OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. W. C. Sullivan

FROM : Mr. W. A. Branigan

SUBJECT: LEE HARVEY OSWALD
INTERNAL SECURITY - RUSSIA

SECRET

DATE: February 13, 1964

1 - Mr. Belmont
1 - Mr. Mohr
1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Sullivan
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. Stokes

Tolson
Belmont
Mohr
Casper
Callahan
Conrad
DeLoach
Evans
Gale
Rosen
Sullivan
Tavel
Trotter
Tele. Room
Holmes
Gandy

This is to detail our handling of a situation that developed in Mexico City shortly after the assassination and to set forth the position in connection therewith we took with the State Department here and in Mexico City. The Director has expressed concern about several references to FBI concurrences in actions taken in connection with this situation which appear in a series of telegrams between the State Department and Ambassador Mann in Mexico City from 11/27-12/3/63.

Classified by [redacted]

BACKGROUND: Declassify on: [redacted]

On 11/25/63 Gilberto Alvarado alleged to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), [redacted] that on 9/18/63 he observed Oswald receive $6,500 in the Cuban Consulate, Mexico City, as part payment to carry out an assassination in the U. S. He was extensively interviewed by CIA and through 11/28/63 maintained his story was truthful. On receipt of Alvarado's allegation we undertook investigation endeavoring to place Oswald on 9/18/63 and Ambassador Mann began to theorize, as it had been established that Oswald was in the Cuban Consulate, Mexico City, in late September and early October, 1963, that Oswald was acting as a Castro agent in the assassination. On 11/25/63 Mann cabled the State Department that he recommended an FBI officer thoroughly knowledgeable of all aspects of the assassination investigation be sent from headquarters to Mexico City for consultation as to action to be taken. He told State that the Legal Attache, Mexico City, concurred in this recommendation. This was not so for the Legal Attache by 11/25/63 cable advised that he attempted without results to dissuade Ambassador Mann from requesting assistance from headquarters. The Legal Attache recommended against sending any one from the Bureau to Mexico City and on 11/26/63 the State Department was advised that we felt the Ambassador's request was not warranted.

On 11/27/63 Ambassador Mann sought authority from State to request the Mexicans to arrest three individuals, two of whom were Cuban Consulate [redacted] the Cuban Embassy, [redacted] also on 11/27/63 the Ambassador told the Legal Attache he had been advised by Alexis Johnson, Deputy Undersecretary of State, that Bureau was considered to be in full charge of the investigation in Mexico City and that we were expected "to call the shots." On the same date

105-82555

JCS:ccm
(8)

52 MAR 5 1964

EX-117

REC-9 105-82555-2237

MAR 8 1964

Memorandum to Mr. W. C. Sullivan
RE: LEE HARVEY OSWALD
105-82555

[redacted]

Alexis Johnson relayed the same thought to the Deputy Attorney General who was advised by Assistant Director Evans that State and CIA had jurisdiction in dealing with foreign governments and in matters involving intelligence coverage abroad and that while we were cooperating fully with State and CIA in Mexico, the responsibility regarding the Alvarado matter in Mexico rested with State and CIA.

b3 50USC 403g
b1 per CIA

In view of the expressed attitude of Ambassador Mann and Johnson the Bureau dispatched Supervisor Lawrence Keenan to Mexico City on the evening of 11/27/63 and on the morning of 11/28/63 Keenan and Legal Attache unequivocally outlined this position to Ambassador Mann. The Legal Attache recommended on 11/28/63 that the best course of action regarding Alvarado, (S)
a Nicaraguan, [redacted] On 11/29/63 Assistant Director Evans spoke directly with Deputy Undersecretary of State Johnson and outlined our position. Johnson said that Ambassador Mann had not informed him of the developments and that he realized it was the Ambassador's responsibility to take action in Mexico and if the Ambassador did not do so, it was up to Johnson to issue the necessary instructions. Johnson said that the specific recommendation made by the Bureau concerning turning Alvarado over to the Mexicans was exactly what he had in mind and felt it was most fortunate that the Ambassador was receiving this professional kind of help from an organization which was most qualified.

Alvarado was turned over to the Mexicans and, on 11/29/63 admitted that his allegation was a hoax designed to induce the U. S. to overthrow Castro. However, following this Alvarado on his release by the Mexicans on 12/2/63 recanted and alleged that he admitted his allegation was a hoax only through fear of bodily harm at the hands of the Mexicans. At this point the Mexicans were holding Alvarado subject to deportation to Nicaragua. In order to resolve the question of whether or not Alvarado was lying and noting the necessity of some action prior to Alvarado returning to Nicaragua, we, on the morning of 12/3/63, strongly urged CIA to afford Alvarado a polygraph examination in which we offered to participate by having the Legal Attache act as interpreter. This was accomplished on 12/5 and 6/63 with the result that the polygraph examiner concluded Alvarado was not telling the truth. Alvarado at the conclusion of the examination admitted that such was the case.

SUMMARY:

We made two recommendations concerning the handling of the Alvarado allegation; namely, [redacted] (S)

b5, b1 b3 50USC403 per CIA

[redacted]

Memorandum to Mr. W. C. Sullivan
RE: LEE HARVEY OSWALD
105-82555

b6
b3 50 USC 4039
b1

[redacted] (S)

These recommendations were made after the Deputy Attorney General, Deputy Undersecretary of State Johnson and Ambassador Mann were clearly informed as to our position that the decision for action to be taken in Mexico was that of State and CIA. The fact that Ambassador Mann finally understood this is clear from his statement in his 11/28/63 telegram to Johnson in which he lauded the work of our Legal Attache and said that he wished to make it clear that "the responsibility for all the recommendations made by this Embassy are solely mine and not theirs" (CIA and FBI).

ACTION:

None, for information.

DEM/mfw

W.C.S.