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JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM

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Cuba

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The United States Senate

R654

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Report of Proceedings

258-11

MINORITY DRAWS

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Friday, June 25, 1975

Washington, D. C.

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C O N T E N T S

TESTIMONY OF

Alfred J. Sarno

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1 for ~~AMUTS~~?

2 Mr. Sarno. I think from December, 1961 or January, 1962
3 to September, 1967. Then from June -- August, 1968 to
4 September, 1969.

5 Mr. Wides. Now let me go back, and can you give us a
6 very brief summary of your positions with the Agency prior to
7 that? I don't mean detailed as to what you were doing.

8 Mr. Sarno. I joined the Agency in September of 1951.

9 Mr. Wides. Yes?

10 Mr. Sarno. I was assigned to three countries before I
11 hit Florida.

12 Mr. Wides. All in the Western Hemisphere Division?

13 Mr. Sarno. All in the Western Hemisphere.

14 Mr. Wides. So you had rather long stations in each of
15 those, three or four years?

16 Mr. Sarno. (Nods in the affirmative)

17 Mr. DeMarco. When did you become an American citizen?

18 Mr. Sarno. I was born in Ohio.

19 Mr. DeMarco. Had you been stationed with Mr. Phillips
20 in Cuba before you came to Miami, or were you in Cuba before
21 you came to Miami?

22 Mr. Sarno. Yes.

23 Mr. Wides. And that is when ~~Mr. [redacted]~~ was the Chief?

24 Mr. Sarno. [redacted] was the Chief.

25 Mr. Wides. And you had contact with Mr. Phillips then?

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1 Mr. Wides. You never heard of any plots, nor of any
2 arrested people attempting to shoot a bazooka when he was
3 giving a speech at Havana Stadium?

4 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

5 Mr. Wides. Let me go to the period when you went to
6 Florida.

7 When you first came here, that was before Station Chief

8 [] had moved the whole station to Miami?

9 Mr. Sarno. [] wasn't there. When I arrived in Florida,

10 [] was not then -- no, sir, he was not the station chief.

11 Mr. Wides. Who was the station chief?

12 Mr. Sarno. I don't think I should give you his name.

13 I don't know. YOU have the rest of all of them, but I can't
14 recall --

15 I can state that there were two station chiefs between

16 [] and Shackley, three of them, in fact.

17 Mr. Wides. Shackley came in when, 1963?

18 Mr. Sarno. '62.

19 Mr. Wides. When in '62?

20 Mr. Sarno. I think the spring of '62 is when it was.

21 Mr. Wides. When was he replaced by Mr. Dimmer?

22 Mr. Sarno. If I am not mistaken, it was in '64, I think.
23 June, July, I think, something like that, of '64.

24 Mr. Wides. And then Mr. Dimmer was replaced in '66 by

25 Mr. []

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1 Mr. Sarno. [REDACTED]

2 Mr. Wides. And then Mr. Esterline replaced Mr. [REDACTED]
3 or was there someone between?

4 Mr. Sarno. Mr. Esterline did not replace Mr. [REDACTED]
5 Nobody replaced [REDACTED] because they closed up the station.

6 Mr. Wides. We understand that the station was operating
7 very recently.

8 Mr. Sarno. Well, I'm not saying -- you see, the station
9 you spoke to before, you spoke of, went out of business in
10 June of 1960 when Mr. [REDACTED] left.

11 Mr. Wides. I see.

12 Now, what was the relationship between yourself and the
13 station? Administratively, and in terms of reporting, when
14 you first went down there.

15 Mr. Sarno. When I first went down there, I was outside.
16 I believe it was concerning clearances to get me into the
17 station, because I had never been working in a station before,
18 so there were special clearances. So at that time, those two
19 months you're speaking of, I attended a course and I may have
20 been sent out once or twice to interview a Cuban refugee or
21 one of our agents who had left Cuba.

22 Mr. Wides. And then you set up the ~~AMURS~~ program? Did
23 you start that project; or was that started when you came in?

24 Mr. Sarno. It had been started, the nucleus had been
25 formed at that time.

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1 Mr. Wides. And except where there's a question of an
2 agent under cover who would be possibly exposed to harm or
3 that kind of thing in regard to the mention of other Agency
4 people, certainly at the level of Mr. Shackley or other
5 officials, Mr. Dimmer, and so forth, that the general procedures
6 have been that people at the Agency or retirees have not
7 refused to disclose names.

8 Now, you certainly have your rights --

9 Mr. Sarno. No, sir. I am not questioning you, or anything,
10 except I've been in this business a long time and I've never
11 mentioned anybody's name. Now if somebody were to tell me,
12 if Seymour Bolton were to tell me that I could tell you all the
13 names of all my supervisors and everything, it's perfectly all
14 right. But I've never mentioned a name and I feel that I
15 shouldn't mention a name.

16 Mr. Wides. Well, we may have to take a break and do that,
17 but let me go on.

18 With regard to the ~~AMUTS~~ program, the ~~AMUTS~~ Cubans were
19 not contract agents of the station, is that correct?

20 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

21 Mr. Wides. They were proprietary employees essentially of
22 ~~LASER~~, essentially?

23 Mr. Sarno. ~~LASER~~ was a group -- that proprietary was
24 set up in September of 1968. Prior to that time they were a
25 bunch of Cubans just living down in Miami.

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1 Mr. Wides. And what was their relationship to the Agency
2 through you?

3 Mr. Sarno. They were a group of Cuban exiles who were
4 being funded to collect information, intelligence information,
5 on Cuba.

6 Mr. Wides.. They were paid agents?

7 Mr. Sarno. They were paid agents.

8 Mr. Wides. Some of them received a fairly sophisticated
9 training in tradecraft, in some cases communications [REDACTED]
10 operations with regard to a station in Florida, and so forth,
11 is that not correct?

12 Mr. Sarno. Sophisticated equipment, yes, sir.

13 Mr. Wides. And tradecraft, general tradecraft training?

14 Mr. Sarno. General tradecraft training, yes, sir.

15 Communications training -- well, most of them weren't
16 communicators, so they required very little if they did
17 receive training.

18 Mr. Wides. Would that put them in a little bit more
19 official status of some sort, whatever the category is called,
20 than simply being a paid informant?

21 Mr. Sarno. No, sir. They were just like paid informants
22 except we provided them funds to operate with.

23 They are no more -- they are not contract, we did not
24 have them under contract.

25 Mr. Wides. But they would still get training?

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1 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir.

2 Mr. Wides. And the program first operated where? Where
3 did you physically locate? Were you at the University of
4 Miami, at the Naval Air Station at the beginning?

5 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

6 Mr. Wides. Where were you at first?

7 Mr. Sarno. Are you speaking of our station? Our station
8 was physically at the [REDACTED] but these Cubans did not
9 know where the station was.

10 Mr. Wides. And you just contacted them separately?

11 Mr. Sarno. They had houses that they rented and they worked
12 out of different houses, and there were many of them, so I
13 can't recall them.

14 Mr. Wides. Did you have an office facility apart from the
15 station?

16 Mr. Sarno. Myself?

17 Mr. Wides. Yes.

18 Mr. Sarno. On one occasion, for a very short period, I
19 had an office.

20 Mr. Wides. Where was the Zenith Corporation?

21 Mr. Sarno. The Zenith Corporation was located on the
22 south campus of Miami.

23 Mr. Wides. Apart from the station?

24 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

25 Mr. Wides. That was a cover?

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1 Mr. Sarno. That was the station.

2 Mr. Wides. And what was the mission and purpose of
3 ~~AMOTS~~ when you first started out, as indicated in the project
4 outline?

5 Mr. Sarno. They were to collect intelligence on Cuba,
6 debrief refugees and provide bodies for any possible operations
7 required by the station.

8 Mr. Wides. They were to debrief refugees?

9 Mr. Sarno. Debrief refugees, collect and evaluate, maintain
10 records.

11 Mr. Wides. Was there a division of the ~~AMOTS~~ members into
12 two groups, with only a small group involving the debriefing
13 of Cuban refugees?

14 Mr. Sarno. Well, it wasn't too small a group, but if you
15 would speak of the whole organization overall, yes, it was a
16 small group.

17 Mr. Wides. And at what point did you set up any cover
18 apart from the station as a proprietary or notional company,
19 in between the ~~AMOTS~~ people and the Miami station? In other
20 words, were the companies prior to the Latin America ~~social~~
21 ~~and economic research~~ company that preceeded it, in time?

22 Mr. Sarno. In the time that I handled them, which is
23 up to the ~~LASER~~, I think there were three, three covers all
24 told, or perhaps four. I think we had our debriefing, you
25 know, under one cover.

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1 Mr. Wides. That was from the start? You had a separate
2 cover for the debriefing?

3 Mr. Sarno. Well, from the start we didn't have a place
4 for them, and it wasn't pulled together as a debriefing unit.
5 When a large flow of refugees started to come in is when we set
6 up the special unit.

7 Mr. Wides. When was that?

8 Mr. Sarno. Well, they cut off --

9 Mr. Wides. '64, '63?

10 Mr. Sarno. It could have been '62, late '62 or '63. And
11 before, we used to send our debriefers, they were within the
12 ~~AMUTS~~ group, specialists in debriefing, area specialists is
13 the kind we used. And we would go out to the reception center
14 and check around and see who had come out of the particular
15 area.

16 Mr. Wides. At Opa-Locka?

17 Mr. Sarno. At Opa-Locka.

18 And our debriefers would go out and check around with the
19 people who came in and try to spot somebody who would be
20 interesting to interview, debrief, concerning the particular
21 area. And so they usually picked them up in a car and either
22 took them to a restaurant or took them to a motel or something
23 and would debrief them. And then we found that it would be
24 better to get a building for them to be in where we located
25 them altogether, where they could prepare their reports and

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1 everything.

2 Mr. Wides. And so that's when you first set up the
3 proprietary for the smaller debriefing component of ~~AMOTS~~?

4 Mr. Sarno. Well, I set up the proprietaries, the notional
5 company for a small debriefing office, and at the same time,
6 we rented a building, a larger building, and they used to
7 operate in Coral Gables, received some publicity and we moved
8 them out of Coral Gables to near the airport in a building where
9 the main office was, where this main office was, where these
10 reports from the debriefers or any other information was
11 collected would be processed, typed in finished form, translated
12 and provided to us.

13 Mr. Wides. About how many people did you have in ~~AMOTS~~
14 Cubans at that time?

15 Mr. Sarno. Well, that's difficult to say.

16 Mr. Wides. 150? Would you say 150?

17 Mr. Sarno. I would say inside, outside, it could be
18 close to 150.

19 Mr. Wides. Did you have more than a dozen or so working
20 in the component on debriefing?

21 Mr. Sarno. As I recall, at one time -- as I recall it,
22 we had about 22, 23 people working in debriefing.

23 Mr. Wides. And apart from those Cubans, you had a staff
24 under you of assistants and secretaries who were Agency
25 assigned personnel?

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1 Mr. Sarno. Yes.

2 Mr. Wides. What kind of staff did you have?

3 Mr. Sarno. Well, it started off originally since we
4 weren't big, I started off with one secretary, and it eventually
5 ended up that there were one or two Intel assistants --

6 Mr. Wides. These were Agency personnel?

7 Mr. Sarno. Agency personnel.

8 --and two or three case officers.

9 Mr. Wides. The case officers handled segments of the

10 ~~AMOTS?~~

11 Mr. Sarno. Segments of the ~~AMOTS~~

12 Mr. Wides. Now, the other, speaking very roughly, hundred
13 and fifty or so ~~AMOTS~~ Cubans, you said some twenty were
14 involved when the debriefing program intensified. What were
15 the other hundred-odd Cubans involved in?

16 Mr. Sarno. Well, we had records personnel, we had
17 I would say six or seven who only worked in records and main-
18 taining of files, and general index cards, and that was it.
19 Then we had what we called our reports section which may have
20 had about fifteen people, twenty people, who wrote reports,
21 checked them out, cross-referenced, and everything else that
22 was involved in that.

23 Mr. Wides. What kind of reports did they write? What
24 were they writing reports about?

25 Mr. Sarno. Economic -- whatever they were learning from

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1 against Cuba, and had weapons they weren't supposed to have.

2 Mr. Wides. Like Alpha-66?

3 Mr. Sarno. Alpha-66, there were many of them.

4 And we usually had one of our outside types, either
5 recruit or get next to an individual of the group and he would
6 penetrate the group himself to report to us what they were
7 doing.

8 Mr. Wides. Do you recall the flights of the Diaz, or one
9 of the Diz brothers, over Havana dropping leaflets?

10 Mr. Sarno. What date was it?

11 Mr. Wides. I believe it was quite early, and it was not
12 in connection with the ~~AMOTS~~.

13 Mr. Sarno. I know the Diaz brothers.

14 Mr. Wides. Do you recall hearing of flights with -- one
15 of them with Frank Sturgis over Havana dropping leaflets?

16 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

17 Mr. Wides. It was fairly widely known.

18 Mr. Sarno. Well, I didn't get into Cubans until maybe
19 it was June of '60, but the only leaflets I ever saw fly over
20 Cuba was the day before the invasion. Those were the only
21 ones I saw.

22 Mr. Wides. When you were in Miami, did you have any
23 contact with Frank Sturgis, Frank Fiorini?

24 Mr. Sarno. Never, never. To my knowledge, he never worked
25 for us.

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1 Mr. Wides. Not getting back to the bulk of the ~~AMOTS~~
2 group, apart from the reporting on refugees and the efforts
3 to keep tabs, which I guess is a summary of what you are
4 saying on what exile groups might be doing that the government
5 might otherwise not know about, is it correct that there was
6 surveillance of the Miami community generally with regard to
7 possible Castro agents?

8 Mr. Sarno. Not that I know of.

9 Mr. Wides. There was no counterintelligence program in
10 the ~~AMOTS~~?

11 Mr. Sarno. We had a counterintelligence component in the
12 ~~AMOTS~~ Program.

13 Mr. Wides. Why don't you describe that?

14 Mr. Sarno. The counterintelligence program consisted of
15 very capable Cubans who knew of the former -- the set-up of
16 the intelligence agency inside of Cuba, so if anybody were to
17 come out, any refugee were to come out and name an individual
18 that was a friend of theirs that we knew or suspected of
19 working for the internal security which was the DSE or their
20 external service, the DGI, our counterintelligence group or
21 one of the individuals would go out and debrief the fellow
22 and collect names, and prepare reports on it, and they maintained
23 files, and that is what it is.

24 They never got under a surveillance of any of them, because
25 once a report was written they suspected somebody. They maintained

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1 a file of them, and when Cuban refugees would come in, they
2 would receive lists of names to check in their files, and if
3 they suspected one, then they would gather all of the
4 information possible on this individual, prepare a report,
5 name their sources, and they would pass it to the station.
6 The station in turn would prepare a memorandum and send it to
7 the bureau.

8 Mr. Wides. Is it your sworn testimony that you never knew
9 of any surveillances or efforts to penetrate groups for
10 counterintelligence purposes by Cubans under your supervision?

11 Mr. Sarno. No, sir, no. You're speaking of penetrating
12 groups, yes. They penetrated groups. Surveillance -- I never
13 sent them out on a mission to surveil anybody concerning whether
14 they were suspect or whatever.

15 Mr. Wides. Was there any surveillance of Cubans in Miami
16 conducted by -- whether it was in cooperation with the Bureau
17 or not -- conducted by any of the ~~AMOTS~~ Cubans that you were
18 aware of?

19 Mr. Sarno. I cannot recall if there ever was.

20 Mr. Wides. I don't mean a specific one.

21 Mr. Sarno. I don't recall ever giving them any assignments.

22 Mr. Wides. I'm not talking about assignments, I'm
23 talking about whether you're aware of their conducting --

24 Mr. Sarno. As I say, I do not recall them conducting
25 any surveillance on anybody.

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1 Mr. Wides. Any telephone taps?

2 Mr. Sarno. Never, any telephone taps, we didn't have
3 telephone tap capability.

4 Mr. Wides. Any photography?

5 Mr. Sarno. We had a photographer.

6 Mr. Wides. When was he used? In what circumstances?

7 Mr. Sarno. Well, the biggest majority of his work was
8 to copy certain documents.

9 Mr. Wides. I mean photographic surveillance.

10 Mr. Sarno. There may have been. I really can't state
11 which one he was used on if he was ever used for photographic
12 surveillance.

13 Mr. Wides. Which what he was used on?

14 Mr. Sarno. I mean if he was used on photographic
15 surveillance. I don't recall ever ordering him out on photo-
16 graphic surveillance.

17 Mr. Wides. Do you recall if there ever was any photo-
18 graphic surveillance carried out by any of the ~~AMUTS~~?

19 Mr. Sarno. I have no recollection. I do not recall.

20 Mr. Wides. Were you getting reports of any sort, whether
21 you would characterize it as surveillance or not, on people
22 who had already come and were in Miami as distinct from the
23 interview reports when the refugees first came?

24 Isn't it correct that the ~~AMUTS~~ personnel were providing
25 you with reports on Cubans who were already in Miami?

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1 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir.

2 Mr. Wides. Would you describe that program?

3 Mr. Sarno. Certainly. As I said, they penetrated these
4 groups, they would go around and then they would sit and talk
5 and as you would call it, the surveillance, the fact that they
6 penetrated, they would sit at the table and report on the
7 individual and what the individual said and what they were
8 planning. We call it penetration.

9 To me, surveillance is to put two men on the street
10 following somebody from one place to another.

11 Mr. Wides. Were there ever occasions when the station
12 was suspicious as to whether Cubans in Miami might be Castro
13 agents that you were aware of?

14 Mr. Sarno. Many.

15 Mr. Wides. Did they ever ask for any assistance in the
16 ~~AMOTS~~ group in trying to keep tabs on those individuals or
17 to test their suspicions?

18 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

19 Mr. Wides. Who would do that?

20 Mr. Sarno. It would be the CI section of the station.

21 Mr. Wides. You don't recall any situation in which -

22 Mr. Sarno. In which ~~AMOTS~~ participated? No, sir.

23 Mr. Wides. -- working with the FBI.

24 Mr. Sarno. The FBI occasionally would ask for the
25 services of one of the ~~AMOTS~~, but it was mainly not to surveil

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1 anybody. It was to provide information to them because their
2 name would come up somewhere in a case.

3 Mr. Wides. What kind of assistance? You mean more than
4 just a chance to interview them?

5 Mr. Sarno. No, just interview. They never used them to
6 run a man on the street or anything like that, no, sir.
7 They tried to get one individual one time and they didn't know
8 that he worked for us and they tried to hire him and he came
9 back and reported it. We had to advise them that he was
10 already working for us.

11 Mr. Wides. And you had 115 men and all---

12 Mr. Sarno. There were women also, sir.

13 Mr. Wides. And women, and all they were doing was
14 interviewing refugees and writing reports on exile potential
15 activities against Cuba?

16 Mr. Sarno. I would say that was the biggest majority of
17 their job.

18 Mr. Wides. What was the rest of it?

19 Mr. Sarno. They also went out, if our station was going
20 to run an operation and they needed X amount of bodies, certain
21 specialized personnel, the ~~AMUTS~~ would go and locate the
22 personnel, talk to them, spot them, get their personal history
23 from them, send it in, and the people would be traced out and
24 checked and cleared and eventually introduced to the station
25 case officer who would use them in our operations.

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1 Mr. Wides. Who arranged for the training at the training
2 station at [REDACTED] (?), was that used?

3 Mr. Sarno. For whom?

4 Mr. Wides. When the ~~AMOTS~~ people received training, some
5 various kind of tradecraft, who would arrange that, yourself?

6 Mr. Sarno. December, 1961 when I took it over there were
7 only three cases of ~~AMOTS~~ who were sent away for special
8 training. Three cases, three individuals.

9 One came here to Washington, the other was going to be
10 loaned to a station overseas. He came up and received training.
11 The majority of the training given to the ~~AMOTS~~ was down in
12 Miami, Florida.

13 Mr. Wides. And what kind was that?

14 Mr. Sarno. Basic tradecraft, reports writing --

15 Mr. Wides. Did they ever get training in surveillance?

16 Mr. Sarno. Yes, they received training in surveillance.

17 Mr. Wides. Why did they get that?

18 Mr. Sarno. Well, that is part of their program of
19 training them as a group.

20 Mr. Wides. Even though there was no use of them for
21 surveillance purposes?

22 Mr. Sarno. I do not recall, sir, ever sending them out
23 on a surveillance.

24 Mr. DeMarco. Who conducted the training?

25 Mr. Sarno. Our Training Branch, personnel from our

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1 Training Branch.

2 Mr. DeMarco. From Washington?

3 Mr. Sarno. Yes.

4 Mr. Wides. You say the majority of the training was in
5 Florida. What period are we talking about, throughout the
6 period?

7 Mr. Sarno. It could be spread over. Reports writing,
8 for instance, when the Agency, or when the station was being
9 cut back in personnel, this group used to produce tons of
10 reports, and when our station was being cut, the staff was
11 being cut, I convinced the Chief of Station into having the
12 reports officers, for instance, trained to prepare reports
13 which would require very little editing or preparation once
14 it arrived in the station, which would take a load off the
15 station, and it was agreed to.

16 Mr. Wides. You arranged in general for the training or
17 the training office?

18 Mr. Sarno. I never trained.

19 Mr. Wides. But they worked through you administratively?

20 Mr. Sarno. Yes.

21 Mr. Wides. So you were familiar with all the training
22 ~~Ames~~ personnel would have got?

23 Mr. Sarno. I would say all of the training that they
24 received during the period I was with them, with the exception
25 of that one year there, and also I must state that although I

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1 Mr. Wides. There were some new people coming in?

2 Mr. Sarno. Yes. Some of the people would move, they got
3 a job that paid them more, but there were very few that came
4 in after the original, say about 1964 I would say it was well
5 established and very few dropped out or were taken aboard there-
6 after.

7 Mr. Wides. They all got what you referred to earlier as
8 basic tradecraft training?

9 Mr. Sarno. No, not all of them.

10 Mr. Wides. How many?

11 Mr. Sarno. There were very few of them in the original
12 group. I never had them trained in basic tradecraft. The
13 original group which I took over which, if I am not mistaken,
14 was about eighteen of them, and I understand that prior to
15 the Bay of Pigs --

16 Mr. Wides. Eighteen in ~~AMUTS~~ or eighteen in training?

17 Mr. Sarno. Eighteen in ~~AMUTS~~ all told.

18 I understood that prior to the Bay of Pigs these ~~AMUTS~~
19 had been given basic tradecraft training. I never once sent
20 them out to receive basic tradecraft training.

21 Mr. Wides. After you came -- when you came there were
22 eighteen ~~AMUTS~~ and eventually we're talking about 150, roughly,
23 or more?

24 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir.

25 Mr. Wides. And you never knew of any of the people who

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1 joined ~~AMUTS~~ after you took over getting general tradecraft?

2 Mr. Sarno. No, sir, no, sir.

3 Mr. Wides. And to your knowledge it was only report
4 writing?

5 Mr. Sarno. Well, they trained them in each one of the
6 sections, and I didn't train the debriefers, so if a new man
7 was hired and he was put in a debriefing, he was trained u
8 usually by the Chief of the Debriefing Group, he was put in
9 there to work along with other debriefers to catch onto the
10 thing.

11 Mr. Wides. Now your testimony with regard to surveillance
12 training, who issued that, or how many people?

13 Mr. Sarno. If I am not mistaken, it was four or five.

14 Mr. Wides. When you first came, or shortly thereafter?

15 Mr. Sarno. Yes, it was all at the -- now, now, just one
16 second, because I went in surveillance training myself.

17 I don't recall whether this four or five whom we trained
18 in surveillance were trained while I had them or they were
19 trained before I took them.

20 Mr. Wides. Now after that, those four or five, no other
21 ~~AMUTS~~ people to your knowledge received any surveillance
22 training, is that your testimony?

23 Mr. Sarno. That is true, sir.

24 Mr. Wides. What about picks and locks?

25 Mr. Sarno. Nobody.

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1 Mr. Wides. That you know of received --

2 Mr. Sarno. Not a single one that I know of.

3 Mr. Wides. Did you know anybody at ~~AMOTS~~ who had
4 capability of any previous experience at picks and locks,
5 surreptitious entry?

6 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

7 Mr. Wides. You were not aware of anyone at ~~AMOTS~~ having
8 that capability?

9 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

10 Mr. Wides. You never discussed it with anyone at the
11 station?

12 Mr. Sarno. Possibly.

13 Mr. Wides. Well, let me ask the question, the
14 capabilities in the area of surreptitious entry or picking
15 locks and no part of ~~AMOTS~~ people in all those years?

16 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

17 Mr. Wides. Were the group that were located in your
18 homestate that were involved in the interception of any
19 traffic, radio traffic or Cuban, were they under your supervision?

20 Mr. Sarno. They were originally under my supervision,
21 and later the station brought an individual down from Head-
22 quarters and took over that operation.

23 Mr. Wides. And when was that?

24 Mr. Sarno. Well, the station always had somebody at the
25 station who was reviewing all of their work and passing

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1 instructions. I handled them for a long time.

2 Mr. Wides. Until roughly?

3 Mr. Sarno. Until roughly the arrival of Mr. ~~Dimmer~~. You
4 have the date there. I think Mr. ~~Dimmer~~'s the one who brought
5 down the fellow from Headquarters.

6 Mr. Wides. And these people received some training
7 regarding the use of [] equipment even if they had
8 some experience as radio operators, isn't that true?

9 Mr. Sarno. Sir, I really don't know.

10 I know that I never brought an instructor down to train
11 them in the use of radio equipment. These individuals had
12 worked in this work in Cuba before they came out --

13 Mr. Wides. In [] work like this?

14 Mr. Sarno. In [] work, yes. We had two very
15 brilliant fellows who were the top people in the communications
16 field in Cuba.

17 And most of the radio operators had had up to twenty
18 years experience, they were elderly people, and they had been
19 in radio and they could read and they could send it out very
20 well.

21 Mr. Wides. So your testimony is that --

22 Mr. Sarno. I do not recall them ever having been
23 trained by anybody, in any sense.

24 Mr. Wides. Or communications in general?

25 Mr. Sarno. Now communications generally, I cannot say that.

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1 because several of the ~~AMOTS~~ were trained and several of them
2 who were brought out of Cuba, because several of them were in
3 Cuba as radio operators and then they came out. They were
4 in the Miami group not operating radios, but --

5 Mr. Wides. But during your administration of the ~~AMOTS~~
6 group as case officer, you don't recall any training being
7 given in communications?

8 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

9 Mr. Wides. Do you recall any cooperation of the ~~AMOTS~~
10 people with the FBI and other Federal agencies trying to DF
11 and identify suspected illegal wireless operators in Miami,
12 Castro agents?

13 Mr. Sarno. No, sir, they never did.

14 Mr. Wides. ~~AMOTS~~ was not involved in that?

15 Mr. Sarno. No, I never heard of any. You must remember
16 that when Dimmer came down and brought the fellow, I never saw
17 the traffic anymore, but during the period that I was looking
18 at the traffic, and I was directing that special intercept
19 group as part of the ~~AMOTS~~, I never once gave them an order
20 and never saw any that they did.

21 Mr. Wides. When Mr. Shackley was the station chief, did
22 you report to him or someone else?

23 Mr. Sarno. I reported to my branch chief.

24 Mr. Wides. And what was that branch?

25 Mr. Sarno. FI Branch, Foreign Intelligence.

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1 Mr. Wides. And that was the same procedure throughout
2 the period?

3 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir.

4 Mr. Wides. Up til '67?

5 Mr. Sarno. Through '67. Well, let's see, now. No, sir.
6 Well, it was, because later they made the ~~AMOTS~~ group, it
7 became a branch, and they brought in a very senior officer to
8 be the Branch Chief, and I was considered the Deputy Branch
9 Chief. Mr. Dimmer brought in the senior officer.

10 Mr. Wides. And you don't feel like you can give us his
11 name?

12 Mr. Sarno. There's no reason not to. He is retired now.
13 Bill Caldwell.

14 Mr. Wides. What contact did you have with a man who
15 called himself [REDACTED]

16 Mr. Sarno. He was the Chief of the MI Group, the Cuban
17 Chief.

18 Mr. Wides. [REDACTED]

19 Mr. Sarno. [REDACTED]

20 Mr. Wides. And he was your principal contact?

21 Mr. Sarno. He was my principal -- he was the head, the
22 Cuban head of it.

23 Mr. Wides. Are you familiar with the history of the ~~AMOTS~~
24 group that he prepared in the late '60's, or worked on?

25 Mr. Sarno. In the late '60's?

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1 Mr. Wides. I thought so. I thought in '66 or '67, that
2 is what I meant, that he had worked on the history of the ~~AMOTS~~
3 group.

4 Mr. Sarno. Well, no.

5 Mr. Wides. Are you familiar with the written history of
6 the ~~AMOTS~~ program?

7 Mr. Sarno. I have never seen it. I had established the
8 policy that every three months he had to write up about the
9 group, so all of that, I understand, was all compiled into the
10 history, so I don't know.

11 Mr. Wides. As part of the Miami Station?

12 Mr. Sarno. As part of the Miami Station, so I don't think
13 he was told in '66 or '67, start all over and prepare it.

14 Mr. Wides. You think it was a consolidation?

15 Mr. Sarno. I think it was consolidated over the years.

16 Mr. Wides. And this is entitled what, do you know?

17 Mr. Sarno. I supposed it would be The History of the

18 ~~AMOTS~~

19 Mr. Wides. And you've never seen it?

20 Mr. Sarno. I've never seen it.

21 Mr. Wides. Do you know if it's at Headquarters in the
22 Latin American Division?

23 Mr. Sarno. I do not know.

24 Mr. Wides. When the Cuban Operations Group was set up --
25 let's go back -- in '61 when you took over was approximately

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1 the period when Mr. Harvey was setting up the staff Task Force
2 W, is that correct?

3 What contact, if any, did you have with Task Force W
4 personnel as distinct from the station itself?

5 Mr. Sarno. None whatsoever.

6 Mr. Wides. They never came down and spoke to you?

7 Mr. Sarno. When I came out of Cuba, when I escaped from
8 Cuba, I was brought up here to Headquarters and debriefed, so
9 I imagine that the person that debriefed me, this is in July
10 of '61, I would imagine that individual was part of the Task
11 Force.

12 Mr. Wides. I think that was still in the Division. They
13 had not split the Task Force until the winter of '61, '62.

14 Mr. Sarno. I see. Well --

15 Mr. Wides. But after that when you were in Florida, you
16 had no contact with anyone, to your knowledge, other than the
17 Station personnel?

18 Mr. Sarno. Well, I don't know. Occasionally they would
19 call me to Washington to discuss something.

20 Mr. Wides. And did you discuss something with people in
21 the Task Force, the Cuban Task Force?

22 Mr. Sarno. The Cuban Task Force.

23 Mr. Wides. Mr. ~~Cheever~~?

24 Mr. Sarno. I know Mr. ~~Cheever~~, yes.

25 Mr. Wides. And did you have any contact with Desmond

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1 FitzGerald when it became the Special Activities Staff and he
2 took it over?

3 Mr. Sarno. I know Desmond FitzGerald, or I knew him, and
4 discussed operations with him -- no, I never sat down and
5 discussed an operation. I met him at a party, and that was all.

6 Mr. Wides. And when you came to Washington what kind of
7 discussions would you have about the ~~AMOTS~~ program?

8 Mr. Sarno. I made so many trips to Washington, I say I
9 was also the case officer, I used to travel and recruit people.
10 I do not specifically recall ever being called to Washington to
11 discuss ~~AMOTS~~.

12 Mr. Wides. But do you recall ever discussing the ~~AMOTS~~
13 program and the Cubans in it while you were in Washington?

14 Mr. Sarno. Well, if I would come up on a trip and some of
15 the people who were sitting on a desk here who were maintaining
16 the records and everything of the ~~AMOTS~~, I suppose, yes, they
17 would come around and discuss perhaps the budget or perhaps
18 get them to report in a different manner. I recall on one
19 occasion discussing the set-up of how the ~~AMOTS~~ group prepared
20 the debriefing reports, that they could remove the names from
21 it, instead of filing them inside the report, they put the
22 names on cards so they could be put into a computer machine
23 here.

24 Mr. Wides. In the period when Mr. Shackley and Mr. Dimmer
25 were Station Chiefs, which would be '63 through '65 or so, did

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1 you have any contact with Mr. Sternfeld or Mr. Esterline?

2 Mr. Sarno. Which period is this?

3 Mr. Wides. '62 to '65 or so.

4 Mr. Sarno. Mr. Esterline, who I believe at that time
5 was -- Mr. Esterline was --

6 Mr. Wides. Was he in Miami?

7 Mr. Sarno. No, Mr. Esterline was on the staff he -- I
8 don't know whether it was on the staff of the Task Force or
9 who at that time, but I knew Mr. Esterline, first from his
10 visits. I first met Mr. Esterline when he came to Miami in
11 either late '61 or early '62, and I never saw him again until
12 he used to make his trips down, and then I understand he was
13 assigned overseas.

14 Mr. Wides. Did you discuss the ~~AMULIS~~ Program with him?

15 Mr. Sarno. At that period?

16 Mr. Wides. At any time.

17 Mr. Sarno. Well, yes, he was my Station Chief at one
18 time.

19 Mr. Wides. You mean in '68 or '69?

20 Mr. Sarno. That's right.

21 Mr. Wides. But not prior to that?

22 Mr. Sarno. Well, yes, he came down on -- prior to his
23 coming down and setting up the new station, he came down and
24 discussed with all of us who might remain at our jobs there.

25 Mr. Wides. But not in the early period of the '60's?

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1 Mr. Sarno. Not in the earlier --
2 Mr. Wides. What about Larry Sternfeld?
3 Mr. Sarno. No, Mr. Sternfeld was never connected with
4 the Cuban thing until early '68.
5 Mr. Wides. Let me go back to the cover companies.
6 You say you set up one company for the smaller group, or
7 one notional that was handling the --
8 Mr. Sarno. Refugees.
9 Mr. Wides. Refugees.
10 Can you give us the name of that?
11 Mr. Sarno. I don't recall it, sir.
12 Mr. Wides. Now, was there a separate company --
13 Mr. Sarno. For the principal group.
14 Mr. Wides. And what was that?
15 Mr. Sarno. Well, you named it off, the ~~Latin American~~
16 ~~Research~~ --
17 Mr. Wides. I thought you said that didn't start until
18 '68?
19 Mr. Sarno. No, sir, ~~LASER~~ started in '68.
20 Mr. Wides. ~~Latin American Social and Economic Research?~~
21 Mr. Sarno. Is that what that stands for? There was a
22 ~~Latin American Research~~ that they had.
23 Mr. Wides. ~~Latin American Research~~ Company?
24 Mr. Sarno. Yeah.
25 Mr. Wides. What was its cover?

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1 Mr. Sarno. They were supposed to be doing, researching
2 Latin America, since they had a lot of files, and you could
3 hear a lot of typewriters clicking all over the place.

4 Mr. Wides. And what's your best recollection of the name?

5 Mr. Sarno. My best recollection is ~~Latin American Trade~~
6 ~~and Research.~~

7 Mr. Wides. Company?

8 Mr. Sarno. Company.

9 Mr. Wides. Did it have any other names? I think you
10 suggested there were even more than two proprietaries and more
11 than two notionals. Did you have three or four going at one
12 point?

13 Mr. Sarno. Well, it was at one point, at one point there
14 were three of them, if you included the Intercept. The
15 Intercept people had another name.

16 Mr. Wides. But basically there were --

17 Mr. Sarno. There could have been three of them at one
18 time, and basically there were two, yes. One of them was
19 ~~Marine~~ -- that's it. I think the debriefing group came under
20 ~~Marine Research~~, or something like that.

21 Mr. Wides. When do you first recall being approached
22 about possible use of ~~AMOTS~~ people outside the Miami area in
23 the United States?

24 Mr. Sarno. Use of ~~AMOTS~~ people outside the Miami area?

25 Mr. Wides. In the United States.

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1 Mr. Sarno. Nobody ever approached me on it. They were
2 outside of Miami, but the thing that happens is the Chief of
3 the Miami group, when an ~~AMOT~~ would leave --

4 Mr. Wides. This is Mr. [REDACTED] P

5 Mr. Sarno. When one of the ~~AMOTS~~ would leave for his
6 reasons, they would always maintain contact with Mr. [REDACTED]
7 when they would move to any area, and all they would do is to
8 report on Cuban exiles in that area.

9 Mr. Wides. And would the fact that they were leaving and
10 going to another area be reported by you, back through channels
11 to Washington for relay to CIA personnel in the area where
12 they were going? Was this ever done?

13 Mr. Sarno. Yes, it was done, yes.

14 Mr. Wides. And was it not uncommon in the case of Cubans
15 going to the New York area? Does that happen fairly frequently?

16 Mr. Sarno. Well, since it was handled in such a loose
17 way, in that it was between [REDACTED] and this individual and
18 we didn't have them on the payroll.

19 Mr. Wides. You mean you didn't have them on the payroll
20 in the sense of employees, they were regularly paid agents,
21 informants?

22 Mr. Sarno. They were given funds by [REDACTED] which
23 obviously were authorized for sort of like operational expenses.

24 Mr. Wides. Excuse me. You're talking about when they
25 were in Florida, or when they were moving?

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1 Mr. Sarno. No, when they were in New York, if they went
2 to New York.

3 Mr. Wides. Well, let's go back.

4 The first question I was asking you was with regard to
5 your relaying to CIA personnel the fact that someone who had
6 been at ~~AMOTS~~ in Florida was going elsewhere and you said that
7 that happened, and then I asked you -- we will come to the
8 operational relationships in a moment -- how frequently that
9 happened in regard to people coming to New York. For example,
10 I assume that there were a fair number of Cubans generally in
11 there for one or two members of ~~AMOTS~~ who went up to New York
12 during the course of all of these years.

13 Mr Sarno. No, sir, no, sir.

14 Mr. Wides. Would you say several dozen or a dozen?

15 Mr. Sarno. So far as I recall, there was only one that
16 ever went up there, and he in turn collected two or three of
17 his other friends around him who formed a little nucleus, but
18 there was only one ~~AMOT~~ that went.

19 Mr. Wides. What about other cities? What other cities
20 do you recall people went to?

21 Mr. Sarno. In the United States?

22 Mr. Wides. Yes.

23 Washington?

24 Mr. Sarno. No, sir. San Juan, Puerto Rico, and that's all,
25 in the United States.

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1 Mr. Wides. Chicago?
2 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.
3 Mr. Wides. Anyplace on the West Coast or the Southwest?
4 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.
5 Mr. Wides. Boston?
6 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.
7 Mr. Wides. So you only recall persons who had been in
8 ~~AMUTS~~ telling -- why don't we refer to him as [REDACTED]
9 that they were going to another city as being New York and
10 San Juan?

11 Mr. Sarno. New York and San Juan are the only two I ever
12 recall they ever had any ~~AMUTS~~ or ex-~~AMUTS~~ or people that had
13 been in the organization went.

14 Mr. Wides. Now when they went and they recruited other
15 people, was that [REDACTED] suggestion or under his supervision?

16 Mr. Sarno. They usually collected a group around people
17 that they trusted.

18 Mr. Wides. Was that up to [REDACTED] supervision and
19 direction?

20 Mr. Sarno. He directed them to do it, yes. I didn't even
21 know the individual, I never met him. It's one individual.

22 Mr. Wides. Did he speak to you about the fact that he
23 was going to do this, Mr. [REDACTED]

24 Did he consult with you on it?

25 Mr. Sarno. Well, I believe it came up -- I knew the fellow

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1 was leaving, because he was taken off of the role as being in
2 Miami, and we may have discussed his being used while he was in
3 New York in case anything ever came up.

4 Mr. Wides. Do you recall discussing it?

5 Mr. Sarno. Well, yes, we did discuss it, obviously it
6 was discussed, because this fellow came up with a big thing
7 when they were going to bazooka the UN building.

8 Mr. Wides. Was this one of the Novo brothers -- or was
9 either of the Novo brothers in ~~AMOTS~~ in Florida? I believe
10 this is the name of the two people who were arrested at the
11 time.

12 Mr. Sarno. No, the ~~AMOT~~ that was in New York is the one
13 that discovered the plot and we informed the Bureau and the
14 Bureau moved in on it.

15 Mr. Wides. You informed the Bureau?

16 Mr. Sarno. We informed the Bureau of that shelling of
17 the UN, and it was the ~~AMOTS~~, this one ~~AMOT~~ up there who got
18 the information.

19 Mr. Wides. And he relayed that to someone in New York, or
20 back, through [] to you?

21 Mr. Sarno. He relayed it to [] and we -- he
22 informed us, and we in turn advised our base in New York who
23 in turn advised the Bureau.

24 Mr. Wides. Which base is that, the Domestic Operations or
25 the Security Office?

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1 Mr. Sarno. Domestic Operations.

2 (Discussion off the record.)

3 Mr. Wides. With regard to the information received from
4 the former ~~AMUT~~ in New York about the plot to shoot a bazooka
5 at the UN, was Mr. Shackley the Station Chief at the time you
6 received that information?

7 Mr. Sarno. I don't recall the date, but the date was
8 between early '62, which it had to have been, and -- because
9 Shackley left which I think was in July of '64 and that would
10 have meant he was the Chief of Station.

11 Mr. Wides. Well, didn't he just indicate before while we
12 were taking a rbreak that you had recalled that Shackley was
13 the Station Chief?

14 Mr. Sarno. I don't recall whether he was exactly the
15 Station Chief or not. I can't place the date with what had
16 happened, so I know I went back to the Station and I reported
17 it, and it in turn was reported. Now, if I told it to Shackley
18 or if I told it to Dimmer, if I told it to the two different
19 Branch Chiefs that were there at the time, I do not recall.

20 Mr. Wides. Now would that report be in the ~~AMUTS~~ file?

21 Mr. Sarno. In the history?

22 Mr. Wides. No, in the file, the project file.

23 If we got that date when that took place, the date when
24 the Agency had the information, would your report and report of
25 the branch or station in Florida be in the ~~AMUTS~~ project file

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1 or would it be in some other file?

2 Mr. Sarno. I don't think that they maintain a chrono on
3 ~~AMUTS~~. It was voluminous. Once they were processed by the
4 Agency and put into our communications channel, be it by
5 dispatch or by cable, I don't think they retained all of those
6 tons of files.

7 Mr. Wides. Do you recall who the FI Branch Chief was at
8 the time?

9 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

10 If you give me a date that I know --

11 Mr. Wides. I believe it was '64.

12 Mr. Sarno. If it was early 1964, then Mr. Shackley was
13 there. If it was late 1964 when Dimmer came, then there was
14 another branch, so there were two branch chiefs.

15 Mr. Wides. Now did you relay this information, did you
16 say, to Washington, or directly to New York?

17 Mr. Sarno. Sir, I never handled communications.

18 Mr. Wides. Well, I didn't mean you --

19 Mr. Sarno. If I write it up, I give it to my branch chief,
20 and my branch chief in turn sends it out. But to me, it would
21 seem logical, knowing communications, that we would send the
22 cable directly to New York with info to Washington.

23 Mr. Wides. Were you ever told that communications had
24 been made to New York? You said before --

25 Mr. Sarno. Yes, I was told, because I think there may have

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1 been a cable or something coming down and giving the boys
2 credit for the thing. .

3 Mr. DeMarco. Do you recall now the name of this one
4 ~~AMOTS~~ who went to New York?

5 Mr. Sarno. His name was Enrique.

6 Mr. Wides. Could you spell that?

7 Mr. Sarno. E-n-r-i-q-u-e, that is his first name.
8 I don't recall his last name.

9 Mr. DeMarco. Lazarus?

10 Mr. Sarno. No. Lazarus is not a last name.

11 Mr. Wides. How many people did he have working with him?

12 Mr. Sarno. Sir, I don't recall, but I know there was more
13 than one or two.

14 Mr. Wides. And would [redacted] give you reports that he
15 sent down to [redacted]

16 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir.

17 Mr. Wides. And what did the reports talk about?

18 Mr. Sarno. They were on Cuban exiles, groups, collection
19 of money, Alpha 66 and people of that group who were up in
20 New York City.

21 Mr. Wides. Was it your impression at the time that this
22 group had no contact with any CIA offices in New York?

23 Mr. Sarno. Which group, sir?

24 Mr. Wides. The group that this fellow Enrique had.

25 Mr. Sarno. Had no contacts with anybody else?

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1 Mr. Wides. With any CIA offices in New York. Was your
2 impression that the only contact that he had with CIA was all
3 the way back through Miami?

4 Mr. Sarno. I believe that was the case, yes, sir.

5 Mr. Wides. You had no understanding?


6 Mr. Sarno. Well, obviously once this thing came up, we
7 put this fellow in contact with somebody in the base up there
8 who in turn delivered them to the Bureau.

9 Mr. Wides. And this was the Domestic Operations Base, not
10 the Security Office?

11 Mr. Sarno. Domestic Operations.

12 Mr. Wides. Now thereafter, did they keep contact with
13 this group?

14 Mr. Sarno. I cannot recall.

15 Mr. Wides. Did you continue after that incident to get
16 reports through 

17 Mr. Sarno. I believe so, yes.

18 Mr. Wides. With no indication whether they were also in
19 touch with the Agency?

20 ~~Mr.~~ Sarno. No, sir.

21 Mr. Wides. You weren't curious, or did you ever inquire?

22 Mr. Sarno. Well, I would believe it to be that they were
23 not in contact with anybody up there, because if the report
24 were to come down, they would probably have indicated in their
25 report that they had passed this information on.

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1 Mr. Wides. No, I mean after that, after they were put
2 in touch with the base.

3 Mr. Sarno. That's what I was speaking of. Many reports
4 that came there after, they would have indicated that it had
5 been passed, and I don't recall ever reading a report from
6 them that he had passed the information on to any contact up
7 there.

8 Mr. Wides. Do you recall any instance in which the
9 Agency asked, through you, and in turn through Mr. [redacted] that
10 particular people in New York be watched or investigated?

11 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

12 Mr. Wides. How would they decide what groups or what
13 individuals to penetrate or keep under surveillance?

14 Mr. Sarno. Well there were the active groups. This
15 fellow used to come down to Miami and he would talk to [redacted]
16 [redacted] and [redacted] would tell him, here is people here who
17 are talking about collecting money, about a supposed operation,
18 how much money are they getting for it --

19 Mr. Wides. Where would he get that information from, from
20 you?

21 Mr. Sarno. Get what?

22 Mr. Wides. Where would [redacted] get that --

23 Mr. Sarno. The MI group knew more about what was going on
24 in Cuban operations in the Miami area than we did, so most of
25 the information we obtained was through them.

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1 Mr. Wides. So how would he get the information about
2 potential targets in New York?

3 Mr. Sarno. Because they had the groups down in Miami
4 penetrated, so in Miami, these groups in Miami, would discuss
5 their contacts with the splinter group sitting up in New York
6 and the information would come about.

7 Mr. Wides. You never got any written instructions or
8 oral instructions when you were in Washington or Miami to see
9 if you could arrange for this person to get information on
10 people in New York?

11 Mr. Sarno. Never. Never once.

12 Mr. Wides. What about picketing in New York by Cuban
13 personnel? There's some reference to that in testimony we've
14 already received.

15 Mr. Sarno. There is one incident of the Mexico -- I think
16 it was against Mexico, where they went to an affair or something
17 and threw out leaflets.

18 Mr. Wides. What about picketing of an airline company or
19 an airline office?

20 Mr. Sarno. I heard that that took place, but I was not
21 in Miami at the time. I was away on a trip.

22 Mr. Wides. But your understanding was it involved ~~AMUTS~~
23 personnel?

24 Mr. Sarno. This individual was involved in it.

25 Mr. Wides. And what did you understand had been the

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1 origins of the picketing? How would it come about?

2 Mr. Sarno. Well, I don't believe it was started, I know
3 it wasn't started in ~~AMOTIS~~ because one individual cannot start
4 it, but the groups, the Cuban exile groups who were located in
5 New York decided to picket it because, I believe, of Mexico's
6 relations with Cuba.

7 Mr. Wides. At this time, wasn't the Agency carrying on
8 a wide variety of operations to try and isolate Cuba economically
9 and commercially?

10 Mr. Sarno. I believe they were, yes. I was never involved
11 in any of those operations.

12 Mr. Wides. And including air traffic people, airlines
13 going to Cuba. That was one aspect of the efforts to isolate
14 Cuba.

15 Mr. Sarno. Well, the airlines going to Cuba, if I
16 can recall at that time, were not Mexican airlines.

17 Mr. Wides. You didn't have any idea at the time as to
18 what --

19 Mr. Sarno. Mexican airlines do not fly to Cuba. The
20 Cubans always flew their airplanes over. The Mexicans were
21 not flying.

22 Mr. Wides. So you understood this to be harrassment of
23 a Mexican Company or a Mexican national company, because of
24 Mexico's general relations with Cuba?

25 Mr. Sarno. General relations with Cuba, that is what I

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1 understood it to be.

2 Mr. Wides. And you didn't have any information that the
3 Agency was aware of it beforehand?

4 Mr. Sarno. No, sir, I was never involved in it. I don't
5 recall ever seeing the reports or anything, because as I say,
6 I did an awful lot of travelling when I handled the ~~AMUTS~~

7 Mr. Wides. When you discussed this with the people at
8 the Agency, is your testimony that you never heard any indica-
9 tion that the Agency was involved in that picketing?

10 Mr. Sarno. That is --

11 Mr. Wides. No one's ever suggested --

12 Mr. Sarno. Nobody ever suggested that the Agency was the
13 one who backed the people who did the picketing, no.

14 Mr. Wides. Now was there a time when ~~AMUTS~~ personnel who
15 had not moved outside of the Miami area were ever used or
16 involved in any Agency operations to your knowledge outside of
17 Miami, went on trips to do little jobs?

18 Mr. Sarno. ~~AMUTS~~ went out of Miami in order to do little
19 jobs --

20 Mr. Wides. I don't mean to Cuba.

21 Mr. Sarno. No, they went out of Miami to do little jobs
22 like for instance a specialist in say, sugar, would say come
23 out of Cuba through Spain and he'd end up in New York, and so
24 an ~~AMUTS~~ would go from Miami to New York to debrief him. Or we
25 would hear of somebody who knew of a well-known government

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1 figure in Cuba who came out and he goes to Louisiana or he
2 goes to Chicago. Well, an ~~AMOTS~~ would be dispatched over to his
3 house to debrief him. That is the only places I ever sent the
4 ~~AMOTS~~, or the ~~AMOTS~~ were ever sent.

5 Mr. Wides. What about with regard to surveillances or
6 breaking or entering?

7 Mr. Sarno. Never.

8 Mr. Wides. Mr. Sturbitz, do you know him?

9 Mr. Sarno. Sturbitz?

10 Mr. Wides. He was involved in economic warfare against
11 Castro.

12 Mr. Sarno. Sturblitz or Sturbitz?

13 Mr. Wides. Sturbitz.

14 Mr. Sarno. Yes, I know Sturbitz.

15 Mr. Wides. He testified he conducted some inquiries in
16 regard to the question of ~~AMOTS~~ involvement in possible illegal
17 activities, breaking and entering, surveillance and so forth.
18 Were you aware of those investigations?

19 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

20 Mr. Wides. Have you ever heard any charges or allegations
21 or suggestions that ~~AMOTS~~ personnel were involved in breaking
22 and entering in New York against groups like the Fair Play For
23 Cuba Committee, the Vinceremos Brigade?

24 Mr. Sarno. No, sir, no, sir.

25 Mr. Wides. And you never heard anything about the use of

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1 ~~AMOTS~~ in regard to any kind of harrassing action against those
2 groups?

3 Mr. Sarno. No, sir, never.

4 Mr. Wides. Do you know if any members of ~~AMOTS~~ may have
5 been used in these kinds of activities without your express
6 direction or not as part of its CIA task?

7 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

8 Mr. Wides. You never heard anything about it?

9 Mr. Sarno. Never heard.

10 Mr. Wides. In Florida also?

11 Mr. Sarno. In Florida also.

12 Mr. Wides. What about with regard to Puerto Rico and
13 ~~AMOTS~~ going there. Tell us about that.

14 Mr. Sarno. Well, there were several ~~AMOTS~~ who left Miami
15 and went over to Puerto Rico. There is a large Cuban community
16 in Puerto Rico with the attendant Cuban exile groups, and it
17 was the same thing as was going on in New York. They would
18 collect data on what these groups were doing, operations that
19 they were preparing, funds that they were collecting, et
20 cetera.

21 Mr. Wides. Did you see those reports as they came in?

22 Mr. Sarno. Yes, they came in and [] would prepare
23 them and send them into the office.

24 Mr. Wides. When did they start including reports on
25 Puerto Rican affairs?

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1 Mr. Sarno. Never.

2 Mr. Wides. No discussion in those reports --

3 Mr. Sarno. Never once did they write up about Puerto
4 Rican political affairs. I never once saw a report.

5 Mr. Wides. Did you ever have any discussion with
6 or anyone involved in the Puerto Rican Cuban community about
7 Puerto Rican affairs?

8 Mr. Sarno. Never.

9 Mr. Wides. Was there a station operating at that time
10 for the Caribbean in Puerto Rico?

11 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

12 Mr. Wides. During the entire period, '61 til about '67?

13 Mr. Sarno. To my knowledge, there wasn't. There was
14 not a station.

15 Mr. Wides. Do you want to go ahead?

16 Mr. DeMarco. Just a couple.

17 You mentioned, or it was touched upon earlier, the
18 period of time you were actually in Cuba, 1961.

19 Mr. Sarno. '60 and '61.

20 Mr. DeMarco. What requirements were levied upon you when
21 you left to go to Cuba?

22 Mr. Sarno. None.

23 Mr. DeMarco. Well, you'd better explain that. I don't
24 understand that answer at all. You just went on a vacation?

25 Mr. Sarno. I was transferred from a foreign country to

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1 Cuba because they needed me.

2 Mr. DeMarco. What foreign country were you transferred
3 from?

4 Mr. Sarno. I don't think that I should state that.

5 Mr. DeMarco. I insist that you answer that.

6 Mr. Wides. Let's go off the record.

7 (Discussion off the record.)

8 Mr. DeMarco. For the record, I think I should explain to
9 you that we are highly interested in the sort of activities
10 that you were involved in in Cuba in 1960 and '61, but our
11 investigation has to a certain point been slowed down by the
12 inability to obtain the right kinds of documents and that
13 being the case, and your insistence here on not answering
14 certain questions, will require us to simply have you come
15 back once we have cleared this up with your superiors at the
16 Agency and once they have been more forthcoming with documents
17 that were long ago requested about your activities.

18 I don't want to pursue just suspicions with you, I'd
19 rather talk to you about specific dates and facts.

20 We are going to pursue this very vigorously, and the
21 reason I'm interested in it is the gambling background, and
22 I would like to know your training in that area, your experience
23 in that area and the reasons why you were down there.

24 Now if there is anything you want to tell me now, or do
25 you want to come back --

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1 Mr. Sarno. Sure, I'll tell you now. I was in a country --
2 and I don't think I have to name the country because you are
3 interested in Cuba and you are interested in the operation that
4 I had in Miami and I don't think you're interested in what I
5 did before I went to Cuba. I tell you that nobody gave me any
6 instructions when I went to Cuba. I knew the Chief of Station
7 in Cuba and had known him for many years. He asked for me
8 specifically to come over for my abilities or qualifications
9 or experience. I climbed on an airplane and I went to Cuba.

10 I met the Chief of Station and he told me what he wanted
11 me to do.

12 Mr. DeMarco. What's his name?

13 Mr. Sarno. [REDACTED]

14 Mr. DeMarco. You met Mr. [REDACTED] and he told you what he
15 wanted you to do?

16 What did he tell you?

17 Mr. Sarno. He told me he wanted me to set up a stay-behind
18 net in Cuba because the situation was getting very bad and he
19 would like to set a stay-behind net up in Cuba.

20 Mr. Wides. This is with the break in Cuban relations?

21 Mr. Sarno. That's right, the pending break in diplomatic
22 relations and the rest of the things, and he wanted to set up
23 a net over in Cuba. And that is why he called for me.

24 Mr. DeMarco. Okay. So you --

25 Mr. Sarno. I went into Cuba and did not have a job. I had

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1 no cover. I went in as a tourist, a tourist can wear thin so
2 I had to scrounge around in different ways. I had a brother-
3 in-law who was a professional gambler. When I was a kid, he
4 died. He taught me a little about gambling, so I used to go
5 to the black jack tables and I would win money here, there and
6 the other place.

7 Mr. DeMarco. Is this the hotel black jack tables
8 predominantly?

9 Mr. Sarno. No, they had black jack, roulette, they had
10 baccarat. I would go in there, I would make myself seen, they
11 would see that I was wearing good clothes and I was winning
12 money at the gambling tables and that's it.

13 I am not to be tied into any Syndicate or anything like
14 it. I didn't know a single soul.

15 Mr. DeMarco. You knew no one?

16 Mr. Sarno. Nobody.

17 Mr. DeMarco. And your task then, which you learned on
18 arriving there, was to set up a network?

19 Mr. Sarno. To set up a network of agents in Cuba, yes.

20 Mr. DeMarco. So you started meeting people to do that?

21 Mr. Sarno. No.

22 We never meet people to do that.

23 Mr. DeMarco. Describe to me how you did it.

24 Mr. Sarno. People were spotted by other individuals and
25 they're checked out, and once they're checked out and their

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1 clearance is obtained on them, they are delivered to me for
2 me to handle and train and what have you.

3 Mr. DeMarco. I see.

4 Were any of those Americans?

5 Mr. Sarno. No, I never spotted any Americans. There
6 were two Americans over there who were already working, and they
7 were given to me to use as, to handle some of the other ones
8 that were involved.

9 Mr. DeMarco. Were they also involved in the same type of
10 cover you were, gambling?

11 Mr. Sarno. No. They were not in the same cover. As I
12 say, it was a cover provided by the Agency. It was a cover I
13 just naturally stumbled into since I was going to the
14 different casinos and I was winning money there and I could
15 pass myself off as a tourist-gambler.

16 Mr. DeMarco. These other two Americans you were talking
17 about, can you name them?

18 Mr. Sarno. Well, I'll give you the name. One I would
19 name, because I was not involved with the other one very long.
20 One's name is Emelio Rodriquez, but he is dead now.

21 Mr. DeMarco. He was an American?

22 Mr. Sarno. Yes, he died of a heart attack. And the
23 other was Julian.

24 Mr. DeMarco. Julian?

25 Mr. Sarno. Julian. I don't recall the last name, but he

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1 only remained for about two months after I arrived.

2 Mr. DeMarco. What were these two people doing in Cuba
3 prior to the time they were turned over to you and you met
4 them?

5 Mr. Sarno. Collection of intelligence.

6 Mr. DeMarco. For the Agency?

7 Mr. Sarno. Yes, for the Agency. They were agents of the
8 Agency, as was I. But they were residing in Cuba.

9 Mr. DeMarco. At any time while you were in Cuba, for that
10 matter, at any time, did you become aware of any Agency
11 relationships with -- I'm going to use the term generically --
12 organized crime. Do you understand what I mean by that?

13 Mr. Sarno. Yes, certainly.

14 Mr. DeMarco. Whether or not organized, people who you've
15 read about in the paper, or you would consider to be involved
16 in that kind of business, are you aware of any relationships
17 between any Agency personnel in Cuba or elsewhere?

18 Mr. Sarno. None whatsoever.

19 Mr. DeMarco. During the period of time that you were in
20 the casinos, playing black jack and roulette and so forth, did
21 you get an opportunity to meet the people that were running
22 the casinos?

23 Mr. Sarno. No.

24 There was one big Swede in the Capri that because it was
25 close to where I was living I would go in there more often, and

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1 as soon as I take off from my house, my apartment, I would
2 head over there and he was always seeing me in and offer me
3 drinks, but he was not a big wheel, he was just one of their
4 employees.

5 Mr. DeMarco. Where was this?

6 Mr. Sarno. At the Capri.

7 Mr. DeMarco. You say a big Swede?

8 Mr. Sarno. A big Swede, a blond-haired fellow. I didn't
9 even know his name, I'd just call him Swede.

10 Mr. DeMarco. Was he an American, or from Sweden?

11 Mr. Sarno. I think he was from America.

12 Mr. DeMarco. Were any of the people that you were
13 involved in handling in Cuba commercial or airline people?
14 Any airline people?

15 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

16 Mr. DeMarco. Did any of them have official Cuban govern-
17 ment positions?

18 Mr. Sarno. Yes.

19 Mr. DeMarco. They did?

20 Mr. Sarno. Some of them did, those were the ones that
21 you were looking for.

22 Mr. DeMarco. I don't have anything more at this time.

23 Mr. Wides. I am just a little puzzled by your testimony
24 regarding the ~~AMOTS~~ activity with regard to the Cuban community.

25 You indicated there was a CI capability, but if I understand

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1 it, you said the only penetration was for purposes of finding
2 out about exile activities being planned against Cuba.

3 What was your testimony with regard to the use of ~~AMOTS~~
4 for members of the Cuban community who might come under
5 suspicion as possibly being intentionally or unintentionally --

6 Mr. Sarno. Suspect?

7 Mr. Wides. They were employed or they were not employed
8 in any way regarding checking on this?

9 Mr. Sarno. If you mean to say did they go around and
10 surveil them --

11 Mr. Wides. No. In any sense of counterintelligence
12 work, keeping their ears open and reporting back information
13 that might be of a suspicious nature.

14 Mr. Sarno. Well, to explain it, if an ~~AMOT~~ were to walk
15 into a place and see a friend and the friend says did you see
16 Juan, do you know Juan is here, and the ~~AMOT~~ himself knows and
17 the guy he's talking to that Juan used to work for the Internal
18 Security in Cuba, it's obvious. Where's he at, try to find
19 him.

20 And then they would go back to the files and dig out all
21 the information and in would come a report. Juan is in the
22 city of Miami and here's the stuff that we have on him. He
23 was a Castro collaborator, or he's a member of the security
24 forces over there, and everything.

25 Mr. Wides. So in general it would be fair to say -- and

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1 I'm not trying to twist your testimony, I know you referred
2 to the basic purpose being to keep tabs on what was going on
3 so you would be aware of what Alpha-66 and groups like that
4 were planning, but in general, they were the eyes and ears of
5 the Station in the Cuban community and might come up with
6 counterintelligence information as well as the information
7 about the activities?

8 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir, yes, sir.

9 Mr. Wides. And as you understand it on a smaller scale,
10 this was also true with regards to the group in New York?

11 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir.

12 Mr. Wides. It was not simply to find out about Alpha-66,
13 but they would also report to the extent that they obtained
14 CI, that is counterintelligence information, about the Cubans
15 in New York?

16 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir.

17 Mr. Wides. What about with regards to the activities at
18 the UN? Any reports regarding UN activity relative to Cuba?

19 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

20 Mr. Wides. Was there a Cuban mission at the UN at this
21 time?

22 Mr. Sarno. Yes, sir.

23 Mr. Wides. And this group never relayed any information
24 regarding the Cuban mission or the people they contacted in
25 New York?

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1 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

2 Mr. Wides. Why wouldn't they have been used for that
3 purpose?

4 Mr. Sarno. Because that is the Bureau's domain. We never
5 checked up on Cubans, the diplomats who were in the UN, nobody
6 was ever in contact with them, they never reported on any
7 Cuban diplomats in the UN or any of the Cubans seeing them or
8 anything.

9 Mr. Wides. Did you ever hear any stories whether they
10 were associated with ~~AMUTS~~ or not of Cuban exiles being
11 involved in any harrassment or surveillance of groups in
12 America friendly toward the Castro regime, such as the
13 Vincereamos Brigade and the Fair Play For Cuba Committee?

14 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

15 Mr. Wides. You were not aware of any activity by exiles?
16 I'm not talking about necessarily ~~AMUTS~~.

17 Mr. Sarno. Not of any activities.

18 Mr. Wides. You never heard anything?

19 Mr. Sarno. I never heard anything.

20 You're smiling. I'm telling you, I never heard anything.

21 Mr. Wides. What about Cubans in the late '60's after the
22 Vietnam War arose, being involved, Cuban exiles, in any
23 harrassment or surveillance of peace groups? What do you know
24 about that?

25 Mr. Sarno. Nothing.

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1 Mr. Wides. Do you know anything about Cubans coming up
2 from Miami to be involved in surveillance or disruption of
3 any peace demonstrations in Washington?

4 Mr. Sarno. No, sir.

5 Mr. Wides. You never heard of that?

6 Mr. Sarno. I never heard of it. I know no ~~AMOTS~~ and I
7 never heard of any other Cubans.

8 Mr. Wides. Is there anything else that you -- have you
9 gotten a clear understanding of our lines of interest?

10 Mr. Sarno. Yes, I have.

11 Mr. Wides. -- would like to tell us, or any information --

12 Mr. Sarno. I have no information. I ran a group there
13 and we were never involved in anything which I would consider
14 to be illegal. They were working against the government of
15 Cuba.

16 Mr. Wides. I understand that.

17 Mr. Sarno. And that is where all of their energy went.

18 Mr. Wides. Who was it who would ask you to have members
19 of ~~AMOTS~~ detailed for missions elsewhere in America?

20 You described one where they would go to another city to
21 debrief somebody.

22 Mr. Sarno. I would --

23 Mr. Wides. How would you get those instructions? From
24 the Branch Chief?

25 Mr. Sarno. No, I wouldn't get the instructions. Since it

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1 was a group and we were collecting economic and political
2 intel --

3 Mr. Wides. Where would you get the information that there
4 was a target of opportunity or someone to be debriefed in
5 another city?

6 Mr. Sarno. If the ~~AMUT~~ were to come up with the informa-
7 tion, if the ~~AMUT~~ were to come up with the information, he
8 would come in and report it and I would authorize him to go
9 into that city and find him, because the information could
10 come in many ways.

11 See, they were known as the Cuban municipalities and
12 operations in the city of Miami, and everybody that came out
13 from like a province or a state would register in it, and
14 as soon as they got information, the word would get around that
15 Joe Blow came in or something like that, and the word would get
16 back to the ~~AMUTS~~ and the ~~AMUTS~~ would say, well, we should
17 discuss with this fellow, and that's it.

18 Mr. Wides. You never got any requests for ~~AMUTS~~ personnel
19 to be made available for that kind of task from Washington?

20 Mr. Sarno. To debrief an individual?

21 Mr. Wides. Or to travel in general.

22 Mr. Sarno. Yes, yes, they would come down and say, we
23 would like a person because Washington would hear of an
24 individual and would like for him to go over and debrief.

25 Mr. Wides. What office?

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1 Mr. Sarno. It would come out of the Cuban branch.

2 Mr. Wides. Cuban Operations Task?

3 Who would come down? Just a member of the staff?

4 Mr. Sarno. Come down? They usually came in a cable.

5 It said, you know, we understand such and such a person is
6 living at such and such an address and they worked at such and
7 such, suggest send an ~~AMOT~~ out to debrief.

8 Mr. Wides. Did you have a particular point of contact
9 or several people who were particular points of contact for
10 you that would tend to be the ones sending you cables?

11 Mr. Sarno. No, I wasn't the Station Chief. The cables
12 come into the station, the Station Chief would pass it to me
13 or to the Branch Chief, and that would be it.

14 Mr. Wides. Okay.

15 I think that's all the questions we have, and I want
16 to thank you for your patience, it's been a long morning.

17 (Whereupon, at 12:42 o'clock p.m., the hearing recessed.)

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