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IV

Tel Taps and Photo Surveillance

Mr. Helms offered testimony regarding the CIA's reticence to inform the Warren Commission, at least during the initial stages of its investigation, of the existence of ^{at CIA's} telephonic and photo surveillance operations in Mexico City directed against the Cuban and Soviet Embassy / Consulate. Helms' testified:

The reason for the sensitivity of these telephone taps and surveillance was not only because it was sensitive from the Agency's standpoint, but the telephone taps were running in conjunction with the Mexican authorities and therefore, if this had become public knowledge, it would have caused very bad feelings between Mexico and the United States, and that was the reason.

[Helms Exec Session hearing, pp 51-52, regarding ^{Govt. of} Mexico involvement see ___]

Nevertheless, the CIA had provided information to the FBI regarding the Mexico City surveillance operations

prior to the assassination and during the post-assassination period on a regular basis [cites?]
 In addition, as of November 28, 1963 the White House, through information made available to ^{by DCI McGeorge} National Security Council? Duettre McGeorge Bundy, was aware that the CIA had telephone taps in operation against the Cuban and Soviet Embassy / Consulate and that through the tapes Oswald's presence ~~at~~ in Mexico City had been corroborated ^{prior to the assassination} ~~attempts~~

The CIA's reticence to inform the Warren Commission of the surveillance operations and ^{as he describes} ~~to volunteer~~ ^{to} ~~the~~ Commission in ~~the~~ the early stages of the investigation ~~with~~ the transcription of Oswald's ^{conversations} ~~with~~ Cuban Soviet and Cuban officials is a source of concern to this Committee. It is indicative of an attitude on the Agency's part, ~~which would~~ ^{to} unilaterally determine the substance of CIA generated information to be provided the Warren Commission. [see Scels. dep. J. This process might well have hampered the Commission's ability to proceed

in its investigation with all the facts before it, even those which explain certain sensitive operations to the Commission.

might have meant

On January 31, 1964, the CIA provided the Warren Commission with a memorandum that chronicled Lee Harvey Oswald's Mexico City visit during Sept 26, 1963 - October 3, 1963. That memorandum ~~did~~ made no mention of the fact that Oswald's various conversations with the Cuban and Soviet Embassy/Consulates had been tapped and subsequently transcribed. Furthermore, that memorandum made no mention of the fact that the CIA had tapped and transcribed conversations between Cuban Embassy employee ~~Edgy~~ Sylvia Dunn and Soviet officials at the Soviet Embassy/Consulate nor was mention made of the conversations between Cuban President Dorticos and Cuban Ambassador to Mexico which the CIA had also tapped and transcribed.

On Feb 10, 1964 Helms appeared before the Commission (secretive) and said that the CIA had tapped and transcribed conversations between Cuban Ambassador to Mexico and President Dorticos.

On February 10, 1964, J. Lee Rankin wrote Helms in regard

④

to the CIA memorandum of January 31. A review of Rankin's letter indicates that at least as of the letter date the Warren Commission had no ^{substantive} knowledge of the telephone surveillance operation or the production i.e., the tapes and transcripts, from that operation Rankin inquired on the February 10, 1964 whether Oswald's direct communication with employees of the Soviet Embassy (as stated in # ___ of the January 31 memorandum) had been facilitated by telephone or interview. Manifestly, if the Warren Commission had been informed of the telephone surveillance operation and its success in tapping Oswald's, the inquiry by Rankin would not have been made.

Raymond Paccia's testimony tends to support this conclusion. It was Paccia's recollection that between the time period of January 1964 - April 1964, Warren Commission representatives had visited the CIA's headquarters in Langley, Virginia

and had been shown various transcripts resulting from the CIA's telephone surveillance operations in Mexico City. [Rocca dy. p 89]

However, Mr. Rocca did not personally make this material available to Commission representatives and was not able to state under oath ^{precisely} the point in time at which the Warren Commission learned of these operations.

On February 19, 1964 the CIA responded to Rankin's inquiry of February 10. The Agency response did indicate that Oswald had phoned the ~~the~~ Soviet Consulate and was also interviewed at the Consulate. However, the Agency did not reveal the source of this information in its response to the Commission or indicate that it would be revealed by other means (e.g. by oral briefing)

continue
& show
no mention
in WC memo
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During the period of March - April 1964, David Slawson drafted a series of memoranda which ^{among other issues} concerned, Warren Commission knowledge of and access to the production material derived from the CIA telephone surveillance operations in Mexico City. A review of these memoranda tend to support the Committee's belief that Warren Commission, through Moses Slawson, Coleman, and Willers did not obtain access to ^{CIA} telephone surveillance material until April 9, 1964. At that time, Coleman, Slawson and Willers met with Win Scott, the CIA's Chief of Station in Mexico City who provided them with various transcripts and translations derived from CIA telephone taps of the Cuban and Soviet Embassy / Consulates. [Slawson memorandum of April 22, 1964, subject:]

However, ~~it~~ prior to that date it appears doubtful that ^{the Commission} had been given ^{even partial} access to the referenced material ^(the record) ~~on~~ March 12, 1964, ~~by~~ ~~Slawson~~ ~~and~~ ~~Willers~~ ~~and~~ ~~others~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~CIA~~ ~~office~~ ~~in~~ ~~Mexico~~ ~~City~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~Warren~~ ~~Commission~~ ~~had~~ ~~at~~ ~~least~~ ~~become~~ ~~aware~~ ~~that~~

7/2/64
nevertheless

the CIA did maintain telephone surveillance of the Cuban Embassy/Consulate. [Slawson memorandum, March 12, 1964, Subj: Meeting with CIA representatives]. Slawson's memorandum reveals that the Warren Commission had learned that CIA had in its possession transcripts of conversations between ~~the~~ the Cuban Ambassador to Mexico, Arnaz and the Cuban President Dorticos. These conversations, ^{request of the Warren Commission representatives at a meeting with CIA officials, including Richard Helms} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~obtained~~ ^{obtained} after Silva Duran's arrest and interrogation by the Mexican Federal Police, ~~and~~ ~~obtained~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~Warren~~ ~~Commission~~ [cite?] ^{at that date} ~~Helms~~ responded to the Commission's request for access, indicating that he would attempt to arrange for the Warren Commission representatives' review of this material. [Slawson memo, March 12, 1964]

at enclosed

It should be noted that the records reviewed do not reveal the manner in which the Commission learned of the Dorticos-Arnaz intercept. As detailed above, both the FBI and White House (through McGeorge Bundy) were aware of the CIA's telephone surveil-

ESIC 3 One on the other
 lane activities in Mexico City. ~~_____~~
~~_____~~ could well have provided
 the Warren Commission with this
 information. Nevertheless, Raymond
 Rocas testimony as cited herein Rocas
 dep. 3 lends ^{some} support to the
 position that the Commission had
 been informed of the Daticos - Armas
 conversations through the CIA's
 initiative.

Another ~~_____~~, Slawson
 memorandum, dated March 25, 1964
 concerned Oswald's trip to Mexico.
 Slawson therein stated that the
 tentative conclusions, ^{as} related to
 Oswald Mexico trip, that he had reached
 were derived from CIA memoranda
 of January 31, ¹⁹⁶⁴ and February 19, 1964,
~~_____~~ and a ~~_____~~ ^{in addition} ~~_____~~ ^{summary}
 of interrogations ^{conducted by the police} of certain Cuban
 Embassy employees. Slawson
 wrote?

a large part of it (the summary
 report) is simply a summation of
 what the Mexican police learned
 when they interrogated Mrs. Silvia
 Duran, ^{ESIC 3} a employee of the Cuban

Consulate in Mexico City, and is therefore only as accurate as Mrs. Duran's testimony to the police.

~~These~~ ~~comments~~ ^{indicate} ~~the~~ ~~limited~~ ~~reliance~~ ~~placed~~ ~~upon~~ ~~the~~ ~~Mexican~~ ~~police~~ ~~summary~~ ~~which~~ ~~is~~ ~~no~~ ~~indication~~ ~~that~~ ~~Slawson~~ ~~had~~ ~~been~~ ~~provided~~ ~~with~~ ~~the~~ ~~Duran~~ ~~telephone~~ ~~intercept~~ ~~transcripts~~, ~~which~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~Committee's~~ ~~belief~~ ~~that~~ ~~Slawson~~ ~~had~~ ~~not~~ ~~been~~ ~~given~~ ~~access~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~Duran~~ ~~transcripts~~ is further supported by reference to his memorandum of March 27, 1964. [Cite] wherein he states ~~that~~ his ~~conclusion~~ ~~is~~ ~~based~~ ~~upon~~ ~~an~~ ~~analysis~~ ~~of~~ ~~Selva~~ ~~Duran's~~ ~~testimony~~ ~~before~~ ~~the~~ ~~Mexican~~ ~~police~~. Once again, ~~there~~ ~~is~~ ~~no~~ ~~indication~~ ~~that~~ ~~he~~ ~~had~~ ~~reviewed~~ ~~any~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Duran~~ ~~transcripts~~. Had Slawson been given access to ~~the~~ ~~transcripts~~, his analysis ~~and~~ ~~conclusions~~ ~~should~~ ~~have~~ ~~reflected~~ ~~the~~ ~~fact~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~review~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~transcripts~~ by its corroboration a criticism of the Mexican police summary report.

that Slawson

the Duran transcript by virtue of Slawson's comment concerning the transcript which was not shown to the Warren Commission as of March 25 had been provided little or no information re Slawson's Duran

7 attempts of Slawson had been given access to the transcripts, and that their substance would have been incorporated into his analysis and conclusions re Slawson's Duran transcript

As of March 25, 1964, the record demonstrates that the Warren Commission, in its effort to investigate Oswald's activities in Mexico City had not been given access to the Duran transcripts. The Commission had been forced to rely upon the two memoranda that did not make reference to the surveillance operations and a summary police report. The Agency had been successful for over 3 months in not exposing the surveillance operations to the review of the concerned Warren Commission staff members. As was stated in the CIA cable to its Mexico City Station, ^{in December 29, 1964}

Our present plan in passing info to Warren Commission is to eliminate mention of telephone taps, in order protect your continuing ops. Will rely instead on statements of Silvia Duran and on contents of Soviet consular file which Soviets gave ODACID here.
 (CIA cable, DIR 90466, FOIA 420-759, Dec 20, 1964 CIA p 2144)

