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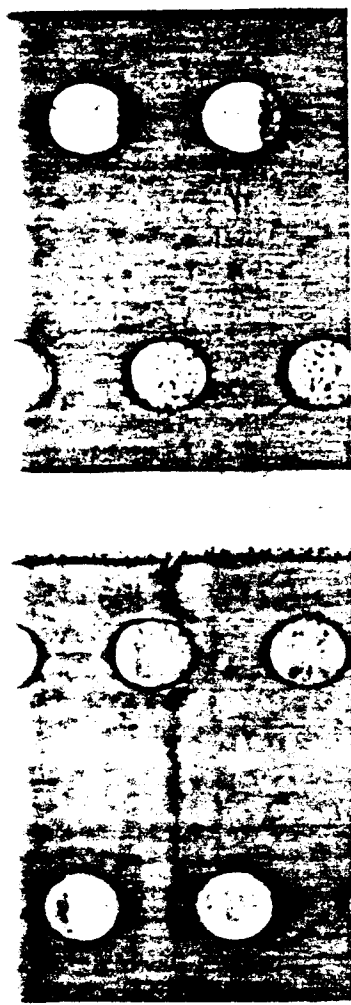
Clowup of Cuban photo of FRANK STURGIS

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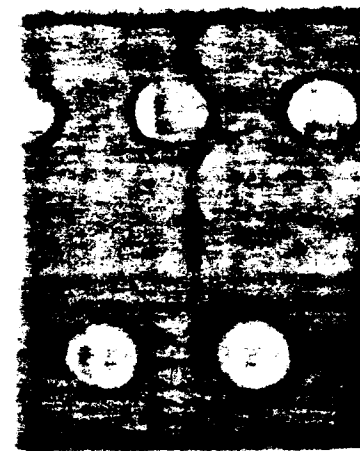
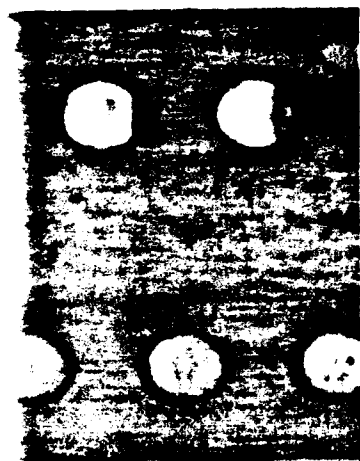


CIA Photo of frank Sturris in Cuba - see note behind picture - real name Frank Fiorino





Robert Curtis, Left, at Anti-Castro Training Base in Mexico in 1968  
... Frank Sturgis, right, while on a pro-Castro exercise in Cuba in 1959



# Was Anti-Castro Plot a Cover For Car-Theft Ring in Mexico?

By RUB ELDER  
Herald Staff Writer

The new red-and-white Olds, Florida license tag 10E-3017, a rental car from King Motor Co., Fort Lauderdale, pulled into the Mexican border station on a Sunday night, dusty from a long drive.

There were three men in the car, and a bag of oranges lay on the shelf under the rear window.

Three things made this car different from others coming into Mexico from Texas on a hot September weekend.

The Olds had a very hard back seat. It weighed more than General Motors ever meant it to. And it eventually would be listed as stolen.

THE BACK SEAT was solid as a stone because the springs had been removed and replaced with disassembled rifles. The Olds was overweight because the side panels had been stuffed with handguns, ammunition, guerrilla warfare training manuals and military uniforms.

And the car would be listed as stolen because King Motor Co. never would see it again.

The driver, a skinny young man with sharp blue eyes,

long hair and a reddish beard, got out and gave the Mexican border guards a dollar each. He went inside the border station and gave their captain \$5.

The Olds crossed into Mexico without a search.

That was the beginning of the Mexican caper of Frank Fiorini, alias Frank Sturgis, Watergate burglar, and his South Florida soldiers of fortune.

WHEN IT HAPPENED, in 1968, Sturgis told reporters it was a "commando raid on Castro's Cuba."

Now, almost five years later to the day, the U.S. Justice Department is preparing to prosecute him and six other South Florida men on charges that the mysterious Mexican mission really was a conspiracy to smuggle stolen automobiles out of the United States.

Scheduled for arraignment in Miami Sept. 10, Sturgis now is in the federal prison in Danbury, Conn., serving a 40-year provisional sentence for his part in the Watergate break-in.

In Texas, a codefendant, former South Florida resident Jerry Buchanan, has claimed the whole car theft case merely is a government

ploy to force Sturgis to talk about the 1972 burglary of the Democratic National Committee headquarters.

WHAT REALLY happened during the 1968 Mexican adventure until now has been a closely guarded secret, known only to the participants and, possibly, the FBI agents who have been tracking them for five long years.

Last week, however, Robert Curtis of Pompano Beach, a member of Sturgis' "Secret Army Organization" and a key government witness scheduled to testify at this month's upcoming trial, told his story in an exclusive interview with The Herald.

With Sturgis on record as claiming the entire affair was an anti-Communist foray against Castro, and with the

Justice Department claiming it was merely a cover for car theft, Curtis takes a middle position.

According to him, it was some of both. And Robert Curtis has reason to know. He was the bearded man who drove the red-and-white Olds across the border. And later he did the same with two other allegedly stolen cars listed in the government indictment.

As Curtis relates it, the whole thing began with a classified ad.

APPEARING SPORADICALLY in various newspapers in July and August 1968, the ad called for "young men interested in adventure, intrigue and foreign travel."

It indicated that the work was with a mercenary army in South America. Pay was described as "very high." Those interested were invited to contact Col. Francisco Quesada in care of Ray Sandstrom, a Fort Lauderdale lawyer.

When reporters inquired about the ad in 1968, Sandstrom, who spent weekends flying cargo to Saigon for Airlift International as a part-time pilot, said the ad was placed without his knowledge.

Last week, however, Sandstrom told The Herald that the advertisement appeared after Sturgis asked me if he could use my address to get some mail, and I let him.

Sandstrom said Sturgis told him the mail concerned an anti-Castro mission into

ALONG WITH others who answered the ad, Robert Curtis was told that the mysterious Col. Quesada was in charge. Sandstrom said Quesada "may be Cuban," and Sturgis described Quesada as a former Cuban doctor who had fled into exile and formed a "Secret Army Organization" in Venezuela.

There was some vague talk later that the colonel was dying as a mercenary in the Congo. No one ever saw him. Government sources are now convinced that "Col. Quesada" actually was Sturgis.

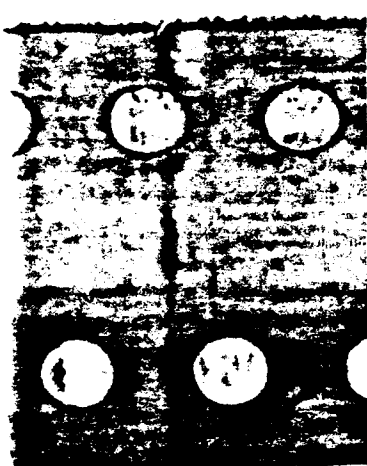
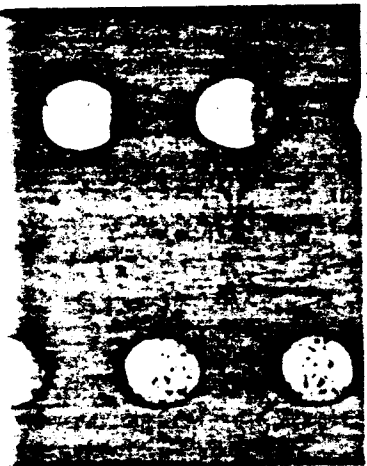
At any rate it was Sturgis, identifying himself as "Frank

Fiorini," who greeted the 50 men who answered the ad and came to a meeting in the back room of a truck-sales company on Miami's NW 36th Street.

ANYONE WHO KNEW much about the anti-Castro movement in Miami had heard of Frank Fiorini. He had fought with Castro, and once was photographed, gun in hand, standing proudly on the fresh mass grave of 75 Batista loyalists executed by the Castro regime.

Later, he switched sides and claimed to have made a daring propaganda raid in which anti-Castro leaflets allegedly were dropped from a plane over Cuba. Sturgis — or Fiorini, as he then was known — was a controversial soldier of fortune, and precisely the kind of man who might advertise for followers who wanted adventure, danger, and high pay.

"He told us men with two kinds of experience would get preference for this job," Curtis says. "Ex-cons and



There were more meetings. According to the indictment, they continued "during July, August and September of 1966 . . . at various locations," including Sturgis's residence at 2515 NW 122nd St.

Sturgis was present, the indictment charges, as were codefendants Jerry Buchanan and Max Gonzalez (also known as Max Gorman) and two unindicted coconspirators: Richard G. Brown and Robert Curtis.

**CURTIS SAYS** Sturgis told the others that he was organizing a "Secret Army Organization" to "attack Castro ships and stop trade with Cuba, and eventually attack Cuba itself."

Curtis, then 31 and a former Marine, was impressed.

"Frank painted a beautiful picture. He said he was the phantom flyer who had dropped leaflets over Cuba. He said we was going in and in-

filtrate with the Cuban people in the mountains, and 50 per cent of them would join us.

"He said it could be a one-way trip, but we could make \$60,000 in three years, and we'd have a \$10,000 insurance contract.

"I thought it was an adventure."

According to Curtis, he and about 15 others signed formal contracts with the "Secret Army Organization," and Sturgis stamped the contracts with a notary's seal, but kept all the copies.

**FIVE YEARS** ago this weekend, Curtis and other members of the group prepared to leave for Mexico. Curtis recalls the experience as "just like going back in the service."

"I quit my job and sold my car and my truck. I purchased a rifle with a scope. Then there was a delay, and I sat for a week in a motel in Fort Lauderdale, waiting."

The waiting would be Curtis's eventual undoing, for it was then that he rented that red-and-white Oldsmobile, vehicle identification number 354878D118437.

In what the U.S. Attorney's office admits may be a self-serving claim by their prospective witness, Curtis blames Sturgis for the car's ending up in Mexico.

"Frank said, 'You're gonna have to take the rental car.' I said, 'What do you mean? That car's rented in my name.' He said, 'That's all right.'"

If Sturgis indeed said it was all right, he was wrong. In 1969, a Broward County jury took just 20 minutes to find Curtis guilty of unauthorized use of the car, a crime for which he went to jail.)

**ACCORDING TO** the indictment, the rented Olds was one of at least three South Florida cars that entered Mexico with Sturgis's self-styled army. Max Gonzalez allegedly drove a new red Chevrolet, and Lomen Ray Bruce transported a new ivory-colored Chevrolet. The ivory Chevy, like the Olds, was a rented car. It isn't clear where the red one came from, and the government does not claim it was stolen.

By October 7, the indictment says, the Floridians traveling in the various cars had regrouped in Guadalupe, Mexico. According to Curtis, the cars disappeared and the would-be freedom fighters "hung around a Mexican motel."

Then, Curtis says, he and Richard Brown were told that "we had to go back to Texas and rent another car. Frank had a typewriter with a leather case. Sewn into the case were Florida license tags, blank titles, birth certificate forms and blank registration forms."

Armed with the typewriter kit and a Gulf Oil travel card

in the name of Charles Connell, Curtis and Brown went to Brownsville, Tex., and rented a 1969 maroon Ford Torino with a black stripe on the side.

"We put on a Florida tag and threw away the Texas tag." Then they drove the car into Mexico.

**LESS THAN** a week later, according to the indictment, Curtis was at it again, and or-

ders from Sturgis and Buchanan.

Curtis remembers this trip as the wildest one. "Frank said, 'Bob, you got to go back into Texas and get another car. You have 15 minutes to get ready.'"

Curtis took a bus to Brownsville. This time he used the Gulf card to pick up a red 1969 Mustang so new that the odometer showed only three miles. Averaging 110 m.p.h., Curtis sped back across the border. The car had 800 miles on it when he got to Guadalajara.

"I FELT kind of bad about it, because the rental guy said he just had two, and somebody had taken one, and what I was thinking was, 'Well, now you don't have any.'"

Finally, the time came to launch the long-promised commando raid. The group moved to Progreso, Mexico, and boarded a yacht called the Amigo. The Mexican captain later claimed the Americans hijacked his ship. Curtis confirms it, saving the cap-

tain and his mate were forced at gunpoint to sail where Sturgis told them.

The directions apparently weren't overly expert. The raiders never came anywhere near Cuba. The Amigo ran aground on the reefs off British Honduras, and the soldiers of fortune found themselves jailed in that country's capital, Belize.

What happened after that is not altogether clear. Curtis is under the impression that George Smathers, then a U.S. senator from Florida, intervened on behalf of the Sturgis group. But his ac-

count admittedly is based only on what he says Sturgis told him:

**"THEY LET FRANK** make a phone call. He called Sen. Smathers in Washington, D.C., and then he (Sturgis) came back and told us we were going to get some political help."

Efforts to reach Smathers for comment were unsuccessful last week, although messages were left with his

Miami and Washington offices.

It seems clear that somebody in Washington stepped in to help because Sandstrom, the Fort Lauderdale lawyer, says he got a call "from a man at the State Department, wanting to know if I could go down to British Honduras and represent them (the Sturgis group)."

It wasn't necessary. Three at a time, the men were freed and flown to the United States, where they were not arrested upon their return.

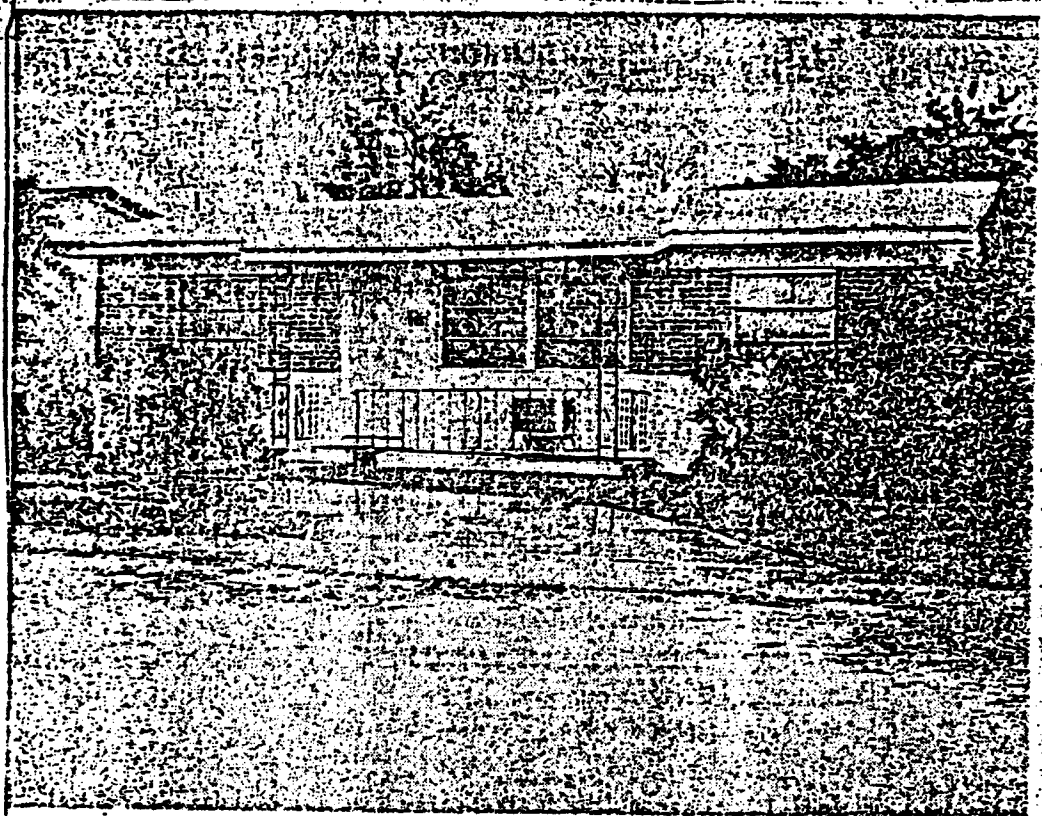
"It seemed strange to me," Sandstrom says. "I gather it (the raid) had the tacit approval of somebody in the government, or they would have been in trouble."

**SOME OF THE** reporters who interviewed Sturgis upon his return to Miami were skeptical as to whether the raid actually was intended to reach Cuba. They pointed out that to sail from Progreso, supposedly for Cuba, and to hit Honduras instead is to miss the ostensible target by nearly 4 miles.

Sporting a gray-streaked beard, the chubby, dark haired Sturgis stood his ground. The plan had been to rendezvous with another boat, he insisted.

"We planned to stage the raid with about 40 men after the rendezvous," he said.

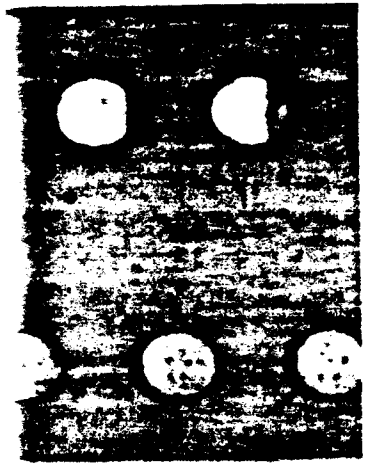
Curtis, who claims to have been at Sturgis's side during most of the mission, never heard of the second boat or the additional men.



—Herb K. Starr Photo by DAVE DIDIO

**Sturgis' Mexican Adventurers Sometimes Meet at His Miami Residence**

*... the house, at 2515 NW 122nd St., was one of several places the group held sessions*





But Curtis says, has he ever seen any of the "very high" pay he was promised.

On his return to the states, he was interviewed by the FBI and told to go home. For six months, the entire affair seemed to be over.

**THEN ONE DAY** he parked his custom Corvette in front of a Fort Lauderdale grocery and found himself surrounded by policemen. He was charged with stealing the rented Oldsmobile and convicted of the lesser charge of unauthorized possession.

Curtis is the only member of the Sturgis group yet to go to jail as a result of the Mexican mission. He has agreed to testify as a federal witness, and he says a federal prosecutor has told him the case involves more than 100 stolen cars.

Curtis disagrees with Buchanan's argument that the car theft conspiracy case is merely a government move to pressure Sturgis into talking about Watergate.

(In a recent interview in Texas, Buchanan questioned the timing of the indictments. "Why, after five years, do they bring up these charges?" he asked.)

Pressed to explain why it took the government five years to get around to prosecuting car theft, U.S. Attorney Robert W. Rust of Miami explained that "we wanted to include all possible evidence and that some of the evidence had to be gathered in Texas, and some in Florida, which made for a disjointed investigation."

**UNLIKE BUCHANAN**, Curtis is satisfied with the government's explanation that it simply took a long time to put the case together.

But Curtis admits he has plenty of unanswered questions of his own.

Was the mysterious "Col. Quesada" really just another name for Sturgis, alias Fiorini?

When Sturgis spoke vaguely of higher-ups, telling the men that he was receiving orders from someone above him, was he referring to the CIA?

Or was the great anti-Castro expedition merely a highly original cover for car theft, as the government contends?

Curtis has his own opinion:

"He (Sturgis) stole the cars to finance the expedition. He was sincere about fighting Castro — Frank's whole life was to fight the Communists.

"The problem was how he done it," Curtis says. "Frank was just a born con man. He'd lie to you and make you believe it."

"He said there was thousands of dollars in Swiss and Bahamas banks to cover the organization.

"He said there was big money behind him in a lot of South American countries.

"He really set us up...and he could of got us all killed."



Sturgis On Way to Washington, D.C. Jail  
... after arrest in Watergate



Rep. Ford Also a number for is no Mr. Hoover is going to submit.

Mr. Rankin. May I assign 867?

The Chairman. Yes.

(Commission Exhibit Nos. 866 and 867 were marked for identification and received in evidence.)

The Chairman. The Commission will be in order.

Director McCone, it is customary for the Chairman to make a short statement to the witness as to the testimony that is expected to be given.

I will read it at this time.

Mr. McCone will be asked to testify on whether Lee Harvey Oswald was ever an agent directly or indirectly, or an informer or acting on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency in any capacity at any time, and whether he knows of any credible evidence or of any conspiracy either domestic or foreign involved in the assassination of President Kennedy, also with regard to any suggestions and recommendations he may have concerning improvements or changes in provisions for the protection of the President of the United States.

Would you please rise and be sworn.

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give before this Commission shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. McCone. I do.

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The Chairman. Will you be seated please.

Mr. Rankin will conduct the examination.

TESTIMONY OF JOHN A. McCONE.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, will you state your name?

Mr. McCone. My name is John Alec McCone.

Mr. Rankin. Do you have an official position with the United States Government?

Mr. McCone. Yes, sir, I am Director of Central Intelligence.

Mr. Rankin. Have you been Director for some time?

Mr. McCone. Yes, a little over two and a half years.

Mr. Rankin. Where do you live, Mr. McCone?

Mr. McCone. I live at 3025 Whitehaven Street in Washington.

Mr. Rankin. Are you familiar with the records and how they are kept by the Central Intelligence Agency as to whether a man is acting as an informer, agent, employee or in any other capacity for that agency?

Mr. McCone. Yes, I am generally familiar with the procedures and the records that are maintained by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Quite naturally, I am not familiar with all of the records because they are very extensive.

Mr. Rankin. Have you determined whether or not Lee Harvey Oswald, the suspect in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy, had any connection with the Central Intelligence Agency, informer or indirectly as an employee or any other

capacity?

Mr. McCone. Yes. I have determined to my satisfaction that he had no such connection, and I would like to read for the record --

Mr. Rankin. Will you tell us briefly the extent of your inquiry?

Mr. McCone. In a form of affidavit, I have gone into the matter in considerable detail personally, in my inquiry with the appropriate people within the agency, examined all records in our files relating to Lee Harvey Oswald. We had knowledge of him, of course, because his having to do with the Soviet Union, as he did putting him in a situation where his name would appear in our name file.

However, my examination has resulted in the conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was not an agent, employee or informant of the Central Intelligence Agency. The agency never contacted him, interviewed him, talked with him or received or solicited any reports or information from him or communicated with him directly, in any other manner.

The Agency never furnished him with any funds or money or compensated him directly or indirectly in any fashion, and Lee Harvey Oswald was never associated or connected directly or indirectly in any way whatsoever with the Agency.

When I use the term agency, I mean the Central Intelligence Agency, of course.

Rep. Ford. Does that include whether or not he was in the

United States, in the Soviet Union or any place?

Mr. McCone. Any place, the United States, Soviet Union or any place.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, is that the affidavit you are going to supply the Commission in connection with our request for it?

Mr. McCone. Yes. This is the substance of the affidavit which I will supply to you.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Chairman, I ask leave to mark that Exhibit 870 and have it introduced in evidence as soon as we receive it from Mr. McCone as a part of this record.

The Chairman. It may be admitted.

(Commission Exhibit No. 870 was marked for identification and received in evidence.)

Mr. Rankin. Would you tell us about your procedures in regard to having an agent or informer or any person acting in that type of capacity? Does that have to pass through your hands or come to your attention in the agency?

Mr. McCone. No. It does not have to come through my personal hands.

Mr. Rankin. Without disclosing something that might be a security matter, could you tell us how that is handled in a general way in the agency?

Mr. McCone. Mr. Helms, who is directly responsible for that division of the agency's activities as a Deputy Director might

explain that that would be permissible.

Mr. Rankin. Could we have him sworn then?

The Chairman. Yes.

Would you raise your right hand and be sworn.

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give before this Commission shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. Helms, Yes.

TESTIMONY OF RICHARD HELMS

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, you heard the inquiry just directed to Mr. McCone.

Could you answer the question directly?

Mr. Helms. Yes, we have a specific procedure which we follow in all cases where the agency is in contact for the purposes of acquiring intelligence or whatever the case may be, with an individual. We not only have a record of the individual's name, but we also usually get information of a biographical nature. We then check this individual's name against our record.

At that point we make a determination as to whether we desire to use this man or not to use him. It varies from case to case as to how many officers may be involved in approving a specific recruitment, but it invariably involves the man overseas, his chief on location, and responsible officers of the agency in Washington.

May I go off the record?

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, did you have anything to do on behalf of your agency with determining whether or not Lee Harvey Oswald was acting in any of the capacities I have described in my questions to Mr. McCone?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I did.

Mr. Rankin. Will you tell us what you did in that regard?

Mr. Helms. On Mr. McCone's behalf, I had all of our records



searched to see if there had been any contacts at any time prior to President Kennedy's assassination anyone in the Central Intelligence Agency with Lee Harvey Oswald. We checked our card files and our personnel files and all our records.

Now, this check turned out to be negative. In addition I got in touch with those officers who might conceivably have been in positions of responsibility at the times in question to see if anybody had any recollection of any contact having even been suggested with this man.

This also turned out to be negative, so there is no material in the Central Intelligence Agency, either in the records or at least that I was able to establish in the mind of any of the individuals that there was any contact had or even contemplated with him.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms --

Mr. Dulles. Could I ask one question there.

Do you recall or do you know at what time the name of Lee Harvey Oswald was carded, first came to your attention so it became a matter of record, in the Agency?

Mr. Helms. Sir, I would want to consult the record to be absolutely accurate but it is my impression that the first time that his name showed up on any agency records was when he went to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, in connection with your work you have supplied information to the Commission and we have requested

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many things from your agency.

Can you tell the Commission as to whether or not you have supplied us all the information the Agency has, at least in substance in regard to Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. Helms. We have, all.

Rep. Ford. Has a member of the Commission staff had full access to your files on Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. Helms. He has, sir.

Rep. Ford. They have had the opportunity to personally look at the entire file?

Mr. Helms. We invited them to come out to our building in Langley and actually put the file on the table so that they could examine it.

The Chairman. I was personally out there, too, and was offered the same opportunity. I did not avail myself of it because of the time element but I was offered the same opportunity.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, can you explain, according to the limitations of security, the reasons why we examined materials but did not always take them, in a general way?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I can.

In our communications between individuals working overseas and Washington, we for security reasons have a method of hiding the identities of individuals in telegrams and dispatches by the use of pseudonyms and cryptonyms. For this reason, we never allow the original documents to leave our premises.

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However, on the occasion when the representatives of the Commission staff looked at these files, we sat there and identified these pseudonyms and criptonyms and related them to the proper names of the individuals concerned, so that they would know exactly what this message said.

Mr. Rankin. By that means the representatives of the Commission were able to satisfy themselves that they had all of the information for the benefit of the Commission without disclosing matters that would be a threat to security, is that right?

Mr. Helms. It is my understanding that they were satisfied.

Rep. Ford. Mr. McCone, do you have full authority from higher authority to make full disclosure to this Commission of any information in the files of the Central Intelligence Agency?

Mr. McCone. That is right. It is my understanding that it is the desire of higher authority that this Commission shall have access to all information of every nature in our files or in the mind of employees of Central Intelligence Agency.

Rep. Ford. On the basis of that authority you or the Agency have made a full disclosure?

Mr. McCone. That is correct.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, I have handed you Exhibits 868 and 869 directed to you acting for the Agency, the first one being from the Commission to you and the second one, 869 being your

... in regard to your full and complete disclosure in regard to your records, isn't that correct?

Mr. Hollis. That is correct. May I say, Mr. Rankin, that any information though subsequent to this correspondence which we may obtain we will certainly continue to forward to the Commission.

Mr. Rankin. Thank you.

Mr. Chief Justice, I ask leave to have those two Exhibits 868 and 869 received in evidence at this time.

The Chairman. They may be admitted under those numbers.

(Commission Exhibits Nos. 868 and 869 were marked for identification and received in evidence.)

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, if I may return to you, I will now ask you if you have any credible information that you know of or evidence causing you to believe that there is any or was any conspiracy either domestic or foreign in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy?

Mr. McCone. No, I have no information,, Mr. Rankin, that would lead me to believe or conclude that a conspiracy existed.

Rep. Ford. Did the CIA make an investigation of this aspect of the assassination?

Mr. McCone. We made an investigation of all developments after the assassination which came to our attention which might possibly have indicated a conspiracy or an influence on Oswald

from an external source, and we determined after these investigations which were made promptly and immediately that we had no evidence to support such an assumption.

Rep. Ford. Did the Central Intelligence Agency have any contact with Oswald during the period of his life in the Soviet Union?

Mr. McCone. No. Not to my knowledge nor to the knowledge of those who would have been in a position to have made such contact, nor according to any record we have, that we have been able to uncover.

Rep. Ford. Did the Central Intelligence Agency have any personal contact with Oswald subsequent to his return to the United States?

Mr. McCone. No, not to my knowledge.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, your agency made a particular investigation in connection with any allegations about a conspiracy involving the Soviet Union or people connected with Cuba, did you not?

Mr. McCone. Yes. We did. We made a thorough, a very thorough investigation, of information that came to us concerning an alleged trip that Oswald made to Mexico City during which time he made contact with the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City in an attempt to gain transit privileges from Mexico City to the Soviet Union via Havana.

We investigated that thoroughly.

Mr. Rankin. Do you also include in your statement that you found no evidence of conspiracy in all of that investigation?

Mr. McCone. That is correct.

Mr. Rankin. And also the investigation you made of the period that Lee Harvey Oswald was in the Soviet Union?

Mr. McCone. That is right.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone --

Mr. Dulles. Could I ask one question there.

Does your answer, Mr. McCone, include a negation of any belief that Oswald was working for or on behalf of the Soviet Union at any time when you were in contact with him or knew about his activities?

Mr. McCone. We have no evidence that he was working for or on behalf of the Soviet Union at any time. We have no evidence to that effect.

Rep. Ford. Is the Central Intelligence Agency continuing any investigation into this area?

Mr. McCone. No, because we have at the present time, we have no information in our files that we have not exhaustively investigated and disposed of to our satisfaction. Naturally, any new information that might come into our hands would be investigated promptly.

Mr. Helms. I simply wanted to add that we obviously are interested in anything we can pick up applying to this case and anything we get will be immediately sent to the Commission,



that we haven't stopped our inquiries or picking up any information we can from people who might have some information. This is on a continuing basis.

Rep. Ford. In other words, the case isn't closed.

Mr. Helms. It is not closed as far as we are concerned.

Mr. Rankin. Would that be true, Mr. Helms, even after the Commission completed its report, you would keep the matter open if there was anything new that developed in the future that could be properly presented to the authorities?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I would assume the case will never be closed.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, do you have any ideas about improving the security provisions for the President that you would like to relate to the Commission?

Mr. McCone. Well, this is in my opinion a very important question which I am sure this Commission will, has and will devote a considerable amount of thought to it and undoubtedly have some recommendations as part of its report.

Mr. Rankin. Your agency does have an important function in some aspects.

Mr. McCone. We have a very important function in connection with the foreign travels of the President, and I would like to inform the Commission as to how we discharge that responsibility by quickly reviewing the chronology of the Central Intelligence Agency's support of President Kennedy's visit to Mexico City from

the 29th of June to the 2nd of July 1962.

Mr. Rankin. Will you please do that.

The Chairman. Director, is that a security matter?

Mr. McCone. No. I think I can handle this for the record.

The Chairman. Very well.

Mr. McCone. If I have to make a remark or two off the record I will as that privilege.

That visit, as I said, started on the 29th of June. On the 28th of April, in anticipation of the visit, instructions were transmitted to Mexico for the Ambassador to coordinate planning and informational guidance for the advance party of the Secret Service.

We asked that the Secret Service be given information on local groups and persons who would cause disturbances, embarrassments or physical harm, an estimate of the determination and ability of the Mexican government to prevent incidents, and preparation for special briefings to the Embassy officials and the Secret Service, and such additional support and communications personnel that might be required.

These instructions were given two months before the trip.

On the 15th of May, confirmed information we received that the President would visit Mexico on the specific dates. On the 1st of June the Secret Service was supplied by the Agency with the detailed survey of Mexican security forces that would be called upon to protect the President.

Friendly and allied governments were informed of the visit and their cooperation and pertinent informational support was solicited. From this date through the 2nd of July daily information reports were furnished to the State Department, the Secret Service, the FBI and the military services.

That is from the 1st of June to the 2nd of July, a period of 31, 32 days. On the 8th of June the Secret Service advance party was briefed in detail by a group of officers of the agency on the Mexican government's plans for the protection of the President, including current information on the size, strength and capabilities of potential troublemakers.

Hazardous locations and times in the planned itinerary were identified, political and economic issues that might be invoked by hostile elements for demonstrations were specified.

On the 11th of June, the Secret Service advance party left for Mexico supported by additional security personnel to assist in coordinating informational report and follow up activity required.

Especially prepared national intelligence estimates on the current security conditions in Mexico was approved by the United States Intelligence Board on the 13th of June.

On the 15th of June arrangements were completed to reinforce communications facilities. On the 24th of June a conference at the State Department was held at the request of the President for reviewing security measures, and this meeting I attended personally, and reported to the State Department on the essence

of all that had gone before.

Emergency contingency plans were discussed and a consensus was reached that the President should make the visit as scheduled.

On the 27th of June, a final updated special national intelligence estimate was prepared, and this indicated no basic changes in the security assessment that Mexican government was prepared to cope with foreseeable security contingencies.

On the 28th of June, a final briefing report was prepared for the director's use which indicated the security precautions of the Mexican government had effectively forestalled major organized incidents, and our informal estimate was that the President would receive a great welcome.

The report was presented to the President personally by the Director at noon in a final meeting prior to departure on this trip.

From the 29th of June to the 2nd of July in Washington headquarters, headquarters components remained on a 24-hour alert for close support of the embassy and the Secret Service.

So, not only was the Central Intelligence Agency and the various components involved in this for a period of two months in close collaboration with the Secret Service, but by bringing in the United States Intelligence Board we brought in all of the intelligence assets of the United States Government in

In connection with this particular t... I thought this procedure which was followed regularly on all trips that the President makes out of the country would be of interest to the Commission.

The Chairman. That is the normal format of your procedures?

Mr. McCone. Yes.

The Chairman. When the President goes abroad?

Mr. McCone. Yes, I selected this one. The same was true of his trip to Caracas or Paris or elsewhere.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, in your investigation of the Oswald matter did you use the same approach or a comparable approach to a liaison with the other intelligence agencies of government to try to discover anything that might involve your jurisdiction.

Mr. McCone. Yes. We were in very close touch with the Federal Bureau of Investigation and with the Secret Service on a 24-hour basis at all points, both domestically and foreign where information had been received which might have a bearing on this problem.

Mr. Rankin. Assassination?

Mr. McCone. Assassination.

Mr. Rankin. Do you have an opinion, Mr. McCone, as to whether or not the liaison between the intelligence agencies of the United States Government might be improved if they had better mechanical, computer or other facilities of that type, and also some other ideas or methods of dealing with each other?

Mr. McCone. There is a great deal of improvement of <sup>658</sup>

information that might be of importance in a matter of this kind through the use of computers and mechanical means of handling files, and you, Mr. Chief Justice, saw some of the -- of our installations and that was only a beginning of what really can be done.

The Chairman. Yes, I did.

Mr. McCone. I would certainly urge that on all departments of government that are involved in this are adopt the most modern methods of automatic data processing with respect to the personnel files and other files relating to individuals. This would be helpful.

Let me emphasize that a computer will not replace the man, and therefore, we must have at all levels a complete exchange of information and cooperation between agencies where they share this responsibility, and in going through this chronology, it points out the type of exchange and cooperation that the Central Intelligence Agency tries to afford both the Secret Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in matters where we have a common responsibility.

I would like to emphasize the very great importance of this exchange, which is not always easily accomplished because it is cumbersome.

Sometimes it becomes involved in distracting people from other duties, and so on and so forth.



I have given a good deal of thought to the matter of some incentives to bring out informers, thinking about the old informer statutes in which some of them are still on the books, in which people were rewarded for informing when others conducted themselves in a damaging way.

Mr. Dulles. Smuggling cases?

Mr. McCone. Smuggline cases. Remember there was a great number of informers during the war where people would inform on aircraft contractors and building contractors who were conducting their work improperly, and as I remember the law, the informer got a percentage of what was recovered by the government. This law was rescinded because of this rather unfair thing.

But I believe that something could be done, called to the attention of this Commission, that under one of the clauses of the Atomic Energy Act or amendment to it, a rather substantial reward is offered for information leading to the apprehension of a person that attempts to import special nuclear materials or nuclear weapon into the United States.

Some such legislation might be enacted which would make it really worthwhile for a fellow who sold a telescope, a gun with a telescopic gunsight to a person that he might be suspicious of would have an incentive to watch him very carefully and maybe inform the authorities concerning that sale.

Mr. Rankin. Is it your belief, Mr. McCone, that the methods for exchange of information between intelligence agencies

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of the government could be materially improved.

Mr. McCone, I think the exchange between the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation of the Secret Service are quite adequate. I am not informed as to whether the exchanges between the Secret Service and the FBI are equally adequate.

I have not gone into that. I would have no means to know. Certainly it is most important that it be done.

Mr. Dulles. Looking back now that you have the full record, do you feel that you received from the State Department adequate information at the time that they were aware of Oswald's defection and later activities in the Soviet Union, did you get at the time full information from the State Department on those particular subjects?

Mr. McCone. Well, I am not sure that we got full information, Mr. Dulles. The fact is we had very little information in our files.

Mr. Helms. It was probably minimal.

Rep. Ford. Why did that happen?

Mr. Helms. I am not sure, Mr. Ford. I can only assume that the State Department only had a limited amount, and it interestingly enough is far enough back now so that it's very hard to find people who were in the Moscow Embassy at the time familiar with the case, so in trying to run this down one comes to a lot of dead ends and I, therefore, would not like to hazard any guess.

Rep. Ford. Whose responsibility is it, is it CIA's responsibility to obtain the information or State Department's responsibility to supply it to Central Intelligence and to others.

Mr. McCone. With respect to a United States citizen who goes abroad, it is the responsibility of the State Department through its various echelons, consular service and embassies and so forth.

For a foreigner coming into the United States, who might be of suspicious character, coming here for espionage, subversion, assassination and other acts of violence, we would, and we do, exchange this information immediately with the FBI.

Rep. Ford. But in this particular case Oswald in the Soviet Union whose responsibility was it to transmit the information, whatever it was, to the Central Intelligence Agency?

Mr. McCone. Well, it would be the State Department's responsibility to do that. Whether there really exists an order or orders that information on an American citizen returning from a foreign country be transmitted to CIA, I don't believe there are such regulations which exist.

Mr. Helms. I don't believe they do, either.

Mr. McCone. I am not sure they should.

Rep. Ford. I wouldn't be your recommendation that you, the head of Central Intelligence Agency, should have that information?

Mr. Dulles. In a case of an American defecting to a communist country shouldn't you have it?

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Mr. McCone. Certainly certain types of information.

What we ought to be careful of here, would be to rather clearly define the type of information which should be transmitted, because after all, there are hundreds of thousands or millions of Americans going back and forth every year, and those records are the records of the immigration service, the passport division.

Mr. Bullen. I was thinking of a person who having defected might, of course, have become an agent and then reinserted into the United States and if you were informed of the first steps to that you might help to prevent the second step.

Mr. McCone. Well, certainly information on defectors or possible recruitments should be, and I have no question is being, transmitted.

Rep. Ford. What I was getting at was whether the procedures were adequate or inadequate, whether the administration was proper or improper in this particular case, and if some files you have that started when he attempted to defect are inadequate why we ought to know, and we ought to know whether the basic regulations were right or wrong, whether the Administration was proper or improper, that is what I am trying to find out.

I would like your comment on it.

Mr. McCone. Well, I think the basic regulations should be examined very carefully to be sure that they are copper-riveted down and absolutely tight. What I am saying, however, is because of the vast number of Americans who go abroad and stay in foreign

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countries for indefinite periods of time, it would be an impossible task to transmit all information available in the State Department and Immigration Service as files to the Central Intelligence Agency. It would not be a productive exercise. What must be transmitted and is being transmitted, while I cannot recite the exact regulations is information that is, becomes, known to the various embassies of suspicious Americans that might have been recruited and defected, and then returned so that they would be agents in place.

Rep. Ford. In this case, Oswald attempted to defect, he did not, he subsequently sought the right to return to the United States, he had contact with the Embassy. Was the Central Intelligence Agency informed of these steps, step by step by the Department of State?

Mr. McCone. You might answer that.

Mr. Helms. Mr. Ford, in order to answer this question precisely I would have to have the file in front of me. I have not looked at it in some time so I don't have it all that clearly in mind. But it is my impression that we were not informed step by step, but that I say that there is no requirement that I am aware of that the State Department should inform us and when I said a moment ago that we didn't have information from them this was not in any sense a critical statement but a statement of fact.

But an American going to the American Embassy would be handled by the Embassy officials, either consular or otherwise, and this

uld be a matter well within th urview of the State Department to keep all the way through, because we do not have responsibility in the Central Intelligence Agency for the conduct or behaviour or anything else of American citizens when they are abroad unless there is some special consideratinn applying to an individual, or womeong in higher authority requests assistance from us.

So that the State Department, I think, quite properly would regard this matter was well within their purview to handle themselves within the Embassy or from the Embassy back to the Department of State without involving the agency in it at that point in time while these events were occurring.

Rep. Ford. I think it could be argued, however, that the uniqueness of this individual case was such that the Department of State might well have contacted the Central Intelligence Agency to keep them abreast of the developments as they transpired. This is not, and when I say this, I mean the Oswald case, is not an ordinary run of the mine type of case. It is far from it.

Even back in the time, well, from the time he went, and particularly as time progressed, and he made application to return, there is nothing ordinary about the whole situation.

Mr. McCone. That is quite correct, there is no question about that.

Rep. Ford. and I am only suggesting that if the regulations were not adequate at the time and are not now, maybe something



ought to be done about it.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, when you said that supplying all of the information about United States citizens who went abroad and came back to the country would not be a profitable exercise, did that comment include the thought that such an intrusion upon all citizens would be questionable?

Mr. McCone. Such an intrusion?

Mr. Rankin. Upon their right to travel.

Mr. McCone. Well, I think this would have a bearing on it. I didn't have that particular matter in mind when I made that statement, however. I was just thinking of the --

Mr. Rankin. Burden?

Mr. McCone. -- of the burden of vast numbers involved.

Mr. Rankin. Do you have any thought in regard to whether it would be an intrusion upon their rights?

Mr. McCone. Well, that would be a matter of how it was handled. Certainly if it was handled in a way, the counterpart of providing the information was to impose restrictions on them then it would be an intrusion on their rights.

Mr. Rankin. Yes.

Mr. Chief Justice, that is all I have, except I want to inquire into something off the record after we are through.

Sen. Cooper. May I inquire?

The Chairman. Senator Cooper.

Sen. Cooper. I missed the first part of Mr. McCone's testi-

mony. I went to answer a quorum call. Perhaps the question has been asked.

It has been brought into evidence that a number of people in the Embassy talked to Oswald when he first defected, and the various communications with the Embassy and, of course, when he left to come back to the United States.

Have we been able to ascertain the names of officials in the Embassy or employees with whom Oswald talked on these various occasions?

Mr. McCone. I am not familiar with them, no.

Mr. Helms. Neither am I, sir.

Mr. McCone. I presume that the Department's inquiries has covered it.

Sen. Cooper. Is it possible to ascertain the names of these employees?

Mr. Rankin. Senator Cooper, I can answer that.

We have inquired of the State Department for that information, and are in the process of obtaining it all.

Sen. Cooper. Taking into consideration your answers to the previous question, would it have been possible in your judgment to have secured more comprehensive information about the activities of Oswald in Russia?

Mr. McCone. It would not have been possible for the Central Intelligence Agency to have secured such information because we do not have resources to gain such information.

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The Chair. An. Anything more?

Congressman Ford?

Rep. Ford. Did the Central Intelligence Agency investigate any aspects of Oswald's trip to Mexico?

Mr. McCone. Yes, we did.

Rep. Ford. Can you give us any information on that?

Mr. McCone. Yes. We were aware that Oswald did make a trip to Mexico City and it was our judgment that he was there in the interest of injuring transit privileges and that he made contact with the Cuban Embassy while he was there.

We do not know the precise results of his effort but we assumed because he returned to the United States he was unsuccessful. We have examined to every extent we can, and using all resources available to us every aspect of his activity and we could not verify that he was there for any other purpose or that his trip to Mexico was in any way related to his later action in assassinating President Kennedy.

Rep. Ford. Did the Central Intelligence Agency make any investigation of any alleged connection between Oswald and the Castro Government?

Mr. McCone. Yes. We investigated that in considerable case information came to us through a third party that he had carried on a rather odd discussion with Cuban officials in the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City. The allegation was that he had received under rather odd circumstances a rather substantial

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amount of money in the Cuban Embassy, and the statements was made by one who claimed to have seen this transaction take place.

After a very thorough and detailed examination of the informant, it finally turned out by the informer's own admission that the information was entirely erroneous, and was made for the purpose of advancing the informer's own standing with the Central Intelligence Agency and the United States Government and it was subsequently retracted by the infomer in its entirety.

Rep. Ford. Was there any other evidence or alleged evidence--

Mr. McCone. Parenthetically, I might add a word for the record that the date that the informer gave as to the date in time of this alleged transaction was impossible because through other, from other, information we determined that Oswald was in the United States that particular time.

Rep. Ford. Did the Central Intelligence Agency ever make an investigation or did it ever check on Mr. Ruby's trip to Cuba or any connections he might have had with the Castro Government?

Mr. McCone. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. Helms. We had no information.

Mr. McCone. We had no information.

Rep. Ford. Central Intelligence Agency has no information of any connections of Ruby to the Castro government?

Mr. McCone. That is right.

Rep. Ford. Did you ever make a check of that?

Mr. Helms. We checked our records to see if we had information and found we did not.

Rep. Ford. What would that indicate, the fact that you checked your records.

Mr. Helms. That would indicate that if we had received information that, from our own resources, that, the Cubans were involved with Mr. Ruby in something that would be regarded as subversive, that we would then have that in our files, but we received no such information, and I don't, by saying this mean that we did not. I simply say we don't have any record of this.

Mr. Rankin. I might say off the record --

(Discussion off the record.)

Rep. Ford. That is all.

The Chairman. Director, thank you very much, sir, for coming and being with us and we appreciate the help your department has given to us.

(Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the Commission recessed subject to call of the Chair.)

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Rep. Ford. Also a number for this memo Mr. Hoover is going to submit.

Mr. Rankin. May I assign 867?

The Chairman. Yes.

(Commission Exhibit Nos. 866 and 867 were marked for identification and received in evidence.)

The Chairman. The Commission will be in order.

Director McCone, it is customary for the Chairman to make a short statement to the witness as to the testimony that is expected to be given.

I will read it at this time.

Mr. McCone will be asked to testify on whether Lee Harvey Oswald was ever an agent directly or indirectly, or an informer or acting on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency in any capacity at any time, and whether he knows of any credible evidence or of any conspiracy either domestic or foreign involved in the assassination of President Kennedy, also with regard to an suggestions and recommendations he may have concerning improvements or changes in provisions for the protection of the President of the United States.

Would you please rise and be sworn.

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give before this Commission shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. McCone. I do.

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The Chairman. Will you be seated please.

Mr. Rankin will conduct the examination.

TESTIMONY OF JOHN A. MCCONE

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, will you state your name?

Mr. McCone. My name is John Alec McCone.

Mr. Rankin. Do you have an official position with the United States Government?

Mr. McCone. Yes, sir, I am Director of Central Intelligence.

Mr. Rankin. Have you been Director for some time?

Mr. McCone. Yes, a little over two and a half years.

Mr. Rankin. Where do you live, Mr. McCone?

Mr. McCone. I live at 3025 Whitehaven Street in Washington.

Mr. Rankin. Are you familiar with the records and how they are kept by the Central Intelligence Agency as to whether a man is acting as an informer, agent, employee or in any other capacity for that agency?

Mr. McCone. Yes, I am generally familiar with the procedures and the records that are maintained by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Quite naturally, I am not familiar with all of the records because they are very extensive.

Mr. Rankin. Have you determined whether or not Lee Harvey Oswald, the suspect in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy, had any connection with the Central Intelligence Agency, informer or indirectly as an employee or any other

capacity?

Mr. McCone. Yes. I have determined to my satisfaction that he had no such connection, and I would like to read for the record --

Mr. Rankin. Will you tell us briefly the extent of your inquiry?

Mr. McCone. In a form of affidavit, I have gone into the matter in considerable detail personally, in my inquiry with the appropriate people within the agency, examined all records in our files relating to Lee Harvey Oswald. We had knowledge of him, of course, because his having to do with the Soviet Union, as he did putting him in a situation where his name would appear in our name file.

However, my examination has resulted in the conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald was not an agent, employee or informant of the Central Intelligence Agency. The agency never contacted him, interviewed him, talked with him or received or solicited any reports or information from him or communicated with him directly, in any other manner.

The Agency never furnished him with any funds or money or compensated him directly or indirectly in any fashion, and Lee Harvey Oswald was never associated or connected directly or indirectly in any way whatsoever with the Agency.

When I use the term agency, I mean the Central Intelligence Agency, of course.

Mr. Ford. Does that include whether or not he was in the



United States, in the Soviet Union or any place?

Mr. McCone. Any place, the United States, Soviet Union or any place.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, is that the affidavit you are going to supply the Commission in connection with our request for it?

Mr. McCone. Yes. This is the substance of the affidavit which I will supply to you.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Chairman, I ask leave to mark that Exhibit 870 and have it introduced in evidence as soon as we receive it from Mr. McCone as a part of this record.

The Chairman. It may be admitted.

(Commission Exhibit No. 870 was marked for identification and received in evidence.)

Mr. Rankin. Would you tell us about your procedures in regard to having an agent or informer or any person acting in that type of capacity? Does that have to pass through your hands or come to your attention in the agency?

Mr. McCone. No. It does not have to come through my personal hands.

Mr. Rankin. Without disclosing something that might be a security matter, could you tell us how that is handled in a general way in the agency?

Mr. McCone. Mr. Helms, who is directly responsible for that division of the agency's activities as a Deputy Director might

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explain that that would be permissible.

Mr. Rankin. Could we have him sworn then?

The Chairman. Yes.

Would you raise your right hand and be sworn.

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you are about to give before this Commission shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. Helms, Yes.

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TESTIMONY OF RICHARD M. HELMS

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, you heard the inquiry just directed to Mr. McCone.

Could you answer the question directly?

Mr. Helms. Yes, we have a specific procedure which we follow in all cases where the agency is in contact for the purposes of acquiring intelligence or whatever the case may be, with an individual. We not only have a record of the individual's name, but we also usually get information of a biographical nature. We then check this individual's name against our record.

At that point we make a determination as to whether we desire to use this man or not to use him. It varies from case to case as to how many officers may be involved in approving a specific recruitment, but it invariably involves the man overseas, his chief on location, and responsible officers of the agency in Washington.

May I go off the record?

(Discussion off the record.)

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, did you have anything to do on behalf of your agency with determining whether or not Lee Harvey Oswald was acting in any of the capacities I have described in my questions to Mr. McCone?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I did.

Mr. Rankin. Will you tell us what you did in that regard?

Mr. Helms. On Mr. McCone's behalf, I had all of our records

searched to see if there had been any contacts at any time prior to President Kennedy's assassination by anyone in the Central Intelligence Agency with Lee Harvey Oswald. We checked our card files and our personnel files and all our records.

Now, this check turned out to be negative. In addition I got in touch with those officers who might conceivably have been in positions of responsibility at the times in question to see if anybody had any recollection of any contact having even been suggested with this man.

This also turned out to be negative, so there is no material in the Central Intelligence Agency, either in the records or at least that I was able to establish in the mind of any of the individuals that there was any contact had or even contemplated with him.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms --

Mr. Dulles. Could I ask one question there.

Do you recall or do you know at what time the name of Lee Harvey Oswald was carded, first came to your attention so it became a matter of record, in the Agency?

Mr. Helms. Sir, I would want to consult the record to be absolutely accurate but it is my impression that the first time that his name showed up on any agency records was when he went to the Soviet Union.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, in connection with your work you have supplied information to the Commission and we have requested

many things from your agency.

Can you tell the Commission as to whether or not you have supplied us all the information the Agency has, at least in substance in regard to Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. Helms. We have, all.

Rep. Ford. Has a member of the Commission staff had full access to your files on Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. Helms. He has, sir.

Rep. Ford. They have had the opportunity to personally look at the entire file?

Mr. Helms. We invited them to come out to our building in Langley and actually put the file on the table so that they could examine it.

The Chairman. I was personally out there, too, and was offered the same opportunity. I did not avail myself of it because of the time element but I was offered the same opportunity.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, can you explain, according to the limitations of security, the reasons why we examined materials but did not always take them, in a general way?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I can.

In our communications between individuals working overseas and Washington, we for security reasons have a method of hiding the identities of individuals in telegrams and dispatches by the use of pseudonyms and cryptonyms. For this reason, we never allow the original documents to leave our premises.

However, on the occasion when the representatives of the Commission staff looked at these files, we sat there and identified these pseudonyms and criptonyms and related them to the proper names of the individuals concerned, so that they would know exactly what this message said.

Mr. Rankin. By that means the representatives of the Commission were able to satisfy themselves that they had all of the information for the benefit of the Commission without disclosing matters that would be a threat to security, is that right?

Mr. Helms. It is my understanding that they were satisfied.

Rep. Ford. Mr. McCone, do you have full authority from higher authority to make full disclosure to this Commission of any information in the files of the Central Intelligence Agency?

Mr. McCone. That is right. It is my understanding that it is the desire of higher authority that this Commission shall have access to all information of every nature in our files or in the mind of employees of Central Intelligence Agency.

Rep. Ford. On the basis of that authority you or the Agency have made a full disclosure?

Mr. McCone. That is correct.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Helms, I have handed you Exhibits 868 and 869 directed to you acting for the Agency, the first one being from the Commission to you and the second one, 869 being your

answer in regard to your full and complete disclosure in regard to your records, isn't that correct?

Mr. Helms. That is correct. May I say, Mr. Rankin, that any information though subsequent to this correspondence which we may obtain we will certainly continue to forward to the Commission.

Mr. Rankin. Thank you.

Mr. Chief Justice, I ask leave to have those two Exhibits 868 and 869 received in evidence at this time.

The Chairman. They may be admitted under those numbers.

(Commission Exhibits Nos. 868 and 869 were marked for identification and received in evidence.)

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, if I may return to you, I will now ask you if you have any credible information that you know of or evidence causing you to believe that there is any or was any conspiracy either domestic or foreign in connection with the assassination of President Kennedy?

Mr. McCone. No, I have no information, Mr. Rankin, that would lead me to believe or conclude that a conspiracy existed.

Rep. Ford. Did the CIA make an investigation of this aspect of the assassination?

Mr. McCone. We made an investigation of all developments after the assassination which came to our attention which might possibly have indicated a conspiracy or an influence on Oswald

from an external source, and we determined after these investigations which were made promptly and immediately that we had no evidence to support such an assumption.

Rep. Ford. Did the Central Intelligence Agency have any contact with Oswald during the period of his life in the Soviet Union?

Mr. McCone. No. Not to my knowledge nor to the knowledge of those who would have been in a position to have made such contact, nor according to any record we have, that we have been able to uncover.

Rep. Ford. Did the Central Intelligence Agency have any personal contact with Oswald subsequent to his return to the United States?

Mr. McCone. No, not to my knowledge.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, your agency made a particular investigation in connection with any allegations about a conspiracy involving the Soviet Union or people connected with Cuba, did you not?

Mr. McCone. Yes. We did. We made a thorough, a very thorough investigation, of information that came to us concerning an alleged trip that Oswald made to Mexico City during which time he made contact with the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City in an attempt to gain transit privileges from Mexico City to the Soviet Union via Havana.

We investigated that thoroughly.



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Mr. Rankin. Do you also include in your statement that you found no evidence of conspiracy all of that investigation?

Mr. McCone. That is correct.

Mr. Rankin. And also the investigation you made of the period that Lee Harvey Oswald was in the Soviet Union?

Mr. McCone. That is right.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone --

Mr. Dulles. Could I ask one question there.

Does your answer, Mr. McCone, include a negation of any belief that Oswald was working for or on behalf of the Soviet Union at any time when you were in contact with him or knew about his activities?

Mr. McCone. We have no evidence that he was working for or on behalf of the Soviet Union at any time. We have no evidence to that effect.

Rep. Ford. Is the Central Intelligence Agency continuing any investigation into this area?

Mr. McCone. No, because we have at the present time, we have no information in our files that we have not exhaustively investigated and disposed of to our satisfaction. Naturally, any new information that might come into our hands would be investigated promptly.

Mr. Helms. I simply wanted to add that we obviously are interested in anything we can pick up applying to this case and anything we get will be immediately sent to the Commission,

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so that we haven't stopped our inquiries or picking up any information we can from people who might have some information. This is on a continuing basis.

Rep. Ford. In other words, the case isn't closed.

Mr. Helms. It is not closed as far as we are concerned.

Mr. Rankin. Would that be true, Mr. Helms, even after the Commission completed its report, you would keep the matter open if there was anything new that developed in the future that could be properly presented to the authorities?

Mr. Helms. Yes, I would assume the case will never be closed.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. McCone, do you have any ideas about improving the security provisions for the President that you would like to relate to the Commission?

Mr. McCone. Well, this is in my opinion a very important question which I am sure this Commission will, has and will devote a considerable amount of thought to it and undoubtedly have some recommendations as part of its report.

Mr. Rankin. Your agency does have an important function in some aspects.

Mr. McCone. We have a very important function in connection with the foreign travels of the President, and I would like to inform the Commission as to how we discharge that responsibility by quickly reviewing the chronology of the Central Intelligence Agency's support of President Kennedy's visit to Mexico City from