are
10 distinctions, which are pretty esoteric, let's accept them.
11 Mr. Schwarz. And toutine meant just looking at the
12 envelope, and [redacted]
13 Mr. Helms. Yes, let's accept this definition here.
14 These are new terms to me really and, in other words, they
15 are not famous trade graph terms.
16 Mr. Schwarz. In any event, we will accept when it
17 says covert it means opening the letters?
18 Mr. Helms. I guess so.
19 Mr. Schwarz. Is that what it says in the first
20 paragraph?
21 Mr. Helms. [redacted]
22
23
24
25 Mr. Schwarz. Of domestic and foreign mail?

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes,sir.

2 Mr. Schwarz. You told the President, President Nixon,
3 that is, that "covert coverage may be discontinued".

4 Mr. Helms. This is what the report tells him.

5 Mr. Schwarz. You signed it?

6 Mr. Helms. I signed it.

7 Mr. Schwarz. All right, that wasn't true, was it?

8 Mr. Helms. You see, what I don't know here, sir, I
9 wouldn't knowingly have signed something that I didn't
10 believe to be true, and I don't know whether this was referring
11 to covert coverage by the FBI or somebody else. At least the
12 agency was going to be at that time with this same small
13 operation in [redacted] that had been going for some 20
14 years, but I can't imagine that it was referring to that
15 because otherwise I would be signing something that wasn't
16 true, and I would have no reason for doing it. I could haave
17 it stuck out so I can only assume in the context of working
18 level meetings which produced this report this must apply to
19 something the FBI had been doing or planning to do.

20 Mr. Schwarz. How would President Nixon know that.
21 As far as he was concerned he was reading a document that
22 says flatly covert coverage has been discontinued and he
23 kind of got in a lot of trouble on this, you remember the re-
24 lease of the Huston Plan, and that it went on and President
25 Nixon authorized the opening of mail for at least a short

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1 period of time, and he authorized it even though his assist-
2 ant told him it was illegal, and so forth.
3 It was kind of an important matter as it turned out
4 for him, and you signed the report that said flatly it had
5 been discontinued when you knew it was continuing?
6 Mr.Helms. If you were wanting to single me out, Mr.
7 Hoover signed it and he knew it was going on. And General
8 Bennett and Admiral Gayler I imagine knew this small opera-
9 tion was going on in the agency. I can't believe this is
10 directed at that particular thing. I am sorry, but I
11 can't believe that.
12 Mr. Schwarz. How was President Nixon to know that?
13 Mr.Helms. I don't have any idea. I wasn't chairman
14 of the committee and I wasn't the one that had the job of
15 explaining to him.
16 Mr. Smothers. Did you have reason to believe President
17 Nixon knew this mail opening was going on, the operation
18 in New York?
19 Mr. Helms. I don't remember about President Nixon. I
20 believe I told President Johnson about it at one time but
21 I don't recall telling President Nixon. It never came up.
22 He was not very available for these matters, unfortunately.
23 I think there were a lot of things that might have been told
24 to him.
25 Senator Schweiker. If I may inject.

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I took a deposition this week and I think one of the things that might come out there, the FBI might have terminated their mail covers at that point but not CIA.

Mr. Schwarz. The record is clear the CIA's lasted until February of 1973.

Senator Schweiker. I think the deposition I took indicated that the FBI had terminated theirs sometime before that.

Mr. Smothers. How long had mail cover been going on? You say about 20 years?

Mr. Helms. It was '52, '53, '54. It began somewhere in there.

Mr. Smothers. WAs there any particular deliveration that you remember over this paragraph here on page 28?

Mr. Helms. I don't recall any discussion of this report ever. I mean it was delivered to President Nixon but I never saw him in connection with it.

Mr. Smothers. Then this would not in your opinion have been an attempt to say one thing in writing to the President while in fact creating--

Mr. Helms. I don't think so. I think you are going down a blind alley here.

Mr. Smothers. I don't want to go.

Mr. Helms. You can find out from these other gentlemen but I can't believe that we would have put this report together

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for the purpose of tricking or misleading President Nixon.

Mr. Smothers. Can you conceive of any purpose at all for having this paragraph in here?

Mr. Helms. No, except what I believe could be the case, that we are talking about an FBI effort here.

Mr. Smothers. Can you think of anything to be gained by CIA or any other Agency putting in this report the fact that coverage had been discontinued?

Mr.Helms. Absolutely nothing, and you know this CIA operation in any event was on a very narrow focus. I believe in this connection a thought here was to have a great deal more coverage involving other parts of the world. CIA operation involved just the Soviet Union and this desire, if recollection serves at all, to expand this domestic collection was not necessarily in the field of Russia, it was in a lot of other fields.

I am sorry I haven't shed more light on it but I think that you might find some of the individuals who were on the working committee could be more specific about it.

Mr. Schwarz. Isn't this the kind of thing that a President first ought to be informed about or at least ought not to be misinformed about?

Do you agree with that?

Mr. Helms. Yes. But, sir, I have a very hard time, I really do, believing that there was any intention on the

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1 part of any of us who signed that report to mislead the
2 President.
3 Now, what accounts for this I don't recall any more, I
4 don't have the whole document, I don't recall the temper of
5 the times, but it seems to me for this committee to try to
6 make a case we were intentionally misleading the President is
7 unfortunate.
8 Senator Hart of MIchigan. If you were a high school
9 teacher and had given an assignment and this turned up
10 in the assignment how would you grade it in terms of accuracy
11 and understanding -- if you were the reader of it.
12 Mr. Helms. Senator Hart, I have not read through that
13 entire report from cover to cover in a long time.
14 Is it not possible that if one read the report from
15 cover to cover that some clarification might emerge, or am I
16 wrong?
17 Senator Hart of Michigan. I haven't read it either and
18 you may be quite right. And I really wasn't familiar with
19 the thing at all until the last five minute, and let me state
20 my question with a little preliminary.
21 Did the President ask to be advised with respect to
22 whatkind of mail covers were going on?
23 Mr. Schwarz. Yes, what kind of restrictions existed as
24 far as activity that might be undertaken.
25 Mr. Helms. Senator Hart, maybe I can help to clarify.

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Senator Hart of MIchigan. Let me explain why I react as I do. And on this one page we have in front of us four responsible Americans defined two kinds of covers, one which is unacceptable, and with respect to that these four good Americans tell the President covert coverage, which is the one defined here, has been discontinued. And Ilistened to the exchange it had not been discontinued.

I don't know what kind of case it makes, if any, but I am trying to find out. Won't you agree that that would mislead a President?

Mr.Helms. As I sit here looking at it today I don't know why it wasn't clarified at the time.

Senator Hart of MIchigan. It is clear. That is my point.

Senator Baker. This played a major role in Watergate hearings.

Senator Hart of Michigan. Youtake over.

Senator Baker. The document was produced with great fanfare and there was proof, which was at least uncertain, that Nixon authorized a go-ahead on the Huston Plan, that Mitchell was unhappy with it and prevailed on the President the next day to call it off, and it was never put into effect. But the entire report, I think, doesnot add much to shis information.

But I would call one's attention to an ambiguity which

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1 I think might be helpful to this conversation.

2 The CIA and military investigative agencies have found

3 mail cover helpful. Then it goes on to say that

4 covert coverage has been discontinued because Congressional

5 hearings involving accusation of governmental invasion of

6 privacy.

7 Those were hearings of Army spying, not CIA spying. I

8 suggest that I am not entire clear, maybe this interfaces

9 with the Army or Defense Department rather than the CIA in

10 its focus on the question of continuance.

11 Mr.Helms. That is helpful, because really I truly

12 believe it has to be something like that.

13 Senator Baker. I do know that Senator Ervin was

14 deeply involved in the invasion of privacy military spying

15 situation. That was the one I believe that got so much

16 publicity and related back to the Huston Plan.

17 Mr. Schwarz. I wonder if the sentence that Senator

18 Baker focussed on which is the second sentence at the top,

19 CIA and military investigative agencies have found this

20 information particularly helpful in the past.

21 Doesn't that connote to a reader that both for the

22 CIA and the military it is a past matter?

23 Mr. Smothers.I think we have really asked the witness

24 about the extent of his knowledge on this. Maybe we ought

25 to do a little more work on it. To ask him to speculate on

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1 why the past tense is used I don't think we are going any-
2 where.

3 Senator Hart of Michigan. If it is the past tense I
4 means something.

5 Mr. Smothers. I agree. I don't think the witness has
6 indicated to us he can help us.

7 Senator Hart of Michigan. I would still give it a poor
8 grade if I was the high school teacher.

9 Mr. Helms. I have to agree with you. I don't think
10 this is a master piece of clarity.

11 Senator Baker. I think the best thing would be to get
12 Tom Charles Huston and ask him.

13 Mr. Helms. Senator Baker, I don't want to delay this
14 proceeding but I thought this thing was put together by a
15 committee.

16 Senator Baker. I think Huston was the one who probably
17 produced it.

18 Mr. Helms. Did he actually write it? I don't recall
19 any more. I know there was some work group meeting and
20 he was the one who put pen to paper. You would remember
21 this better than I. But I am really asking for clarification.

22 Was he the one who put pen to paper?

23 Senator Baker. I am told now that may not be the
24 case. I think he was designated in the White House to produce
25 the document. But I am told that Sullivan of the FBI and

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1 Angleton at CIA actually provided the material
2 that went into it. But I guess Huston would be the editor
3 of it.
4 Mr.Helms. It is the drafter I think we are looking
5 for.
6 Senator Hart of Michigan. Then I will reserve my grade
7 for him.
8 Senator Baker. Why don't we ask staff to interview
9 Sullivan, Angleton and Huston?
10 Mr. Schwarz. We have had Huston.
11 Senator Hart of Michigan. I understand two have been
12 interviewed.
13 Mr. Aaron. That is correct.
14 Senator Hart of Michigan. The third one should be.
15 Senator Baker. Who has been interviewed?
16 Mr. Aaron. Mr. Sullivan was not under oath.
17 Senator Hart of Michigan. Any further discussion of this
18 document?
19 I think counsel wanted to take up and finish with
20 Cuba.
21 Mr. Schwarz. On Mr. Lumumba, you do remember him?
22 Mr. Helms. Patrice Lumumba?
23 Mr. Schwarz.Yes. WAs he someone the U.S. Government felt
24 favorably toward?
25 Mr. Helms. Back at that period of the Congo's history

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1 I didn't -- what I am trying to say is that I am trying very
2 hard at this late date to place Mr. Lumumba in his proper
3 political niche. I am relatively certain that he represented
4 something that the United States Government didn't like but
5 I can't remember any more what it was.
6 Was he a rightist or leftist?
7 Senator Schweiker. Whatever it was he was marked for
8 assassination.
9 Senator Mathias. The curious thing I remember, drawing
10 purely on personal recollection, we actually had him come to
11 Washington as a guest of the U.S. Government and he stayed
12 at Blair House and was wined and dined as our greatest friend
13 at one point, shortly after his accession to power.
14 Senator Hart of Michigan. I think Fidel Castro came
15 after he came to power. That was the only time Congress
16 took an early fall recess because they didn't want to stay
17 around here and have to have a joint session. They quit
18 for the year.
19 Senator Baker. When are we getting back?
20 Mr. Schwarz. Do you know a man named Justin O'Donnell?
21 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.
22 Mr. Schwarz. A CIA agent?
23 Mr.Helms. He used to be an officer in the CIA,yes, sir.
24 Mr. Schwarz. Were you aware that there was a plan to
25 assassinate Mr. Lumumba?

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1 Mr. Helms. Not at the time. I have obviously learned
2 about these things subsequently because I obviously read that
3 report that was made in 1967 at the time so I was conscious
4 later on that therewas, but I have no contemporaneous
5 recollection of this business about Lumumba.
6 Mr. Smothers. Were you at all involved in that?
7 Mr. Helms. I don't recall having been and I think I
8 might very well have but I just don't recall this business
9 about Lumumba.
10 Actually what was wrong with Lumumba, why didn't we
11 like him?
12 Senator Schweiker. That is the tragedy of the whole
13 thing. Nobody knows why we wanted to get rid of somebody.
14 Mr. Smothers. Do you have any recollection beyond
15 what appears in the report or are we just --
16 Mr. Helms. No, I don't.
17 As a matter of fact, interestingly enough, when was
18 Malcolm X alive? He died but when was it?
19 In any event, it is not important about the dates but
20 I remember that in a particular era when he was alive a lot
21 of his followers were very much opposed to the CIA and
22 were making statements about it and so forth, the
23 allegations being widespread in that part of the black
24 community that the CIA had done Mr. Lumumba in, and I remem-
25 ber making some inquiries at the time to find out if there

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1 was any even remote relationship and was told that there was
2 not, and actually, too, made some efforts to see if something
3 could be done to redress this misunderstanding in the black
4 community. But that is all I remember about it.
5 Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Bissell has testified that there was
6 at least a plan to assassinate Lumumba. Did you check with
7 him when you made that check?
8 Mr. Helms. No, he left the agency by that time.
9 Mr. Schwarz. Mr. O'Donnell testified that he was asked
10 by Mr. Bissell to actually assassinate Mr. Lumumba and upon
11 hearing that request he went to see a man called Gottlieb.
12 Do you know Mr. Gottlieb?
13 Mr. Helms. Sidney Gottlieb? Yes.
14 Mr. Schwarz. And was shown some poisons and deadly
15 viruses, and then he came to your office and he
16 stated to you that Mr. Bissell had asked him to kill Lumumba
17 but that he wasn't going to do it, and you said you agreed
18 he shouldn't do it?
19 Mr. Helms. I don't remember the conversation at all
20 but I don't have any reason to cavil with it. I don't recall
21 the conversation.
22 Mr. Schwarz. You can't add anything on that?
23 Mr. Helms. No.
24 Senator Schweiker. What capacity were you serving in
25 then?

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1 Mr. Helms. I would have been Mr. Bissell's number 2
2 at that time.
3 Senator Schweiker. Chief of Operations?
4 Mr. Helms. Yes.
5 Senator Schweiker. If they sent poison down to the
6 Congo, would you have had to know something about that?
7 Mr. Helms. You see, maybe yes, maybe no, Senator
8 Schweiker, because a Deputy Director could make his own
9 arrangements without necessarily going through his under-
10 lings if he chose, and if he had wanted to make specific
11 arrangements for something of this kind he wouldn't necessarily
12 have to tell me that.
13 It would be his option that. That is what I am
14 trying to say.
15 Mr. Schwarz. You had a report prepared on Trujillo also
16 in 1967. Why did you have that report prepared, incidentally,
17 since the Drew Pearson column had been limited to Castro?
18 Mr. Helms. I thought this was all done at the same time.
19 Did Mr. Breckenridge have any other recollection?
20 Weren't these three rports done together because --
21 Mr. Schwarz. They were all done in the spring of
22 1967.
23 Mr. Helms. My recollection is it was the Drew Pearson
24 thing that may have triggered this off in President's
25 Johnson's mind but I believe he asked me for all three of these.

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Mr. Schwarz. Do you recall his saying anything specifically about Trujillo, why Trujillo was included?

Mr. Helms. I think he was just trying to check on various reports that he had heard about how these people had come to die. You know there were assertions around that, and I have forgotten any more whether they were newspaper assertions or just things sort of mentioned by the back of the hand, but he wanted to know whether the Agency had been responsible for these deaths and that was why I asked to have this work done.

Mr. Schwarz. All right, now, on Diem. I think you told us yesterday afternoon that he, President Johnson, had a particular theory about the death of Mr. Diem.

Would you recount that for the committee?

Mr. Helms. He once said to me that he just wondered whether President Kennedy hadn't died because he had caused the death of President Diem of Vietnam, and I remember him having said this to me because it struck me hard at the time. I thought this was a peculiar conception, but that is all I know about it and the conversation never went any further.

Mr. Schwarz. You had the report done on Trujillo and you reported back to President Johnson about all three matters, Castro, Trujillo and Diem?

Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. When you reported on Trujillo, based upon
2 the '67 report, did you say that the Agency had or had not
3 had anything to do with the death of Mr. Trujillo?
4 Mr. Helms. I gave him the controversy as I recall it that
5 want on but said that it was my opinion that the evidence
6 pointed in the direction of the Agency not being responsible
7 for his death.
8 Senator Schweiker. On the Diem point, in your CIA
9 work with South Vietnam was there any link that comes to your
10 mind as to why President Jonson might have said that?
11 Any connection at all between Diem and Kennedy that comes to
12 CIA 's attention?
13 Mr. Helms. No, that was what struck me, Senator
14 Schweiker. I probablywouldn't have remembered something
15 like this if it hadn't seemed to be an odd belief to have.
16 My recollection is he said this to me not terribly long
17 after President Kennedy's assassination and that it
18 may have been part of the trauma of a conspiratorial theory
19 of the time and I honestly don't know but it did strike me
20 as odd.
21 Mr. Schwarz. Isn't he quoted by someone else in the
22 press linking possibly Lee Harvey Oswald to Cuba, too?
23 Are you aware of that? I think this is just a news
24 report, this is nothing more than that, that one of the people
25 who talked to him thought there might be some connection

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between Cuba and Lee Harvey Oswald.

Mr. Helms. Not long ago, Senator Schweiker, I forget, I guess it must have been on one of my trips back here, I don't remember which one, but I was watching a news report one night and it seemed to me that Walter Kronkite had some kind of a clip in the news report.

Senator Schweiker. Of an interview?

Mr. Helms. An interview with President Johnson in which this was generally adverted to. I don't remember the exact words. But President Johnson sort of ended up saying you know I am not entirely sure or something and sort of trailed off.

Mr. Schwarz. Was that the occasion on which President Johnson said we had at some points been running a Murder, Inc. in the Caribbean?

Mr. Helms. No, that language wasn't used. This was an interview after he ceased to be President. It was part of the long series Kronkite made at the ranch sometime after he left office.

Senator Mathias. Was this statement by President Johnson sort of amoral, was he drawing a moral conclusion?

Mr. Helms. It seemed to me to have a heavy overtone of that.

Senator Mathias. Rather than a factual historical deduction?

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes,sir.

2 Senator Schweiker. It was clearly a suspicion, if you

3 saw the film.

4 Senator Baker. I think it was clearly speculative.

5 But I think the tone of the statement was he had reason to be-

6 lieve but was not sure that there had been a conspiracy of

7 some kind.

8 Senator Mathias. That President Kennedy had brought down

9 the nemesis from the skies on himself.

10 Senator Baker. I think that maybe a second conclu-

11 sion.

12 I would request, if I may, that counsel obtain a copy

13 or transcript of that interview and insert that in the record.

14 Mr. Schwarz. Yes.

15 At the time Trujillo died, May 30, '61, you were Mr.

16 Bissell's deputy then?

17 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

18 Mr. Schwarz. Did you have anything to do with the

19 passage of weapons from the United States to dissidents in

20 the Dominican Republic?

21 Mr. Helms. My recollection of the Trujillo business is

22 this was handled largely by Mr. Bissell and the Chief of

23 the Western Hemisphere Division at that time, Colonel King, and

24 that I got into it and as the record shows that I got into it

25 at one point when Bissell must have ben away somethere.

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In other words, this authorizing some document or other. The question has come up about whether or not weapons were passed in the pouch, the official pouch to the Dominican Republic, and I was suggesting, as you remember yesterday afternoon, I don't know whether those records exist any more, but I was really seriously wondering whether the actual State Departmnnt pouch had ever been used for such a purpose because I had put a watch dog on the pouch for the simple reason that we were using State Department facilities, that they had certain regulations about the kind of things that should go in the pouch, and I wanted to be certain that year-in and year-out there were not abuses of the pouch privilege because of the terrible temptation on the lowest level for employees to want to send perfume and other customs items through the pouch to avoid paying duties and so forth, and that also there are all kinds of abuses that one can make over a pouch that can't be opened by foreigners or domestics.

So, I had the widow of a foreign service officer periodically on this job to be sure there weren't violations of the pouch, and if it should come to me there should be a record whether anybody made an exception, whether I or anybody else in the Agency for sending guns through the pouch, there should be something there to indicate that exception was made.

In other words, this is not something that somebody

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could do just by saying send this package in the pouch.

Mr. Schwarz. The record shows some weapons were sent through the pouch,the record being the report made to you in '67. But I asked you, I think, whether you knew in 1960 or 1961 that the U.S. Government had supplied weapons to dissidents in the Domincan Republic.

Mr. Helms. I am sorry, Mr Schwarz, I don't remember. I mean I could have known. I don't think I knew. I don't think I was involved in that part of the operation. But, on the other hand, with all of the things that have gone on through th eyears it could have been that I have been told about this.

Mr. Schwarz. Then I take it also follows you can't add anything as to whether or not the Agency had authority to supply guns at all, number one; had authority to supply guns for the purpose of assassination, number two?

Mr. Helms. I thought that when I was reading this I.G. report that there was a voluminous amount of telegraphic correspondence and memoranda and so forth about every move in this whole thing being cleared with the State Department and so forth.

Are these things not covered in that record?

Mr. Schwarz. There was a great deal of discussion of clearance with the State Department. Indeed, there is a man called Deerborn who is in the State Department who appears to be a motivating force.

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What isn't entirely clear is whether particularly at the last month the knowledge of the persons on both sides of the fence or in the Agency and outside is on an equal footing. All things except for that are clear and I take it --

Mr. Helms. I can't help on that. I am sorry, I recally can't.

Senator Hart of Michigan. Do any members have any questions of the Ambassador?

Senator Schweiker. Yes.

You gave us your philosophy, Mr. Ambassador, on assassinations a moment ago, and I believe you inferred, and maybe said to the staff earlier, that during your tenure as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency there were no political assassinations that took place.

Am I putting words in your mouth?

Mr. Helms. No, you are not. I said that.

Senator Schweiker. That is correct.

I wonder again, for the guidance of this committee, you haven't gotten into this other area yet, but I think in view of your one statement and your experience it would be helpful, what was your policy as Director of Central Ingelligence on what we have read about in the press and media and books and, et cetera, on termination of assets who have outlived their usefulness or termination of other agents? I wonder if you would for the record philosophically tell us your

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1 policy on that while you were Director.

2 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir. These exotic phrases are
3 euphemisms that are used to describe these purposes, none
4 of them were indulged in with my permission and I don't
5 believe they were indulged in at all. I just simply did
6 not believe in this method of taking care of one's embarrass-
7 ments, if you want to call it that, and I never authorized
8 any such actions at any time.

9 As I explained this morning, it is not only the moral
10 question involved but in our form of country and with our
11 philosophy and, if you like, theology, it simply isn't an
12 acceptable way to do business and, therefore, other methods
13 have to be found.

14 I know in the literature of espionage and secret wars and
15 so forth, particularly British, French, German, Russian, and
16 so forth, there are references to the fact when an agent,
17 secret agent becomes an embarrassment he was eliminated, he
18 was gotten rid of. But I just don't believe that this was a
19 viable system, either morally or any other way, for us to
20 conduct ourselves with people who had gone sour and we just
21 tried to find other methods of taking care of the problem.

22 Senator Schweiker. In the earlier days, before your
23 tenure as Director, was this always our policy, or maybe
24 earlier in the era of the CIA this was not as firmly estab-
25 lished or left to local option.

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What is your recollection, not when you were Director, but policies preceding that, from your experience?

Mr. Helms. I don't recall any incidents of agents that went sour being eliminated during any of these 25 years. I really don't recall any incidents of this. I can't say that other times it might not have happened and I never learned of it, but I don't know of any.

Senator Hart of Michigan. That is all I have.

Mr. Schwarz. I think you said now, or you said earlier, that killing or assassination, killing of agents or assassinations of political leaders were both impractical, because of the likelihood of exposure, and so forth, and undesirable or unacceptable to our society, right?

Mr. Helms. Yes, that is right.

Mr. Schwarz. Now, you also have said that, focussing on the Castro operation, there the pressure to get rid of Castro or to overthrow the Castro government constituted an authorization, at least an implicit authorization to kill him, to assassinate him.

Is that right?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I think that is generally an accurate phrasing of it.

Mr. Schwarz. Now, there is a conflict.

Not a conflict but a tension between those two pieces of your testimony.

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Mr. Helms. Right.

Mr. Schwarz. Now when you became Director, so that you were in charge and recognized that you knew that efforts had been undertaken to assassinate Mr. Castro under the general instruction to overthrow his government, and recognizing further that it is your attitude or it is your testimony that you thought that was unacceptable for both practical and moral reasons, did you take any steps to issue an instruction to prevent such activity from occurring again?

Mr. Helms. Well, I do know that, and I don't recall now the means that this manifested itself in, but I certainly made it clear to my senior associates when I was Director, I simply didn't want this to go on, and I think if you will talk to them you will find that they understood this very clearly.

Mr. Schwarz. Of course that is what Mr. McCone said when he took over.

Mr. Helms. I understand that. But I mean we can roll this over and over and over, but may I just say one thing. As somebody pointed out in the newspaper not long ago, if someone had killed Hitler in 1938 and '39 it might have saved the world quite a number of deaths and a very difficult war and vast expense and all the rest of it. And is it not possible that even in the good sense of the citizens of the

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1 United States of America that there are some occasions on
2 which they seem to think that the provocation is larger than
3 it is on others and that certain actions would be more accept-
4 able in one climate than they would be in another climate,
5 even though in the strict interpretation of law and moral
6 judgment this might not be the case.

7 I simply have to rest my case this way because it seems
8 to me history shows this.

9 Senator Schweiker. How do you know when a Hitler
10 becomes a Hitler and where do you draw the line when a
11 Trujillo ought to go or Lumumba ought to go, and who makes
12 that decision?

13 Mr. Helms. It certainly ought to be made at the top of
14 the government, Senator Schweiker. It certainly ought to be
15 made by political official who are subject to the will of
16 the people and the Congress.

17 Senator Schweiker. I have one more question.

18 This is going ahead a little bit, Mr. Ambassador,
19 based on your 25 years of experience, and having seen now
20 many of the problems that have come to bear for the Agency,
21 or all intelligence, including not only the assassination prob-
22 lems but domestic surveillance problems, and the problem with
23 Congress and Laos and the war there.

24 What advice could you give this committee to avoid
25 areas such as this for the intelligence agency of the future

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1 so we do have a strong intelligence agency doing legitimate
2 intelligence activities yet not hamstringing it but yet
3 making sure some of the things we have learned the hard
4 way over these 20-some years don't happen again?
5 What advice could you give to us to do that?
6 end nash
ml fols
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Mr. Helms. Sir, I thin k that I would like to answer you by saying that obviously I have given thought to these matters. I have wondered what it was that if it had happened differently through the years might have avoided these various things.

I have looked at the law, the statute. I think there are things that should be changed in it and I think it should be tightened up in certain respects, but I am also mindful of the fact that as long as one is dealing with himan beings, written words are not going to be the determining factor in their conduct 24 hours a day seven days of the week, and that I would hope that in the future what is called oversight over intelligence activities been given a fuller opportunity, because I honestly believe that part of the problem through the years has been that those people who had oversight over intelligence activities, or particularly the activities of the CIA, were senior officials both in the Executive and in Congress who were so busy and so preoccuplied about other matters that rather short shrift has been given to this activity, and if there are better oversight or better opportunities to have extended conversations with members of the Congress, for example, I think some of these things could be headed off simply by an indication from a chairman of a committee or something that this didn't seem to be desirable, or from some other Senators.

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For example, let me just take a specific instance. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, when I was leaving, had a hearing about something having to do with police departments. It was the sense of the Committee that this was an undesirable activity for the Agency to be helping police departments directly, so they made a statement to the effect this should stop. So I believe it was stopped that very day. There isn't any desire of these people to go beyond what they have been told not to do. But if you can't get ahold of your oversight committee or they don't have meetings and you are busy you go ahead doing as best you can, and I honestly believe, you know, as I look back in history that Mr. Dulles would have been very pleased if he would have had a couple of Senators by the hand when he went into the Bay of Pigs.

Senator Schweiker. I think you are perfectly right about oversight. I couldn't agree with you more. And I think here Congress itself has been derelict. I agree with that. I think that is a very serious weakness of Congress on the oversight committees. The other aspect I think is important, too, and I concede the first point is in many cases when some oversight was tried to be exercised, and let me say very little was. I don't think the intelligence agencies leveled with the Congress per se, too, and I think that that is a very serious problem from those who want to say they want to do a good job when you don't have that leveling or credibility or whatever

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you want to call it, how do we instill that in a system?

Mr. Helms. I thought that the Agency's record of leveling was pretty good when given the opportunity.

Senator Schweiker, I don't recall ever being before one of the oversight committees set up by Congress and not absolutely honestly and fairly answering any question I was asked.

Senator Schweiker. Now, how about the war in Laos? I sat on the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, Mr. Ambassador, and I think I was on there for eight years, all during the war, before CIA owned up to conducting a war in Laos. And I think Stu Symington, who sat on the Select or on the Committee on Supervision of CIA made the discovery.

I can't agree with you on Laos because I sat on the House and Senate Armed Service Committees when you folks came a number of times and testified and we had to stumble into it backwards. I think Senator Symington really did it through Foreign Relations contacts, even though he was on the Oversight Committee of the Armed Services. I think there is a case where I won't agree with you, even though I agree with what you said about oversight.

Mr. Helms. I am under oath. Would you mind if I ducked this? I can give you no answer except to tell the truth and I would rather not get into it now, if you don't mind, unless it is important to you.

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Could I talk to you privately about it if you like?

Senator Schweiker. Okay.

Senator Baker. (Presiding). Are there other questions?

Senator Schweiker. One other question I do have. In terms of assassinations, did any member of Congress know of any assassination attempts? In other words, did the Agency in the oversight responsibility level with any members of Congress or oversight committees about assassinations?

Mr. Helms. I don't know of any conversations about this.

Senator Schweiker. That is all I have.

Mr. Madigan. Mr. Ambassador, there have been rumors of resent vintage that the CIA has contributed money to political campaigns.

Do you know or have any knowledge as to whether --

Mr. Helms. Where is that, sir? What political campaigns?

Mr. Madigan. In the United States?

Mr. Helms. Never to my knowledge.

Mr. Madigan. None to your knowledge?

Mr. Helms. No sir.

Senator Mathias. Ambassador, You, I think explained very fully and lucidly the way in which you felt you had authority to act in the very situations , which was a kind of a blanket authority without restriction, and that once this was determined, as illustrated by the case of Attorney General Robert Kennedy, you didn't feel it was necessary and

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1 refresh that authority with each succeeding episode?

2 Mr. Helms. Yes, I would prefer, Mr. Mathias, to say that

3 we were seeing him so regularly that we felt that we were in

4 tune with what he desired and what was acceptable.

5 Senator Mathias. There was an exchange of, if not words,

6 an exchange of ideas and feelings that kept the situation

7 current and continually kept you reassured that there was no

8 lack, there had been no change of direction at the highest

9 levels?

10 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

11 Senator Mathias. That was true as far as the Castro

12 situation was concerned?

13 In other situations was there an exchange of ideas in

14 this same level of intensity?

15 Mr. Helms. I don't recall except on Vietnam as many

16 regular exchanges on any subject as there were on Cuba. And

17 to get the attention of the top members of the Government on

18 a continuing basis on one theme really takes a great deal of

19 attention to that theme on the part of the White House in

20 order to generate the fact that the Secretary of State should

21 attend that meeting rather than that meeting on a specific day.

22 The power of the President flows into these matters in a strange

23 way and if the Secretary of State appears at an inter-Govern-

24 mental meeting it is because he is pretty clear in his mind

25 that is where he ought to be that day rather than making a

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speech in Chicago or something.

Senator Mathias. How did you manage then under these difficult circumstances -- I understand exactly what you are saying -- manage to be sure that, say, in the Lumumba situation or Trujillo situation that there was this same kind of continuing policy, or there hadn't been any change in policy?

Mr. Helms. I don't know the Lumumba situation, I don't know where the idea came from or what the policy was any longer at all, and the Trujillo situation I think that the record shows an on-going back and forthing between the Agency and the State Department about the situation in the Dominican Republic.

Here it seems to me we had a situation in which it stayed in CIA rather than inter-agency committed formally established dealing with this matter. I know in there, for example, Assistant Secretary Rubottom's name keeps coming up again and again so I assume the Agency people were dealing on a continuing basis.

Senator Mathias. Now, after November 22, 1963, when President Johnson came in, I think your testimony is that you continued to deal with Attorney General Kennedy?

Mr. Helms. I think for a time we did as long as he was Attorney General. I forget how long he stayed there. But I recall even seeing him at one time and saying is there any truth to the rumor you are going to leave and run for the

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Senate, and he said yes, it is true. So I must have been seeing him up to that time. This is just something that occurred to me at this moment but I do recall asking him that question.

Senator Mathias. And you continued to deal on these matters with him although he didn't stand in quite the same relationship with President Johnson as he obviously had to President Kennedy?

Mr. Helms. I think on the matter of the Castro business it would have been with that Special Group rather than him particularly, because by this time that thing had wound down somewhat. But I think that he was still involved. I think that is right.

Senator Mathias. So there is a kind of fluidity about the whole relationship in all of these matters that is very difficult to --

Mr. Helms. Would it be helpful to you if I were to say over this period of 25 years it has been a very fluid thing, this busoness of getting clearances and approvals and how close you are piped in and how close you are not piped in and oversight and all of these things do change through the years. It is one of the reasons I think that the establishment of the Select Committee 25 years later to look at the intelligence community is a very baluable, wize thing for our country. I think a lot of things have to be brought up to date. I think the experiences of 25 years ought to be used to tighten these

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1 things up in the right places. The intelligence community
2 so-called has kind of grown like Topsy over the years. Here
3 was an agency and there was another agency and then you add a
4 third and then you add a fourth and then tou find some way to
5 relate them and find some way to try and coordinate them and
6 find some way to get Congressional oversight of them and if you
7 were to start from absolute scratch and one day say let's set
8 up an intelligence community you might set the thing up
9 entirely differently and maybe more effectively. So the 25
10 years later I think it is just fine that this Committe has
11 seized this problem. It is very difficult one and I don't
12 believe by circling you are going to find many easy answers
13 but it is certainly an effort worth making on behalf of our
14 country. After all, two things. Intelligence is the first
15 line of defense by good effective intelligence organizations,
16 but it has to be good, there is no sense in having an intelli-
17 gence organization like the German one during World War II,
18 which was no good. That does you more harm than good. I
19 don't mean to keep saying that word. The other thing is that
20 in the arranging of the intelligence community, the establish-
21 ment of some kind of an organization which was set up after
22 Pearl Harbor and designated the CIA to get material from all
23 over the Government and give balanced judgments not subject to
24 political or departmental pressures, as to what they believe th
25 future holds or what they believe the strength of the Soviet

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1 Union is is very important because if that function falls into
2 the hands of the self-servers there wouldn't be enough money in
3 the world to support our military establishment.
4 Senator Mathias. I think that is a very helpful and
5 useful comment.
6 I think we understand that by whatever means, by whatever
7 form of human communication was involved that original
8 authorizations were given even at various times for given
9 projects. The projects may have altered. I think the
10 testimony, not only your testimony but Mr. Bissell's and others
11 has been that a project undertaken to remove somebody in a
12 political sense might become later a project to remove that
13 same person in a physical sense. So the projects did alter.
14 But, all pursuant to the original authorization, do you
15 think that there was adequate political control as this kind
16 of undulation took place, that a President or a President's
17 designee, for example, sufficiently aware of the undulations
18 and had an opportunity to veto the action at some point, at
19 some critical point?
20 Mr. Helms. I think that the basic thrust of what you are
21 saying is quite accurate. As a long time, I might put it this
22 way, bureaucrat, it seems to me one of the great problems of
23 Government is that one starts something it takes on a life of
24 its own, then it gets turned off far too late, and I have been
25 guilty of this in my own work. I know this, but it is also

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true of departments of Government. And if the Senate, for example, every year had put before it a list of all the things that it had set up the year before, I venture to say there might be a percentage of them you would like to get rid of a year later or five years later, but they continue going on and getting budgeted and employing people and so forth and nobody gets around to stopping them.

Senator Mathias. We have a snuff box on the floor of the Senate. It is filled everyday.

Let me ask off the record.

(Off the record discussion)

Senator Schweiker. I have one question. Mr. Ambassador, had the CIA, to your knowledge, ever used Peace Corps or Peace Corps members as either direct assistants in any way to our overseas intelligence activities?

Mr. Helms. No sir. I say no sir emphatically because I remember in this case specifically writing a paper making it clear to everybody that was involved in the clandestine side of the CIA the Peace Corps was not to be used because Sargeant Shriver when he was head of the Peace Corpr went to President Kennedy one day and charged that we were using the Peace Corps for cover. And I went into prove that Mr. Shriver was wrong and as a result of this I said there is only one way to be absolutely certain and that is for me to ban this, and I am glad to ban it because we didn't need the Peace Corps

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and I don't want to corrupt an organization which has a very clear purpose and shining light and so forth, so I issued those instructions and I am relatively certain they were complied with through the years.

Senator Schweiker. Can you shed any light -- I think our Peace Corps people were thrown out of Ceylon with the allegation that they were helping the CIA?

Mr. Helms This was a KGB political or psychological warfare rather. At that time for years, even very shortly after the Peace Corps began, that the Soviet propaganda kept asserting that it was CIA that was under the Peace Corps, it was CIA, that was in the Arab press and Asiatic press and African press, and I would assume the Ceylonese press. It was exactly the same, it was Communist propaganda.

Senator Schweiker. There is a written memorandum or written order that is still in effect on this point?

Mr. Helms. It goes back to the early days of the founding of the Peace Corps.

Senator Schwiker. I wonder if we could get that for the record?

That is all.

Senator Baker. Let me ask you two quick questions. Would you supply for us now or later in one of your subsequent appearances some indication of how the CIA interacted or cooperated with the DIA and the NSA?

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Mr. Helms. Let me write down this note.

Senator Baker. We can giv e you a copy of the transcript. What I really want to say is a general description of how CIA interacted with the other intelligence gathering bodies of the Government, FBI, NSA, DIA, and others.

I understand there are 16 that have a primary intelligence gathering mission.

Mr. Helms. Right.

Senator Baker. And I really think it might be better later after you give it some thought.

Mr. Helms. Yes, I would appreciate being able to refresh my memory and on my subsequent appearances, why don't I cover that? I just wanted to write the notes down to have your request accurately.

Senator Baker. If there are no other questions we thank you for being a patient and cooperative witness in an entire day of testimony and the hearing will stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Mr. Helms. Senator Baker, as the Chairman, may I say that I would prefer not to make a statement to the press or get involved in colloquy with them. I wanted to say this before so I don't fly under false colors, that I intend to sneak out of here as best as I can.

Mr. Schwarz. There is a way you can get out from behind.

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Mr. Helms. I think we have been trying to contrive this through the day.

Senator Baker. We will be willing accessories to that.

(Whereupon, at 4:13 p.m., the hearing was recessed subject to the call of the Chair.)

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HELMS EX 3
6/13/75

Col By Exhibit
#5 5.23.75

SECRET/SENSITIVE

14 April 1967

TO: The Director

FROM: John A. McCone

1. No memorandum can be located covering the August 10, 1962 meeting; however, it is highly probable that one exists.

2. Meetings of August 8 or 9, 1962, in the JCS Operations Room (Pentagon) and August 10, 1962, in Secretary Rusk's Conference Room were for the purpose of considering staff proposals for Phase II of operation MONGOOSE. This operation was under the direction of General Lansdale, with Wm. Harvey handling CIA participation (under FitzGerald). At one of these meetings -- probably the meeting in the JCS Room -- I recall a suggestion being made to liquidate top people in the Castro regime, including Castro. I took immediate exception to this suggestion, stating that the subject was completely out of bounds as far as the USG and CIA were concerned and the idea should not be discussed nor should it appear in any papers, as the USG could not consider such actions on moral or ethical grounds.

3. Immediately after the meeting, I called on Secretary McNamara personally and re-emphasized my position, in which he heartily agreed. I did this because operation MONGOOSE -- an inter-departmental affair -- was under the operational control of DOD through the JCS.

4. At no time did the suggestion receive serious consideration by the Special Group (augmented) nor by any individual responsible for policy.

5. Through the years the Cuban problem was discussed in terms such as "dispose of Castro," "remove Castro," "knock off Castro," etc., and this meant the overthrow of the Communist Government in Cuba and the replacing of it with a democratic regime. Terms such as the above appear in many working papers, memoranda for the record, etc., and, as stated, all refer to a change in the Cuban Government.

John A. McCone

John A. McCone

SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET

Witness
HELMS Ex 4
6/13/75

16 August 1963

EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Sam Giancana

1. Attached is the only copy in the Agency of a memorandum on subject, the ribbon copy of which was sent to the Attorney General in May of 1962. I was vaguely aware of the existence of such a memorandum since I was informed that it had been written as a result of a briefing given by Colonel Edwards and Lawrence Houston to the Attorney General in May of last year.

2. I spoke with Colonel Edwards on the telephone last evening, and, in the absence of Mr. Bannerman on leave, I was with Colonel Edwards' assistance able to locate this copy. As far as I am aware, this is the only written information available on Agency relationships with subject. I hope that this will serve your purpose.

3. I assume you are aware of the nature of the operation discussed in the attachment.

Richard Helms
Deputy Director (Plans)

Attachment
3-page memo dated 14 May 1962,
TS-101486 - Memo for the Record -
Arthur James Balletti et al -
Unauthorized Publication or Use
of Communications.

TOP SECRET

NW 50955 DocId:32423463 Page 188

SECRET SENSITIVE EYES ONLY

14 August 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Plans)

SUBJECT : Operation MONGOOSE

1. Action. None. This memorandum is for your information.

2. Reference is made to our conversation on 13 August 1962, concerning the memorandum of that date from General Lansdale. Attached is a copy of this memorandum, revised from which are four words in the second line of the penultimate paragraph on page 1. These four words were "including liquidation of leaders."

3. The question of assassination, particularly of Fidel Castro, was brought up by Secretary McNamara at the meeting of the Special Group (Augmented) in Secretary Rusk's office on 10 August. It was the obvious concern at that meeting, in answer to a comment by Mr. Ed Murrow, that this is not a subject which has been made a matter of official record. I took careful note of the comments at this meeting on this point, and the Special Group (Augmented) is not expecting any written comments or study on this point.

4. Upon receipt of the attached memorandum, I called Lansdale's office and, in his absence, pointed out to Frank Hand the inadvisability and stupidity of putting this type of comment in writing in such a document. I advised Frank Hand that, as far as CIA was concerned, we would write no document pertaining to this and would participate in no open meeting discussing it. I strongly urged Hand to recommend to Lansdale that he excise the phrase in question from all copies of this memorandum, including those disseminated to State, Defense, and USIA. Shortly thereafter, Lansdale called back and left the message that he agreed and that he had done so.

SECRET SENSITIVE EYES ONLY

NW 50955 DocId:32423463 Page 189

SENSITIVE EYES ONLY

5. For your information also, in your absence and since the attached memorandum already had been distributed and in view of the possibility that this might come to the Director's attention, I informally briefed Walt Elder on the above.

WILLIAM K. HARVEY
Chief, Task Force W

Attachment
Memo fr Gen Lansdale dtd 13 Aug 62

EYES ONLY