

HW

1525 Acton St.
Berkeley, CA 94702
February 4, 1980

Dear Mark,

Thanks for your letter of the 30th, which arrived today. Yesterday, I got CD 347 and the Owen affidavits, plus Jim's letter. As I had suspected, they had been sent to my previous address. That address was more than a year old, so the post office could not forward the mail; the carrier gave it to a neighbor/friend, who called me yesterday. I'm sorry I wasn't able to contribute anything earlier, but I think you are way ahead of me on the factual details - Harold is too, I expect.

To deal with the specifics in your letter first: here is a copy of page 24 of the Stern-Rankin memo of 2/17/64, unannotated (but not very clear).

Your points on when the Mexico tape was heard are well taken, and persuasive. I agree that the HSC didn't do a good job on this issue. Of course, they may have learned more than they told us.

Before I forget: you may have heard about the recently proposed (and maybe submitted) legislation which would essentially exempt the CIA from the FOIA, except when people request their own files. Obviously our experiences with the JFK documents provide good arguments against such an exemption. Is there anything we can be doing about this?

By the way, the latest CIA promise on the last batch of JFK documents was in a letter of 27 August 79, saying that it would be "at the very least several more months." On 14 February 1978 [sic] they told me that "the final batch will be released in approximately six to eight weeks." In addition to the general request, I have a couple of specific requests (Rockefeller Commission stuff relating to my memo, and mail intercept material) going back to March and June 1976, respectively.

With regard to the material you recalled, about a CIA investigation of Kostikov's movements, done before or shortly after 11/22: I couldn't find anything giving any details of the results of that investigation. What I did find is enclosed (6 pp.): on 11/23 HQ asked for info on Kostikov's activities [#42-16]; on 11/27 a memo was written concluding that he was KGB (#179-71), and the FBI was given a resume of his observed activities [#xxx-150, 2 pp.]. On 20 December HQ asked [Mexico] for a specific file, noting that "your info and study will be a vital contribution to our presentation to Warren Commission" - which means it should have gotten into CD 347. [# xxx-173] Then, on January 9, it was reported that Kostikov had met with the chief of the KGB's Latin American department. [# xxx-190]

Perhaps the most interesting document I came across is CIA # xxx-149, an early ~~xxx~~ (11/24?) summary of the CIA's info on LHO. CD 347 may, in fact, have used this as one of the source documents, since there is a lot of similarity in structure. Paragraph 10 notes that Kostikov was observed post-11/22. It sort of corresponds to paragraph 18 of CD 347.

Paragraph ~~18~~ 2 of item 149 seems to correspond to paragraph 5 of CD 347. Thus, it may well be that the big deletion in CD 347 (paragraphs 5-12d) includes much of what is in paragraphs 2-7 of item 149, where there are fewer deletions.

Now to CD 347. I'll just give you my recollections of what has been released before, and what is likely to be in the blanks, without taking the time to look things up. As I said, you're probably way ahead of me on this.

Graf 1: Enclosed is p. 10 of R73-IM5, the 2/14/64 Coleman-Slawson memo. The authors note that LHO's comments to the guard were "in what has been described as 'halting' Russian." Someone should get an IBM executive typewriter and see if "in halting Russian" fits the second deletion. (As you know, such a deletion would involve more than just sources and methods, since lots of people - such as Marina - thought Oswald's Russian was pretty good.)

P. 10 of R73-IM5 has more detail about how the guard decided it was probably Kostikov than the present version of CD 347. My guess is that Owens didn't have the Coleman-Slawson memo around when he was going over CD 347.

Of course, I don't have to tell you that there is nothing new in grafs 1-4, as released. As I mentioned on the phone, one can probably still argue that CD 347 was withheld in full because it established that the CIA was not candid with the WC about the MMM photo.

The deletion at the top of p. 2 presumably says that the guard went into the Embassy, and is deleted because it indicates a physical (visual) surveillance.

The long deletion presumably includes the info from surveillance, the Duran story, and the Dorticos-Armas conversation, arranged chronologically.

Any idea what the deleted material in "d" on p. 8 is? I don't think any pre-assassination stuff would have gone to the White House.

Section II (Kostikov), as now released, doesn't have much more than the sanitized and published version, CE 2764. Likewise for the D story.

Finally, a few comments on the Owens affidavits:

~~It's not clear to me what happened between 1/9 and 1/11. Did someone at the CIA get around to reading CD 347 - i.e., someone with some knowledge of the case? Did you do something to force the issue? Did the judge make any requests?~~ OVER 1 YR -
1 MISREAD !!

Are you planning to write this story up? I think a nice succinct version would be of interest to non-buffs too. For example, has anyone talked to Lardner?

While the idea of the CIA hiding the fact that they were spying on the Soviet and Cuban Embassies is sort of silly, it occurs to me that what could be really sensitive is spying on the Mexican government or police. That could be the problem with the transcripts of the Duran interrogations - maybe the Mexicans didn't give them to the CIA?

I am puzzled by the "B" deletion in graf 25, as explained on p. 9 of the 1/11 affidavit. "A ??? polygraph expert," with a deletion which avoids the disclosure of an intelligence method? Given the spacing peculiarities of this typewriter, it might be possible to distinguish between "CIA" and "FBI." I don't think the CIA would have used a more exotic abbreviation - a CIA component, or something for the Mexican police - in a memo for the WC.

Maybe I can be of more help after I see your and Harold's analysis of this material. Again, let me encourage you to write it up for a more general audience. The failure to explain the MMM photo, and the current attempts to cut back the FOIA, might be enough for a story. I tend to get distracted by the complicated details.

With best regards,

Paul

PLH