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JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM  
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Vol. 1 of 2

**NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION**  
**Unauthorized Disclosure Subject**  
**to Criminal Sanctions**

The United States Senate

Hclms

## Report of Proceedings

INVENTOR:ED

PN 3147

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**Hearing held before**

Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental  
Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities

Friday, June 13, 1975

Washington, D. C.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

1  
2 The Chairman. I am going to ask Fritz Schwarz if he would  
3 give us a short rundown on what it is we intend to focus on  
4 in the questioning today, what we expect to cover, what we hope  
5 to get, and anything, I suppose, Mr. Smothers, that you would  
6 like to add, just to give us a sense of direction in connection  
7 with the proceedings this morning.

8 Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Helms was Bissell's Deputy during the  
9 period that the Bay of Pigs was planned. He apparently was  
10 kept pretty much out of that, that is both consistent with what  
11 he said yesterday and with what the written record appears to  
12 show.

13 He took over as Deputy Director of Plans in the winter of  
14 1962 and remained in that position essentially until he became  
15 the head of the Agency in 1966.

16 The first thing that I think that we should cover with  
17 him is to go through his perspective on what was happening  
18 with respect to Cuba generally without getting to the assassina-  
19 tion question. On that he's going to say, I believe, based on  
20 interviewing him yesterday and what he said to the Rockefeller  
21 Commission, that there was continuing intense pressure to do  
22 something about Castro or get rid of Castro or overthrow the  
23 Communist government in Cuba.

24 I think he will say that in that connection, in effect,  
25 anything goes. Or, as Senator Goldwater put the question the

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1 other day, there were not any limitations. But it's going to  
2 be worth a little bit exploring with him and understanding what  
3 he means. Does he mean that the CIA could have dropped bombs,  
4 could have blown up ships in the harbor? What does he mean by  
5 anything goes and what does he mean by there were no limita-  
6 tions?

7 When we come to the subject of assassination, I think  
8 you will see his testimony kind of bounce back and forth. On  
9 the one hand, he is going to be saying, well, anything goes,  
10 and that is something. On the other hand, he's going to be  
11 saying, I think, well there really wasn't anything going in the  
12 assassination area.

13 He will admit that he knew about Mr. Roselli; he will  
14 admit, I believe, that he, indeed he and his man Harvey took  
15 over Roselli. But I believe you'll find the testimony, based  
16 on what he said to the Rockefeller Commission and what he said  
17 yesterday, quite vague on that subject.

18 We will turn on that subject before too long to the 1967  
19 memo which is the most complete description of the events in  
20 connection with Castro. He had that prepared because President  
21 Johnson asked him to brief President Johnson on the allegations  
22 about Castro that were appearing in the Press. Then Johnson  
23 on his own added Trujillo and Diem.

24 Senator Baker. Is this the Drew Pearson article?

25 Mr. Schwarz. Yes, which President Johnson had been

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1 project lasted into 1973 in New York and was just starting on  
2 his authority in San Francisco at the very time he was writing  
3 President Nixon saying it had been discontinued.

4 That is worth having him explain.

5 The Chairman. Has he explained that to you previously?

6 Mr. Schwarz. He didn't, because we didn't have this in  
7 mind until afterwards. That is essentially it on the Castro.

8 The Chairman. What did he say on the question of  
9 Presidential authority in assassination?

10 Mr. Schwarz. Well he puts it in this sense, Senator.  
11 Anything goes, and we knew the President wanted the government  
12 overthrown.

13 The Chairman. Nothing more specific?

14 Mr. Miller. I disagree. If I might, I think this might  
15 help, Fritz.

16 Yesterday in the discussion we followed the theme that was  
17 raised by Bissell without stating where -- in fact, we did  
18 express the notion of plausible denial.

19 Mr. Schwarz. Yes, we should discuss that with him, what  
20 does it mean and so forth.

21 Mr. Miller. And we came baldly out with the question,  
22 could this have happened without the President's approval. And  
23 I think, it is my impression and there may be other gradings  
24 on this, because he was very careful in his answer, was he did  
25 not think so. The President and the Attorney General were aware

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1 option but he is very fuzzy when you get down to was it  
2 actually discussed.

3 Mr. Smothers. What is very helpful, I think, and we spent  
4 some time with him yesterday, on simply going through his  
5 impressions of how Mongoose developed and how he had come to  
6 the feeling that he articulated very clearly that there was no  
7 doubt in his mind about what his marching orders were about  
8 what they wanted done, they being the President on down.

9 We talked about the question of the various sources of this  
10 kind of impression, meetings he had with Cabinet people, meetings  
11 that Mr. McCone would have, his conversations with McCone.  
12 While not explicit, it is very clear that all of these meetings  
13 appear to him to be consistent.

14 I think the other thing that may be very helpful for us  
15 to try to get a close look at is the nature of the coordination,  
16 again as reflected by Mongoose. Here we have a pulling together  
17 of essentially all of the government agencies in an effort to  
18 get a task done, and if we focus on something like, one, the  
19 Attorney General's involvement, it appears as he said yesterday  
20 that the whole concept of the Special Group Augmented was to  
21 allow for the Attorney General's input, and also to provide  
22 for the stewardship of Lansdale who, for the first time, whose role  
23 becomes a little clearer here as we look at why Lansdale comes  
24 out of nowhere.

25 I think if we really pursue the question of how this

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1 about in fact through impressions, he gets more precise infor-  
2 mation out by which he calls impressions than if you ask him  
3 specific questions.

4 Senator Goldwater. Well let me back up. I know this  
5 fellow very, very well, and he is very touchy on the subject of  
6 his years of service to the government.

7 The Chairman. All right, let's have him in.

8 Mr. Schwarz. The only document that on its face -- only  
9 folder that on its face is not self-explanatory are a bunch of  
10 handwritten notes. Those are his notes, I think, for the  
11 purpose of briefing President Johnson on the subject.

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(Mr. Helms entered the hearing room at 10:28 a.m.)

2

The Chairman. Mr. Helms, would you please stand and be

3

sworn?

4

Do you swear that all of the testimony you are giving in

5

these proceedings will be the truth, the whole truth and

6

nothing but the truth, so help you God?

7

Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

8

The Chairman. Mr. Schwarz will begin the questioning.

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1 Director for Plans in early 1962.

2 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

3 Were you the second in command in the Plans section?

4 Mr. Helms. Yes. I had the title of Chief of Operations  
5 which was the number two.

6 Mr. Schwarz. And you reported to Mr. Bissell?

7 Mr. Helms. I reported first to Mr. Wisner and then to  
8 Mr. Bissell.

9 Mr. Schwarz. And then when Mr. Bissell left in the winter  
10 of '62 you left his place as the Deputy Director for Plans?

11 Mr. Helms. That is correct.

12 Mr. Schwarz. And you stayed in that job until you became  
13 DCI, or did you have an intervening job?

14 Mr. Helms. No, I was Deputy Director of Central  
15 Intelligence which was a job that I received in I think it was  
16 April of 1965.

17 Mr. Schwarz. At about the time Admiral Rayburn took  
18 over?

19 Mr. Helms. Exactly the same time.

20 Mr. Schwarz. And then you succeeded Admiral Rayburn as  
21 DCI?

22 Mr. Helms. That is correct.

23 Mr. Schwarz. And you held that job until the winter of  
24 1973?

25 Mr. Helms. I think it was very early in '73.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. At that point, you went to your present  
2 post, which is Ambassador to Iran?

3 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

4 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

5 Would you recount for the Committee, turning to the country  
6 of Cuba, your understanding of the relationship between the  
7 United States government and Cuba, starting with Mr. Castro's  
8 takeover and running up to the time you became DCI. And when  
9 I say relationship, I don't mean the formal diplomatic sense,  
10 but in the sense of what was the United States government  
11 interested in accomplishing as far as the government of Cuba  
12 was concerned.

13 Mr. Helms. Well, this recital may be somewhat impression-  
14 istic because I have not gone into any details about dates.  
15 In fact, I don't recall right now what year it was that Castro  
16 took over, in the real sense. When was that?

17 Mr. Schwarz. '59.

18 Mr. Helms. '59.

19 After he took over there was no doubt that President  
20 Eisenhower's Administration regarded that development as a most  
21 unfortunate one, and starting early on, various thought was  
22 given to how this takeover of Cuba by a Communist could be,  
23 how the balance could be redressed.

24 You remember there was some trouble, I believe, down in  
25 Columbia at the time. One of our Secretaries of State went

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1 down there, at which time -- this was before Castro took over --  
2 but at which time he was identified specifically as a  
3 Communist and there was a very real feeling in the Eisenhower  
4 Administration that having a Communist regime 90 miles from the  
5 shores of the United States was a most unwelcome development.

6 These thoughts led to the project which over time has  
7 come to be known under the rubric of the Bay of Pigs. It was  
8 certainly not known as that when it began and it was begun as  
9 a project to organize Cuban exiles, Cubans who had been exiled  
10 by Castro from Cuba or had fled of their own volition, into a  
11 brigade trained in guerrilla tactics, the objective being to  
12 land in Cuba in the hope that with this show of force, those  
13 Cubans still there who were against Castro would rise up and  
14 implicit in this scheme was that if the invasion force got into  
15 any serious trouble, or conversely if they had a good chance  
16 of making it, they could probably rely on American military  
17 support or American support of some kind.

18 In any event, you all know the history of the Bay of Pigs.  
19 It failed, it was a traumatic experience. I want to say for  
20 anybody who was serving in the Central Intelligence Agency in  
21 those days it was very traumatic. But it did fail. I think  
22 some 90 people lost their lives in the brigade, four Americans  
23 or five Americans -- please don't hold me to those details --  
24 I guess about a hundred on the other side and about 1200 of  
25 the brigade were taken prisoner which led, if you will recall,

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1 later to a very complicated series of negotiations to free  
2 these prisoners or at least to free some of them.

3 You will recall also, because I think we must put in this  
4 element that it was President Eisenhower under whom the original  
5 concept of mounting a guerrilla operation against the island  
6 came into being, but by the time the execution of the operation  
7 was to take place, President Kennedy had come into office.  
8 Therefore this project had been at work under two Presidents.

9 It has been said since -- I don't know if this is  
10 relevant to our discussion this morning -- that one of the  
11 reasons for this misfortune was that President Kennedy had been  
12 in office such a short time that he had hardly had a chance to  
13 get ahold of the government apparatus before this thing was  
14 presented to him and mounted and off it went. And this was  
15 pretty tough on him and pretty tough on everybody involved.

16 Subsequent to the Bay of Pigs, obviously there was a  
17 licking of wounds and a sort of regrouping, and then as I  
18 recall it, sometime in late 1961, I guess -- the Bay of Pigs as  
19 I recall was in April of '61 --

20 Mr. Scowharz. April of '61.

21 Mr. Helms. So this would have been in the fall, like  
22 October or November.

23 We were instructed to -- at least the Agency was instructed  
24 to get going on plans to get rid of Castro by some devices which  
25 obviously would have to be covert because nobody had any

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1 stomach anymore for any invasions or any military fiascos of  
2 that kind.

3 The Chairman. Mr. Helms, could you be more specific on  
4 this particular point?

5 You say that in the fall of '61 after the regrouping and  
6 the licking of wounds, the Agency received instructions to get  
7 on with a plan to get rid of Castro.

8 Now just from whom did these instructions come and what  
9 was the nature of the instruction. Can you be more precise  
10 about this?

11 Mr. Helms. Sir, I am not very helpful in this period here  
12 for the simple reason this came to me second or maybe third  
13 hand, and it did not involve me particularly.

14 The Chairman. At the time, what was your position? In  
15 the fall of '61?

16 Mr. Helms. I was Chief of Operations or the Deputy  
17 Director for Plans. In other words, it was a number two job.

18 The Chairman. Second in command of covert operations?

19 Mr. Helms. Yes.

20 The way this had been worked, Mr. Bissell had come in  
21 as Director of Plans, having been in the Agency and having been  
22 the agent, if you remember, of U-2 operations and that kind,  
23 and he brought those things with him into the job of the DDP  
24 and he spent a good deal of time prior to the Bay of Pigs  
25 working on that.

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1 In other words, it was a big operation for an organization  
2 for the CIA. In retrospect, far too big. So let's not shilly-  
3 shally with the words about that.

4 I think he spent a great deal of time on it, and my role  
5 was to try and take care of what remained of the world.  
6 Therefore, I was absorbed outside, obviously on the fringes of  
7 this, but not involved in the decisions or how it was to be  
8 done or who was doing what or anything of that kind.

9 So it was -- as I say, we go downhill into, I think it  
10 was late 1961 or early 1962 and I'd have a hard time putting  
11 my finger on exactly when, Mr. McCone had by that time become  
12 Director. And as I recall it, this was the first time that I  
13 was sort of brought into Cuban operations. And he indicated I  
14 should interest myself more on this that we had to build up  
15 in order to conduct a larger effort.

16 And this then began. Then later, somewhat later, I  
17 became Deputy Director, I think it was in February, and then  
18 obviously these things came generally under my aegis.

19 We set up sort of a task force in order to work on these  
20 Cuban problems.

21 Mr. Schwarz. Was Mr. Harvey the man in charge?

22 Mr. Helms. Mr. Harvey was then put in charge of that  
23 sometime in this time frame.

24 I'm sure in the documents it shows what it was called,  
25 Task Force W or something of that kind sticks in my mind, but

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1 that may be wrong.

2 Then later, and I don't know anymore in terms of time,  
3 but a bit later, I believe, General Lansdale was brought in  
4 to head up this Cuban effort.

5 Senator Schweiker. Within the CIA?

6 Mr. Helms. No, sir, I'm sorry. I'm not being very  
7 specific, Senator Schweiker, I'll clear that up right now.

8 In the CIA, we were informed that General Lansdale, who  
9 was working in the Department of Defense in an office which I  
10 think at that time was headed by General Erskine(?), it was  
11 an office in the Department of Defense which was dedicated to  
12 supporting covert operations and actions of the Central  
13 Intelligence Agency. That was one of its functions, among  
14 others, I have no doubt, but that was one of them.

15 But in other words, it was the point at which the CIA in  
16 these matters plugged into the Department of Defense. My  
17 recollection is that the proposition at first was that General  
18 Lansdale was going to organize a whole organization underneath  
19 himself, sort of outside of other existing departments and  
20 agencies to work on this Cuban operation.

21 But in any event, that was a very short-lived idea because  
22 I think Mr. McCone objected to putting, sending his people out  
23 of the Agency to be under somebody else's command. I think  
24 the State Department objected. So that died aborning.

25 So the result was that General Lansdale became a sort of

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25 Mr. Helms. Yes. When this needed a code name, I think as



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1 I recall it it was a code name contributed by the Agency. I  
2 don't know who thought it up, but -- so this became known as  
3 Operation Mongoose.

4 And Operation Mongoose I believe -- now this is the best  
5 of my recollection -- stayed in existence until the Cuban  
6 missile crisis in the fall of 1962 at which time it was disbanded  
7 in that form.

8 Mr. Smothers. Mr. Ambassador, before we get away from  
9 Lansdale who was, as you say, in charge of operations, do  
10 you know, or do you have any impressions as to who Lansdale  
11 reported to, what was the line of authority that he responded  
12 to with respect to the Special Group?

13 Mr. Helms. Well, Mr. Smothers, it was my impression at  
14 the time that he had been put into the job by the Attorney  
15 General. Now I don't have this firsthand, I was not there when  
16 he was given the assignment, but this was my understanding.

17 You will recall perhaps that General Lansdale had had  
18 quite a rich experience in political action and political  
19 warfare. When he worked for the Central Intelligence Agency  
20 he had been in the Philippines and had helped to organize  
21 the fighting against the Huks and after that he moved to  
22 Vietnam and was instrumental in setting up the Diem government  
23 from the chaos that existed before that.

24 So he had substantial credentials for, if you want to  
25 say, a political warrior, and I have no doubt that it was that.

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1 reason that he attracted the attention of the powers that be.

2 Mr. Smothers. At this time, was the Attorney General  
3 chairing the Special Group Augmented at this time?

4 Mr. Helms. I believe so. After all, he would have been  
5 the senior official. I think he was, yes.

6 Mr. Smothers. So was it your impression that he was sort  
7 of setting the tone for the group's action or activity?

8 Mr. Helms. Oh, yes, sir, there wasn't any doubt about  
9 that. He was very much interested in this and spent a great  
10 deal of time on it.

11 Mr. Schwarz. We want to come back to those particulars,  
12 but would you continue with your answer as to what the United  
13 States government was trying to do about Cuba?

14 You had reached the missile crisis which was in October  
15 of 1962 and the missile crisis was resolved by some kind of  
16 an understanding between Chairman Khrushchev and President  
17 Kennedy. Do you know the nature of that understanding?

18 Mr. Helms. I don't know anymore about it than anybody  
19 would have known from reading the papers at the time. I was  
20 not privy to any inside information.

21 Mr. Schwarz. Some kind of combination; the missiles  
22 were removed.

23 Mr. Helms. The IR-28's were removed.

24 Mr. Schwarz. Now, after that, what happened to the  
25 efforts of the United States government to overthrow the Casti

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1 regime after the missile crisis and up to the time you became  
2 DCI in 1965 or '66?

3 Mr. Helms. You remember that after the missile crisis --  
4 and I think I'm right about this, and I would appreciate it  
5 Mr. Chairman if there's anybody in the room, where I get my  
6 historical facts wrong, would correct me, because I have no  
7 interest in trying to get this all messed up. This is just my  
8 best recollection.

9 The Chairman. We understand.

10 Mr. Helms. There was quite an operation in the Organization  
11 of American States after the missile crisis to organize a  
12 combined American approach to isolating Cuba. And I believe  
13 it was out of these deliberations at the OAS at that time  
14 that came the economic embargo of Cuba. But also, there were  
15 various sanctions which the United States government was  
16 trying to work out.

17 I don't know if I'm using the right word here, now, but  
18 they certainly would like to have punished Castro for the  
19 Cuban missile crisis because I think if I remember the temper  
20 of those days, there were a lot of lumps in people's throats  
21 all over the United States when they realized how close a call  
22 we had had on this really extraordinarily daring operation  
23 of Khrushchev's to insert those missiles there secretly and  
24 have them pointing down the throats of Americans.

25 So in those days, the temper of getting after Castro was

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1 a real one. I mean, people had their heart in it, I must  
2 say, and there didn't seem to be much disposition on the part  
3 of the Congress or the American people to cabal with doing  
4 anything that was possible to punish this man.

5 The Chairman. That was particularly true after the  
6 missile crisis?

7 Mr. Helms. This is my point, this is my point.

8 Mr. Schwarz. So not only the multilateral efforts through  
9 the OAS, as you described, but what might be called the  
10 unilateral efforts by the United States to take covert action  
11 against Mr. Castro to overthrow continued after the missile  
12 crisis.

13 Mr. Helms. They did indeed. As I say, Operation  
14 Mongoose, as I recall it, disappeared, but it simply was  
15 replaced by a continuing effort on the part of the CIA to  
16 mount harassment operations and so forth against Cuba.

17 The base in Miami from which these operations were  
18 conducted was continued in being, and it continued in being  
19 for two or three years thereafter, but on a somewhat declining  
20 scale, because first, the operation, I must confess, was not  
21 very successful. I mean, there were some things done and some  
22 good intelligence acquired, but as far as the sabotage -- and  
23 if I may call it, the rough stuff was concerned, it was not  
24 very effective. The Russians had moved in to Cuba, into the  
25 Cuban security service and had done a rather astonishing job

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25 Would it be fair to say that it was your understanding

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1 of Mongoose that the task was to get rid of Castro by any  
2 means without limitations, not limited to overthrow?

3 Mr. Helms. Well, my distinct recollection at the time  
4 was -- I perhaps phrased the injunction on us in a very  
5 simplistic American language which you could use other words,  
6 but it was to get rid of Castro or the Castro regime in Cuba,  
7 let's put it that way, and no limitations were placed on the  
8 means. In fact, I never recall having been told by anybody  
9 don't do this, don't do that, don't do the other thing.

10 Mr. Smothers. Let me ask then what do you feel you could  
11 do at that time? Did that feeling change any as this moved?

12 Mr. Helms. Well, I think this is reasonable to state, and  
13 I hope this is responsive to your question. The perceptions of  
14 the Administration, and I say, also, I believe the Congress and  
15 the American people, as reflected by the Administration, as  
16 those things intensified on two or three occasions in  
17 connection with Cuba, obviously the extent of the means that  
18 one thought were available, obviously increased too.

19 In other words, the pressure was pretty intense, and I  
20 remember vividly it was very intense. And therefore, when you  
21 go into the record, you know, you find a lot of very nutty  
22 schemes there and those nutty schemes were born of the intensity  
23 of the pressure. And we were quite frustrated.

24 Mr. Smothers. Well just try to trace that pressure as  
25 it develops and subsides for us. I think that would be

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1 helpful.

2 Mr. Helms. Well I think you find it building up to the  
3 Bay of Pigs and you have a crescendo and you have the aftermath  
4 of the Bay of Pigs and things lying quiet. Well, there's a  
5 great concern about the prisoners, what's to be done about them  
6 and so forth. And then at the end of the year, '61, you find  
7 the intensity building up again where it was very strong at  
8 the end of '61 and '62.

9 We then go along into that period, if you will recall, in '62  
10 the summer of '62 when those first reports were coming out about  
11 missiles in Cuba, and you remember -- I forget which Senator  
12 it was that had some inside information --

13 Senator Mathias. Senator Keating.

14 Mr. Helms. In any event, that began to get very edgy.  
15 And then we came into the missile crisis itself which I guess  
16 was the hottest moment at all in intensity. No doubt about it,  
17 it was white heat.

18 And then that continued on for some time until it  
19 gradually began to taper off. I would have thought -- well, it  
20 lasted pretty much through '63, because I can still remember  
21 meetings about how are we doing with economic warfare, have  
22 we turned off the oil deliveries, what are we doing about taking  
23 care of bus deliveries. I think the Leyland Bus Company in  
24 Spain wanted to sell some buses to Cuba and we did everything  
25 that we could to stop the sale and so forth.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. Well, is that the kind of thing -- that the  
2 process worked? Reading the Monqoose files -- and see if this  
3 was a fair summary of the process -- there were intensive  
4 meetings, frequent meetings and a great deal of pressure to  
5 have action occur.

6 Mr. Helms. Mr. Schwarz, I think the record will show  
7 if I'm not mistaken that those meetings were attended by very  
8 high level members of the government.

9 Mr. Schwarz. And the pressure to have something accom-  
10 plished was being put on the Agency in other places of the  
11 government by the Attorney General, the Secretary of State,  
12 the head of the Defense Department and so forth.

13 Now, at meetings there would be discussions or there was  
14 discussion of various plans and options, is that right?

15 Mr. Helms. Yes.

16 The Chairman. Did Mr. Helms attend the meetings of the  
17 Special Group Augmented?

18 Mr. Helms. Mr. Chairman, I am sure that I must have. I  
19 did not do it with any great regularity, because it is my  
20 recollection that normally Mr. McCone was the Director who was  
21 a member of the Committee would usually take the task force  
22 chief with him to the meetings. I must have attended some of  
23 them, certainly, but I was not necessarily a regular  
24 attendant.

25 Mr. Schwarz. But at the ones you did attend, there would

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1 be discussions of specific operations and plans, for example,  
2 blowing up -- we talked yesterday to sabotage a copper mine or  
3 some mine in Cuba. Do you remember that?

4 Mr. Helms. Well I think there were various sabotage  
5 operations. I remember one against an electricity plant that  
6 was supposed to be, have the web for all of Cuba. And it was  
7 a major operation waged against that.

8 Mr. Schwarz. And those specifics were discussed first  
9 as plans and then as matters that were authorized, as you  
10 understand it, both from attendance at the meeting and your  
11 understanding of the meetings?

12 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

13 Mr. Schwarz, I think to give you -- to not only confirm  
14 what you say, but to give you the picture -- this Special  
15 Group Augmented was the place that the task force chief and  
16 everybody else went to say we're planning this, we're ready to  
17 go, we'll go at midnight tomorrow night, no, it's been called  
18 off, no, we go back and so forth. So they were in the picture  
19 almost on a daily basis.

20 Mr. Schwarz. In detail, and on a daily basis.

21 Mr. Helms. That's right.

22 Mr. Schwarz. Was, to your knowledge, the subject of  
23 assassinating Castro authorized in that fashion at any of those  
24 meetings?

25 Mr. Helms. I don't know that a plan to assassinate Castro

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1 was authorized in any formal way like that. These schemes --  
2 and I call them schemes -- would have taken place in the  
3 context of doing what you could to get rid of Castro, and the  
4 difficulty with this kind of thing, as you gentlemen are all  
5 painfully aware, is that nobody wants to embarrass a President  
6 of the United States discussing the assassination of foreign  
7 leaders in his presence. This is something that has got to  
8 be dealt with in some other fashion.

9 Even though you use euphemisms you've still got a problem  
10 and under our system of government, a President is elected for  
11 four years normally and he's not like a Prime Minister who  
12 can be thrown out on a moment's notice because of something  
13 that has gone astray. So that this Special Group was the  
14 mechanism that was set up earlier on to use as a circuit  
15 breaker so that these things did not explode in the President's  
16 face and that he was not held responsible for them.

17 Now when President Eisenhower took responsibility for the  
18 U-2 flights, that was on his own -- for the U-2 flights -- that  
19 was on his personal option. He wasn't obliged to do that. In  
20 other words, he had his mechanism to blame it on, if he wanted  
21 to. All those people could be fired.

22 The Chairman. Mr. Helms, this makes it all the more  
23 important to recognize in what you say and in understanding,  
24 this makes it all the more important for the Committee to know  
25 whether, within the Special Group Augmented which was in charge

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**Discussion**

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Can you tell us, do you know?

I must say that Mr. McCone had given me my job, he had promoted me to be Deputy Director of Plans. We had a very good relationship, a very good working relationship. I saw him constantly on a daily basis, I felt warmly toward him, and therefore I would not have done something he asked me not to do. And I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, if I may just while we are at this point, that in my twenty-five years in the Central Intelligence Agency, I always thought I was working within authorization, that I was doing what I had been asked to do by proper authority and when I was operating on my own I was doing what I believed to be the legitimate business of the



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1 Agency as it would have been expected of me.

2 And therefore I don't want to leave in anyone's mind in  
3 this room that I ever regarded myself as an unguided missile  
4 or that I had authorities or powers that were exercised in my  
5 own right. And therefore, whatever things may have occurred,  
6 or whatever it may seem in 1975 looks poor on the record, I can  
7 only say that I felt that I was acting always under orders,  
8 and when I read in the Washington Post the other day, Helms  
9 Johnny-on-the-spot, that I always seemed to be around where  
10 the illegalities came around, I must say it seemed rather  
11 poor.

12 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, we have a live quorum now  
13 and I have a question or two in that connection.

14 The Chairman. May I just ask one follow-up question?

15 I personally have never suspected that you operated except  
16 as you understood you should within the chain of authority.  
17 Our endeavor is to determine as best we can what that chain of  
18 authority may have been on the specific matter of assassination.

19 When you say that Mr. McCone, with whom you worked very  
20 closely, never told you that assassination was out of bounds or  
21 gave you any reason to think that this was so, did that -- or  
22 that suggests a corollary question.

23 Did Mr. McCone ever expressly tell you, in so many words,  
24 that assassination was within bounds and we should proceed, or  
25 the Agency should proceed, with assassination plans?

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17 I frankly don't recall having agreed to this, but since  
18 I have no reason to question Mr. Harvey's word either, in this  
19 question, I have been going through my surmises since and these  
20 are surmises, that Mr. Harvey was the former agent of the FBI.  
21 He had served there for many years and he came to me and said  
22 he wanted to see what he could determine about Underworld  
23 links with Cuba through Roselli since Roselli had been involved  
24 with the Agency earlier on in an effort against Cuba in  
25 connection with other gangsters and so forth.

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1 My recollection is that I had very grave doubts about the  
2 wisdom of this, but he tried to convince me that he had been in  
3 the FDIA long time and handled these matters and so forth. And  
4 as I recall it, we had so few assets inside Cuba at that time  
5 that I was willing to try almost anything. But the thing did  
6 not loom large in my mind at that time. I was enormously  
7 busy with a lot of other things, taking over a new job. Mr.  
8 McCone was relatively new in the Agency and I guess I must have  
9 thought to myself, well this is going to look very peculiar to  
10 him and I doubt very much this is going to go anywhere, but if  
11 it does, then that is time enough to bring him into the  
12 picture.

13 I believe that's the --

14 Senator Schweiker. Do you recall any other situations  
15 where you might not have briefed Mr. McCone?

16 Mr. Helms. I don't recall any other situations. As I  
17 say, Senator Schweiker, I used to see him every morning. We  
18 used to get together after our staff meetings, so we  
19 saw each other almost on a daily basis.

20 Now obviously he didn't need a full briefing on everything  
21 that we were doing, but he certainly was up to date on the  
22 things he was interested in knowing. I reported to him  
23 regularly and Mr. McCone, if I might say so, was a good  
24 executive. He knew how to run organizations. There was no  
25 doubt about it. And he was an insistent and pretty tough

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410 F. 2d 984, 988, 77-2 USTC ¶13,000, 38 AFTR2d 77-5811 (CA-9, 1969).

25 (A brief recess was taken.)



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Chairman Church. The hearing will come back to order.  
Mr. Schwartz.

Mr. Schwartz. We previously marked three documents relating to Mongoose as Exhibits 1, 2 and 3, and we will come back to those in a moment.

Would you turn, Mr. Ambassador, to Exhibit 5, which is a single piece of paper previously furnished to you, dated May 23, 1967. It is in all of the folders of the Senators. It is a memorandum for the record from J.S. Earman, subject, "Report on Plots to Assassinate Fidel Castro," dated May 23, '67?

Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Earman was Inspector General?

Mr. Helms. Yes, he was. Mr. Earman had previously been Special Assistant to Mr. Allen Dulles and then he was made Inspector General. Unfortunately he is now deceased.

Mr. Schwarz. And you asked him to prepare a report on plots to assassinate Fidel Castro?

Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you do that because of requests you had received from someone else?

Mr. Helms. Yes. My recollection of asking the Inspector General to look into these matters resulted from, I believe, a request from President Johnson. I believe that there not only had been at that time a column by Drew Pearson but I

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1 believe that Drew Pearson had spoken privately to the President  
2 about the subject matter of that column and the President asked  
3 me about the facts and I said, well, I would have to try to  
4 ascertain them, and it was a result of that that I asked the  
5 Inspector General to get into this matter, and I realized that  
6 memory gets very foggy with time but my impression was I asked  
7 him to do a good worst case detailed investigation so that when  
8 it was finished I could reasonably assure the President of what  
9 the facts were.

10 And just to finish this off, I do recall going to the  
11 President later after this material had been given to me and  
12 briefing him orally about the contents.

13 Mr. Schwarz. The report that was submitted to you you  
14 read before going to the President?

15 Mr. Helms. Yes.

16 Mr. Schwarz. And you have a copy of the report in front  
17 of you, do you not?

18 Mr. Helms. Is this it here?

19 Mr. Schwarz. It is intended to be a tab relating to Mr.  
20 Castro.

21 Mr. Helms. Yes sir. This looks like it anyway.

22 Mr. Schwarz. The report was, as far as you knew the  
23 facts, a good job, an accurate job?

24 Mr. Helms. I don't recall that I went over this report.  
25 I noticed that in the early part of the report there are a

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1 couple of notations in my handwriting. I have no recollection  
2 anymore of what they were or the reason for them. I believe that  
3 I used this report as a fact-finding report. I don't have  
4 any recollection of having gone over it in detail for accuracy,  
5 particularly, except to the extent this was the best they were  
6 able to get out of the various people they interviewed, but  
7 it satisfied my requirement because it set in proper perspec-  
8 tive the assertions which Drew Pearson was making. It separated  
9 them and enabled me to explain to President Johnson what had  
10 been going on.

11 Mr. Schwarz. All right, in that connection, Mr. Reporter,  
12 would you put in front of Mr. Helms the previously marked  
13 Helms Exhibit 6, which are Mr. Helm's handwritten notes, and  
14 the previously marked Helms Exhibit 7, which is page 118 from  
15 the study.

16 These again are both in the Senators' folders.

17 Page 118 of the study is headed "The Drew Pearson Story?"

18 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

19 Mr. Schwarz. And it has two columns. It published the  
20 details and the facts as we know them?

21 Mr. Helms. Yes sir, I have them now in my hand, Mr.  
22 Schwarz.

23 Mr. Schwarz. It is in your folders.

24 Now, turning first to your notes, is it your belief  
25 that those notes were prepared in order for you to brief the

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1 Cuban person known as AMLASH, in code, and Cubela in actuality.  
2 Mr. Helms. I think I can't point to somebody else whose  
3 perceptions might be more accurate than mine. I don't think  
4 that one would have approached the AMLASH thing as an  
5 assassination plot against Castro. I think that one would have  
6 approached that as an extension of our efforts to set up some  
7 kind of opposition group to Castro inside Cuba of which Cubela  
8 was, I guess, our prime opportunity, and that the pressures,  
9 as I recall it, for guns and things of that kind all came from  
10 Cubela himself, they didn't come from the Agency. This wasn't  
11 something we were trying to set up. This was something Cubela  
12 was trying to set up. He hated Castro and wanted to get rid  
13 of him.

14 Mr. Schwarz. The Agency facilitated that by helping  
15 him get guns; is that right?

Mr. Helms. I think the number of people we tried to give guns to in the history of these Cuban operations was multitudinous.

Mr. Schwarz. But you did give guns to Mr. AMILASH or --

Mr. Helms. If the record shows that we did.

21 Mr. Schwarz. And you just don't remember whether that  
22 was disclosed to President Johnson -- it occurred during his  
23 Presidency?

24 Mr. Helms. I don't recall it, but I can as I sit here  
25 today, I can see why it wouldn't have occurred to me to do it.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. All right, now, would you look at Exhibit  
2 7, which is the two-column --

3 Senator Goldwater. Could I ask a question?

4 Did the CIA ever do anything to try to find where these  
5 leaks came from?

6 Mr. Helms. Which leaks were those?

7 Senator Goldwater. To Pearson, to be able to write his  
8 column.

9 Mr. Helms. At the time this review was made, Senator  
10 Goldwater, and I think that it appears in the back of it  
11 someplace, because that is what refreshed my memory -- this is  
12 many years later. I am not saying I remember all of these  
13 things just cold as that. But from reading this and trying  
14 to remember concrete the circumstances of the time, there was  
15 an effort made to figure out who might have done this, and  
16 I think it may well be that this is one of the reasons I have  
17 got these names up in the top of these handwritten notes of  
18 mine -- it might have been the lawyer, Ed Morgan, it might  
19 be Roselli, it might be Maheu, or Garrison, who was out in  
20 Los Vegas, with Maheu and some of the others. In other words,  
21 I think that is what this note could very conceivably, the top  
22 one, refer to. It was for me to indentify to President Johnson  
23 where this might have come from.

24 Senator Baker. Meaning that you were listing the people  
25 who might have had access to this information?

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1 Mr. Helms. I am sorry, I can't see very well with my  
2 glasses.

3 Mr. Kirbow. He has Exhibit 6.

4 Mr. Helms. These names here just at the top where the  
5 first line is Morgan, Roselli, Maheu, Garrison, March in Las  
6 Vegas.

7 Senator Baker. Yes.

8 Mr. Helms. At the very top. Those names conceivably  
9 could have related to my effort to identify to President  
10 Johnson where the leak came from. Underneath I see Morgan,  
11 and Jack Anderson, and in those days Jack Anderson was a  
12 principle assistant to Drew Pearson, I believe, and he knew  
13 Ed Morgan. That was probably a possibility where the  
14 information could come from. But I don't know to this date  
15 with any accuracy.

16 Senator Goldwater. Did you ever chase it down?

17 Mr. Helms. No farther than that, Senator Goldwater.

18 I want to say that, since you have asked the question,  
19 that leaks to newspapers have been an albatross around my neck  
20 for so many years and have gotten me obviously by hindsight  
21 in more trouble than any other single thing and I don't know  
22 of anytime except on one or two occasions when there was really  
23 a pretty accurate research of who had done the leaking, but  
24 nothing was ever done about it.

25 Mr. Schwarz. Can we go to the summary headed "The Drew

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1 Story Published Details and the Facts as We Know Them.

2 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

3 Mr. Schwarz. Exhibit 7.

4 Mr. Helms. Right.

5 Mr. Schwarz. And does everybody have that in front of  
6 them? It is page 118 of the study. The page is on its side.

7 All right, now, would you read the summary and state  
8 whether it does in fact accurately reflect the facts as you  
9 understood them at that point, or as you understand them now?

10 Mr. Helms. Well, as I look this over I think it is not  
11 only simplistic but I don't think it really accurately reflects  
12 all of the facts.

13 I would be hard pressed to tell you in specific instances  
14 where it went wrong, but I noticed this business about hired  
15 assassins and lone survivor and so forth. I don't recall  
16 anybody having any hard information this was the case. I  
17 don't know that anybody ever demonstrated those men ever got  
18 to Cuba. And the CIA hatched a plot to knock off Castro.  
19 I think this is using Drew Pearson's language, if I am not  
20 mistaken, because I can't imagine any Inspectors using language  
21 like that.

22 Mr. Schwarz. But the right column is your Inspector's  
23 language?

24 Mr. Helms. That is right. And I think they are doing  
25 their best to identify to me in the most simplistic and over-

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1 simplified terms what their investigation allegedly showed about  
2 these Drew Pearson allegations. But as I look at the facts  
3 as we know them I think that they, too, are incomplete.

4 Maybe some of the other witnesses can flesh out some  
5 of that for you. But let's, for example, say Roselli informed  
6 Harvey presumably on the basis of information from Verona that  
7 a team of three men was inside Cuba. That was never demonstrated  
8 and I can only say that based on Verona's track record and  
9 Roselli's track record, those are not very good witnesses.

10 Mr. Schwarz. Let's take the pills question, which is  
11 under the heading of unpublished details. The unpublished  
12 detail, that is the detail which was given to President  
13 Johnson informally, by Mr. Pearson. Is that your belief?

14 Mr. Helms. I guess so. I honestly don't know.

15 Mr. Schwarz. The first unpublished detail, pills were  
16 sent to Cuba for use in the assassination, and your Inspector  
17 General's staff said with respect to that, summarizing their  
18 investigation, true. At least we were told by Roselli that  
19 the pills were sent in during Phase I and again in Phase II.

20 Phase I was the pre-Bay of Pigs operation, is that right?

21 Mr. Helms. That is right.

22 Mr. Schwarz. And Phase II was the operation that occurred  
23 or allegedly occurred while you were Deputy Director for Plans;  
24 is that right?

25 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. Now, is it so that the CIA was told that  
2 pills wer sent in during Phase II?

3 Mr. Helms. My recollection of this is that there is  
4 pretty good evidence that the pills got as far as Florida; that  
5 the evidence is most unsatisfactory they ever went any further.

6 Mr. Schwarz. Did you authorize at least their getting  
7 to Florida?

8 The purpose of the pills was to kill Castro?

9 Mr. Helms. I believe they were poison pills and I don't  
10 recall necessarily on this day approving them, but since  
11 Harvey alleges to have them and says that he took them to  
12 Miami, I must have, I must have authorized them in some fashion.

13 Mr. Schwarz. And the study also says that guns were  
14 supplied during Phase II for the purpose of assassination of  
15 Castro?

16 Mr. Helms. Mr. Schwarz, that Phase II with the Roselli  
17 and Verona so far to me ended up, if I may use the vernacular,  
18 zilch. I don't believe that any of these things were done.  
19 There was never satisfactory evidence adduced that these people  
20 were playing fair with us. They were taking money and all the  
21 rest of it. Nothing ever came of it and I am quite prepared  
22 to believe to this day it was a cock and bull story.

23 The Chairman. But, Mr. Helms, that really avoids the  
24 point. Whether they carried through as they represented they  
25 would is quite a --

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1 Mr. Helms. He was under my jurisdiction. In other words,  
2 he was a part of the Deputy Director for Plans Office.

3 Mr. Schwarz. And he was specially assigned to Cuba?

4 Mr. Helms. He was head of the task force which was tied  
5 into the larger Government Operations under Lansdale.

6 Mr. Schwarz. You knew that he was working with Mr.  
7 Roselli, didn't you?

8 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

9 Mr. Schwarz. Now, Exhibit 2, which was previously put  
10 before you, is Mr. Harvey's memo to you of August 14, '62, and  
11 it is also in all of the Senator's folders.

12 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

13 Mr. Schwarz. Now, he refers there to the August 10  
14 meeting and to the fact that Mr. Lansdale had issued after  
15 that a memorandum which stated that a planning document should  
16 be prepared, including in the case of CIA plans for the liqui-  
17 dation of leaders, is that correct?

18 Mr. Helms. Yes.

19 Mr. Schwarz. Now, as of August '62, you were aware, as  
20 you just testified, that Mr. Roselli and Mr. Harvey were in  
21 touch, and Mr. Roselli had been retained for the purpose of  
22 accomplishing assassination, is that right?

23 Mr. Helms. Well, I am not cavilling with this but I don't  
24 have the record in front of me. I thought by August of '62,  
25 any concerted efforts of Roselli had pretty well died, hadn't

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1 they?

2 Mr. Schwarz. No.

3 Mr. Helms. Am I wrong about this? I am just asking for  
4 the facts.

5 Mr. Schwarz. The 1967 study demonstrates that Mr.  
6 Roselli stayed active, stayed in the employ of the CIA, until  
7 June of '63.

8 Mr. Helms. Was he ever --

9 Mr. Schwarz. And stayed active at least until December  
10 '62.

11 Mr. Helms. I don't mean to argue with you. Was he ever  
12 in the employ or did he agree to work for nothing?

13 Mr. Schwarz. I think you are quite right. He was  
14 associated with you.

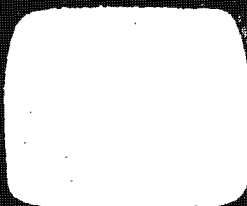
15 Mr. Smothers. Maybe it would help if we got some feel-  
16 ing about what stayed active is?

17 Mr. Helms. I didn't understand.

18 Mr. Smothers. I was saying just to Mr. Schwarz maybe  
19 some indication of the perception of stayed active, one  
20 helpful to you in your recollection of these events. I am  
21 not so sure we know what you mean by that in terms of Roselli's  
22 activities.

23 Mr. Schwarz. You want to know those details we ought to  
24 look at the study itself.

25 Mr. Smothers. The witness has indicated no recollection



1 of that.

2 Mr. Helms. I think what I was trying to say, as best I  
3 recall this, the Roselli effort petered out and although he  
4 stayed associated with Harvey and Harvey was in touch with him,  
5 it was not a very long continued active and I use the word  
6 active in the sense that the man was pushing, prodding, hauling  
7 in efforts to get something done. It didn't seem to me it  
8 lasted very long. It was pretty quiescent for quite a long  
9 time.

10 Mr. Schwarz. Would you look at page 52 --

11 Mr. Helms. Yes, gladly.

12 Mr. Schwarz. -- of the study. At the bottom of 51 it  
13 indicates, referring to the time between September '62 and  
14 January '63 -- it states that in December or January '62, '63,  
15 Mr. Roselli made a payment of \$2700, or payment was made to  
16 Mr. Roselli of \$2700.

17 Mr. Helms. I am finding the place now. I am sorry,  
18 between December and January.

19 Well, then, then it was going on, okay. That clarifies  
20 it. Something was going on or allegedly going on.

21 Mr. Schwarz. Now, to the best of your recollection, as  
22 of 1962 meeting of the Special Group that has been discussed,  
23 the August 1962 meeting, in which Mr. Lansdale after asking  
24 that plans be developed for liquidation of leaders, did Mr.  
25 Harvey disclose to the membership of the Special Group, or any

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1 member of it, that actual efforts were underway to assassinate  
2 Castro as opposed to the request to look at that as an option  
3 or plan?

4 Mr. Helms. I don't know. I wasn't at the meeting. I  
5 was never told that this occurred. I don't know of any paper  
6 that supports it. But I am sure maybe Mr. Harvey will remember.

7 Mr. Smothers. What was your relationship with Mr.  
8 Harvey? Did you select him?

9 Mr. Helms. I think I did. I think I did. I know that  
10 there was some discussion at the time he was selected of trying  
11 to find someone who was a hard-hitting officer to head up this  
12 Cuban effort, and I certainly, if I didn't, actually was not  
13 the one who first suggested it, I certainly approved the  
14 selection. I just don't remember anymore. It is likely that  
15 I might have picked him. I just don't remember those details.  
16 But it is silly of me to say flatly, yes, I selected Harvey  
17 because I just don't remember the exact chain of circumstances.  
18 But I certainly accepted him for the job, which is all your  
19 are trying to find out, isn't it?

20 Mr. Schwarz. Was he working closely with you or was he  
21 working more closely with the Director or with Lansdale?

22 Mr. Helms. No. Before he got this job in charge of  
23 the Cuban task force he had been the head of a staff known as  
24 I recall it, Chief of FID, which meant that he was in charge  
25 of a staff in the Foreign Intelligence Staff inside it, whose

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100 percent function was to mount operations against embassies and installations of foreign powers overseas, to acquire codes and ciphers by surreptitious entry. That was the one function this staff had.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you know about the so-called Executive Action or the portion of that assignment which allegedly related to a capability to kill or assassinate foreign leaders?

Mr. Holms. Well, in reviewing this, these papers, I noticed that there was something called ZR RIFLE, which established and was referred to as an Executive action capability, which is a pretty fancy title for one man who was to constitute a capability in being, as I understood it, under Bissell's instruction. If you needed somebody to carry out murder I guess you had a man who might be prepared to carry it out.

Senator Baker. A Presidential hit man?

Mr. Helms. Some kind of hit man.

Mr. Schwarz. Is that something you are reconstructing from having read the record?

Mr. Helms. No, I remember 2R RIFLE thing. I remember more particularly my desire to get this whole idea put to rest and see if we could use that man in some other way usefully, and he was eventually terminated two or three years later. I don't remember his name. I don't remember his nationality. I don't remember the details about him at all. But I don't

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like the whole idea so I finally phased it out.

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1 Senator Baker. Could I ask a question, just briefly?  
2 Do I understand from the tenor of these remarks that  
3 ZRRIFLE really wasn't a big thing in the agency, in your  
4 view, and you never thought much of it?

5 Mr. Helms. No.

6 As a matter of fact, it was a tiny little thing and I  
7 noticed, Senator Baker, in one of the pages here that Mr. Har-  
8 vey said that he got this involved in his mind with some of the  
9 things he was trying to do on Cuba. I have no recollection of  
10 that whatever.

11 Senator Baker. Mr. Bissell indicated we ought to make  
12 a clear distinction between the general effort to "eliminate  
13 Castro or dispose of Castro," and the ZRRIFLE effort at  
14 assassination of Castro.

15 Mr. Helms. In most minds those lines never crossed.

16 Senator Baker. Sir?

17 Mr. Helms. In my mind those lines never crossed. This  
18 man was the ZRRIFLE fellow, I believe, was in Europe.

19 Senator Baker. Thank you.

20 Mr. Schwarz. Maybe this is confusing and you could  
21 clear it up.

22 On page 38 of the study it states, after describing  
23 executive action -- it states the following -- "The project  
24 named ZRRIFLE first appears in the files in May '61, although  
25 the first recorded approval is dated February 1962. The new

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1 DDP (Helms) on that date authorized Harvey by memorandum to  
2 handle the project on a special basis. Accounting for expendi-  
3 tures was to be by general category and on Harvey certification.  
4 The initial approval was for 14,700, consisting of 7200 for  
5 Q. J. Winn's annual salary and 75 for operational expenses".

6 Then, it describes ZRRIFLE as ostensibly to develop  
7 capability for entering safes and for kidnapping couriers, that  
8 it was separate from the operation against Castro until  
9 November 15, '61, and that on that date Harvey discussed with  
10 Bissell application of the ZRRIFLE program to Cuba.

11 Now, first, did you, as it says here, authorize Harvey  
12 to handle the ZRRIFLE project on a special basis?

13 Mr. Helms. I guess I must have. But may I explain  
14 what I think undoubtedly was involved?

15 In the clandestine services we had a very careful  
16 bookkeeping system that all monies had to be allocated against  
17 specific projects and by proper authority because, as you  
18 Senators will remember, that when the Agency was set up under  
19 the National Security Act of 1947, and then later Central  
20 Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, there were authorities given  
21 to the Director of Central Intelligence for use of unvouchered  
22 funds and certification to the use of those funds had to come  
23 from the Director by law. And so every Director as far as I know,  
24 certainly with Mr. McCone and with me, we had a very care-  
25 ful bookkeeping and auditing system inside the Agency to be

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Yes, I don't think there was any doubt about it, but

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1 there is a great deal of difference between establishing a  
2 capability and using it.

3 Senator Baker. On that point, though, was it also in the  
4 contemplation of the parties, as we lawyers are fond of saying,  
5 that ZRRIFLE had a capability for the assassination of Cas-  
6 tro?

7 Was that discussed?

8 Mr. Helms. Never that I heard of, Senator Baker, as  
9 best I recall those circumstances.

10 In other words, you see, there is a passage in here which  
11 says that these two lines cross. This finds no place in my  
12 recollection.

13 Senator Baker. Thank you.

14 Senator Schweiker. The point on the physical lines of  
15 authority you just described, to pay people under your  
16 vouchered system, then would the CIA issue checks to these  
17 people or was it done by cash as a rule, or how did that  
18 voucher follow-up occur under physical control?

19 Mr. Helms. We did it variously. Sometimes actual  
20 cash was passed to a sensitive agent.

21 For example, you might pay him in Indian rupees, then the  
22 man who passed the money would sign in the office a certifi-  
23 cation under the cryptonym of this operation saying on such and  
24 such a day he passed X Indian rupees to agent so-and-so.

25 Senator Schweiker. Who would give him the cash?

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1 Who would dispense that cash?

2 Mr. Helms. In each station overseas there was either  
3 a finance officer whose full time job was finance, if  
4 it was a large station, or another officer who had a part-  
5 time job of keeping the accounts for that station.

6 So, when the auditors went around there was also  
7 somebody who could present to them the books for that station  
8 of exactly how much money had been expended in the previous  
9 month, and we were enormously scrupulous about this thing.

10 I think you will find if you get the auditors from  
11 the Agency down you will find a very good job was done on  
12 the protection of the funds of the United States.

13 Senator Schweiker. Thank you.

14 The Chairman. All right, Mr. Schwarz.

15 Mr. Schwarz. Would you return again to Exhibit 7, the  
16 two-column thing?

17 Mr. Helms. Exhibit 7?

18 Mr. Schwarz. The two-column thing -- Drew Pearson at  
19 the top.

20 Mr. Helms. Okay, right.

21 Mr. Schwarz. Now, you have already talked about the  
22 first entry which says the CIA had a plot to knock off Castro.  
23 Let's talk about the second entry, the published details  
24 are Robert Kennedy had approved an assassination plot in the  
25 right-hand column. Your staff states not true. He was briefed

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1 on gambling syndicate phase one after it was over. He was not  
2 briefed on phase 2."

3 Was that correct? Is that correct, as you understand it?

4 Mr. Helms. I don't know of my knowledge that Robert  
5 Kennedy was ever asked to specifically approve an assassina-  
6 tion plot. That he was briefed on gambling syndicate phase one  
7 is certainly true, and the record shows that.

8 I don't recall about phase 2. I don't recall briefing him  
9 myself on it. Whether anybody else may have briefed him or  
10 not I don't know. But out of my resources and my recollec-  
11 tion I don't recall his having been briefed on it.

12 Mr. Smothers. Would it be necessary for him to be  
13 briefed on phase 2?

14 Mr. Helms. I would have thought not, sir.

15 I think I would probably have a more specific recollec-  
16 tion if I had gone and done it.

17 Mr. Smothers. Are you saying then that he was suffi-  
18 ciently involved in the activities and intentions of  
19 Special Group Augmented that he would have known about phase 2?

20 Mr. Helms. Not necessarily. He might have. He might  
21 not have. But I think that Harvey kept phase 2 pretty much  
22 in his back pocket.

23 Mr. Smothers. on Phase 1, then, with respect to what you  
24 believe would have been the state of the Attorney General's  
25 knowledge, would he have known about the assassination plot,

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1 would this approval have taken place with his concurrence?

2 Mr. Helms. I don't know, sir. The phase 1 business is  
3 something I had almost nothing to do with and got into  
4 rather late in the game and my perceptions would be of no  
5 assistance to you, I don't think.

6 The Chairman. These questions are important to the  
7 Committee because the documents suggest and the testimony, if  
8 you correctly remember it, seems to suggest that when Mr.  
9 Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, was informed about phase 1, it was  
10 done in the past tense -- the documents bear that out --  
11 and phase 1 had in fact been terminated.

12 So, well, the briefing related to that phase of the  
13 operation which has been terminated?

14 Mr. Helms. That is right.

15 The Chairman. We don't know whether Robert Kennedy was  
16 ever advised of the so-called phase 2 part?

17 Mr. Helms. No, sir, I don't. And I must say that the  
18 presumption based on the papers I have seen within the last  
19 two or three days, would indicate that he was not, but I  
20 don't know this for sure.

21 Senator Goldwater. I am wondering out loud does it  
22 make any difference?

23 The Chairman. Well --

24 Senator Goldwater. I think there is a lot to this  
25 business of I don't care whether Robert Kennedy ordered it

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1 or Bill Rogers ordered it or knew about it, it is done and gone,  
2 and we know I think quite a bit about the total operation.

3 But I don't think it is fair to try to assign by this  
4 line of of questioning blame..

5 The Chairman. That isn't the purpose of the questioning.  
6 I don't think, Senator. It is to determine how these things  
7 worked, what the line of authority may have been, and if it  
8 is true that assassination plots can be carried out without  
9 the specific knowledge of the highest people in the govern-  
10 ment, this Committee ought to know that and we ought to  
11 consider whether that is tolerable.

12:           That is the reason for the questioning.

1:1 Mr. Schwarz. Could we pursue --

14 Senator Baker. Before you do I think both Senator  
15 Goldwater and you are correct in a way but I think we need to  
16 refine that point a little more because I think it will be  
17 helpful in our further evaluation of this witness' testimony  
18 and our general undertaking.

19 It may be that the facts will not yield up the conclu-  
20 sion on whether the President or the Attorney General at any  
21 point in time knew of these undertakings. It may be that  
22 the most we can do is indulge in conjecture or surmise. We have  
23 three alternative possibilities, it seems to me, that are  
24 relevant to the inquiry of this committee, and the problems  
25 that we will make.

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1 One, the President did know and was preserved in  
2 deniability and it cannot be established. I doubt that we  
3 reach that conclusion.

4 Two. That we are not sure but that the force of  
5 circumstances, operating procedures, intuition, but better  
6 still expert testimony from those who were in the committee  
7 probably knew, it is unlikely someone would have acted without  
8 authority or, three, that the CIA was acting on its own in an  
9 irresponsible way in matters of extraordinary importance.

10 The Chairman. Yes.

11 Senator Baker. To the extent that we focus on  
12 two or three it is important. To the extent we focus on one  
13 and try to strain desperately to find out Robert Kennedy or  
14 John F. Kennedy knew or didn't know is not important, but I do  
15 think it is terribly important to ask Mr. Helms, and with  
16 your permission I am going to ask him right now, whether or  
17 not in any situation that he knows of in conjunction with any  
18 assassination efforts against Fidel Castro, whether or not  
19 he or anyone he knows of in the CIA acted in a way that he  
20 would conceive as being beyond their authority and  
21 beyond the instructions they received from some authority?

22 Mr. Helms. Sir, I believe to this day that in these  
23 actions we were taking against Cuba and against Fidel Castro's  
24 government in Cuba, that they were what we had been asked  
25 to do.

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1 In other words, we had been asked to get rid of Castro,  
2 and as I said a little earlier, there were no limitations  
3 put on the monies, and we felt we were acting well within  
4 the guidelines that we understood to be in play at this parti-  
5 cular time.

6 Senator Baker. Then in view of that answer it seems  
7 to me that the further inquiry of this committee, of the  
8 further deliberation of this committee at this point  
9 ought to be whether or not we ought to at this time even  
10 up lines of communication between the ultimate civil author-  
11 ity of the U.S. and the intelligence community so there is  
12 an expressed and provable line of authority or whether it  
13 functions adequately in its present format.

14 Senator Hart of Michigan. Mr. Chairman, I am sorry.  
15 I was taking a deposition.

16 Mr. Helms. Good morning, Senator Hart.

17 Senator Hart of Michigan. You tell us that it is your  
18 impression that nothing done with respect to Castro by the  
19 Agency was done without authority.

20 Do I understand that correctly?

21 Mr. Helms. It was done within the guidelines of  
22 appropriate authority. In other words, we felt that we were  
23 operating as we were supposed to operate, that these things  
24 if not specifically authorized at least were authorized in  
25 general terms.

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1 Senator Hart of Michigan. I am uneasy with that and  
2 not at all critical either.

3 Does it mean that you understood that the highest  
4 authorities of government were anxious that the Castro  
5 government fall and that in some fashion Castro go away?

6 Mr. Helms. Senator Hart, I think you put it very well.

7 Senator Hart of Michigan. All right.

8 Now, do you assume from that, that being the general  
9 authority, that there was nothing you had to check back with,  
10 like the sinking of a Soviet ship in Havana harbor, or napalm-  
11 ing the island or assassinating Castro?

12 Mr. Helms. Sir, before you came in I was explaining  
13 the interrelationship between the operational officials  
14 and the Special Group and our efforts to find out if that was  
15 satisfactory to run a raid against a refinery or whatever  
16 the case might be.

17 In other words, there was a great deal of interplay  
18 here for permission, reports on success, reports on failure,  
19 and so forth.

20 The Chairman. That is what makes it so puzzling, if  
21 I may, Senator Hart, because you say there was a great deal of  
22 interplay with respect to certain projects like the attempt  
23 against a copper mine or something of that kind. But there  
24 appears to have none, no interplay at all we can tie down  
25 with respect to the most sensitive project of all, the

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assassination of the Cuban leader.

You say with respect to that that you weren't told not to do it and you weren't told in so many words to do it, but you understood that that was within the parameters of the general policy?

Mr. Helms. Yes.

The Chairman. Now, it is quite hard for me to understand how you go back and check constantly with the Special Group on ordinary sabotage operations but you have apparently no such communication with the Special Group on an assassination plan against the Cuban leader.

Can you explain that?

Mr. Helms, I understand your puzzlement and I don't know whether I can satisfactorily put the matter to rest in your mind. I will do my best.

The item that seems to loom large in this I.G. report is the use of John Roselli in phase 2.

As I testified earlier this morning, as best I can recall the circumstances at the time, I did not have much hope for what Roselli might be able to do but I was prepared to have Harvey work with him to see if there were lines that the underworld had into Cuba.

Now, I realized that even in retrospect the poisoned pills look very bad and I must say that they don't look very good to me today as I look at them. But I have to say

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1 in all fairness and honesty that in the perceptions of the time  
2 people were losing their lives in raids, a lot of people  
3 had lost their lives at the Bay of Pigs, agents were being  
4 arrested left and right and put before the wall and shot,  
5 and that, therefore, this operation of Roselli's with the  
6 pills would seem to me to be a very feeble operation under  
7 the best of circumstances and indeed turned out to be one.

8 Frankly, at the time it didn't loom large and that is  
9 not because I don't have any moral judgment or because I am  
10 a cynical know-nothing, it was simply because in the  
11 perceptions of the time and the things we were trying to do  
12 this was one human life against many other human lives that  
13 were being lost.

14 The Chairman. Even in the perception of the times,  
15 when you engaged elements of the Mafia to perform an operation  
16 for the CIA, that if it had worked out as hoped would have  
17 resulted in the assassination of Castro, then you tell us  
18 that you didn't bring it to the attention of Mr. McCone  
19 because you didn't think that it was that important, and  
20 that he had any particular need to know about it.

21 That strikes me as being very strange. I should think  
22 that if there was one thing that the Director of the CIA  
23 did have need to know would be a connection with the Mafia.

24 Mr. Helms. Well, sir --

25 The Chairman. As you know --

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1 Mr. Helms. Mr. Chairman, let me say that there had  
2 already been one connection with it which unfortunately I  
3 say that you say this is all strange. I agree it sounds strange  
4 and I regret it and I think that at a different time and  
5 under different circumstances I would have wanted no  
6 relationship with the Mafia, but as I say, we were struggling  
7 very hard in those days to find anybody that had any connec-  
8 tions into Cuba and this was just one that I just didn't  
9 feel I could say 100 percent no to until it demonstrated there  
10 was no such connections.

11 They never developed, they never turned into anything.  
12 The whole thing went down the rat hole. But I must say that  
13 in the hindsight of 1975, and even at that time, I regret  
14 it very much. That is all. But I can't give any  
15 other explanation than the one I have given you. It is the  
16 only one I have got.

17 Senator Mathias. When Mr. Bissell was here I think I  
18 asked him whether the job of communicating with superior  
19 authority was one of protecting superior authority, and  
20 specifically the President, protecting him from knowledge and  
21 at the same time informing him, which is a difficult and  
22 delicate job, and he agreed that that was really the diffi-  
23 culty.

24 And you this morning have said that in advising a  
25 President or very high authority of any particular delicate

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1 subject, that resort was had to you euphemism.

2 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

3 Senator Mathias. Now, what emerges, and I want to  
4 satisfy if my perception of this is right what emerges is  
5 leadership within the Agency of men who knew each other very  
6 well, who could communicate virtually without words. Is that  
7 correct?

8 Mr. Helms. That is correct.

9 Senator Mathias. And to take a case in point, Mr.  
10 Bissell and Mr. Allen Dulles, as an example, was it generally  
11 considered that Mr. Bissell was Mr. Dulles' heir apparent  
12 in the period '60-61?

13 Mr. Helms. That is an interesting question. I hadn't  
14 thought about that for a long time but I wouldn't be surprised  
15 if you are correct. I think there was some talk about that.

16 Senator Mathias. Perhaps what is more important, did  
17 Mr. Dulles and Mr. Bissell consider they had that relationship?

18 Mr. Helms. I think they did.

19 Senator Mathias. And living in that kind of a relation-  
20 ship to each other, did they have a sort of confidential  
21 relationship in which they could share things almost without  
22 words?

23 Mr. Helms. I wouldn't be surprised.

24 Senator Mathias. And was it in fact probably the way  
25 that they communicated on subjects such as the one the Chairman

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1 has raised, the question of an assassination, potential in  
2 general and specific assassination attempt on Castro?

3 Mr. Helms. I think that Allen Dulles did know about  
4 that Mafia thing. I think his Deputy Cabell knew about it,  
5 too, didn't he? I think so.

6 Senator Mathias. Obviously this is not the kind of  
7 subject that urbane and civilized men would particularly want  
8 to dwell on, and so they spoke about it as little as possible?

9 Mr. Helms. That is certainly true. I don't think that  
10 even in the perceptions of the times with all the pressures  
11 and so forth that the moral drawers of the people involved were  
12 dropped. I think we were just trying to get on with a very  
13 tough job and there were certain aspects of it we didn't like  
14 at all, but I realize that the Chairman's problem here about  
15 this matter is a real one and I wish that I could come up with  
16 something more specific about actually recalled conversations,  
17 but I don't remember them. On the other hand, you see, I don't  
18 have any recollection either that I was being delinquent here.  
19 I was inflagrante delicto, or whatever it is. I thought I was  
20 getting on with the job and may I say that --

21 Senator Mathias. If I can proceed with a couple more  
22 points.

23 This sort of doctrine of plausible denial which was  
24 perceived to be, and I assume is still perceived to be the  
25 operational doctrine in the Agency to protect Presidents, we

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1 have explored how Mr. Bissell and Mr. Dulles might have  
2 communicated without words. How about how, to your knowledge,  
3 did Mr. Dulles communicate in these serious matters with  
4 President Eisenhower?

5 Mr. Helms. I think that probably Mr. Dulles dealt with  
6 these matters the way I subsequently did when I became Director  
7 and dealt with them, which was to discuss with the President  
8 something you felt you couldn't discuss with anybody else,  
9 then discuss with his immediate assistants those things which  
10 seemed to be proper for them to help you out with, go to the  
11 Secretary of State when you needed him, go to the Secretary  
12 of Defense when you needed him, and Mr. Dulles did go to Andy  
13 Goodpaster when he could be of help, or Gordon Gray when you  
14 thought he was one who would be of assistance. And my recol-  
15 lection of Mr. Dulles is that being the astute gentleman he  
16 was I think he kept his lines clear all over town. As best I  
17 recall it, I think there was a time when he didn't have these  
18 lines so clear with some Senators about some missiles, but  
19 other than that I think he kept his lines pretty clear.

20 Senator Mathias. Do you think he had the capacity to  
21 communicate directly with President Eisenhower on anything he  
22 felt the President had to know?

23 Mr. Helms. No question about it.

24 Senator Mathias. How about the Kennedy brothers?

25 Mr. Helms. Well, I think that Mr. Dulles had -- well,

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1 I think Directors have always had access to the President if  
2 they want to insist on it. I think there has grown up a  
3 little bit of an impression that this is not the case, but  
4 each Director has to decide how he is going to work for the  
5 President and the President obviously is the first one to decide  
6 how he is going to do it. Then you get into a course of  
7 dealing and I think every person that works in the Executive  
8 Branch becomes aware of the enormous burden on a President's  
9 time, so you don't take things to him that you really don't  
10 think you have just got to take to him, but Mr. McCone, I  
11 don't know how much he saw President Kennedy, but I think he  
12 saw a good deal of the Attorney General both professionally  
13 and socially.

14 Senator Mathias. Maybe it is even more important to  
15 explore how President Kennedy and Attorney General Kennedy  
16 would want to express themselves in these delicate areas.

17 To your knowledge, did they have any inhibitions in  
18 talking to either Mr. Dulles or Mr. McCone?

19 Mr. Helms. Not that I ever heard of. In fact, I used  
20 to go to the Attorney General with specific intelligence  
21 problems on which I needed assistance. I used to deal with  
22 him directly. He was very accessible.

23 Senator Mathias. And direct?

24 Mr. Helms. And very direct.

25 Senator Mathias. You didn't need to use your euphemisms?

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1 Mr. Helms. Mr. Chairman, may I go off the record for  
2 just one second?

3 Chairman Church. Surely.

4 Mr. Helms. This has nothing to do with your inquiry.

5 (Discussion off the record)

6 Senator Mathias. You have already described to some  
7 extent how you dealt personally with President Johnson.

8 Was there ever any doubt in your mind that you weren't  
9 getting through to President Johnson or that he wasn't getting  
10 through to you in a clear way?

11 Mr. Helms. No sir. In the first few months that I  
12 was Director I had a bit of a problem as to how I was going  
13 to communicate with President Johnson, but as a result of  
14 some circumstances surrounding the June War of 1967 I began  
15 to see him quite regularly because I became a member of what  
16 was known as the Tuesday Luncheon Group and when I did not  
17 see him there, which was a small group where one had opportunity  
18 if necessary to speak to him privately, I saw him frequently  
19 in National Security Council meetings and also meetings having  
20 to do with the Middle East, with Vietnam, and things of that  
21 kind. So that I heard, I think I was quite familiar with  
22 President Johnson's views, in answer to your question.

23 Senator Mathias. And he with yours?

24 Mr. Helms. Yes sir, I believe so.

25 Senator Mathias. How about President Nixon?

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1 Mr. Helms. My dealings with President Nixon were not  
2 frequent at all. I dealt with him almost entirely through  
3 Mr. Kissinger, who was his Assistant for National Security  
4 Affairs. I used to see President Nixon in the National  
5 Security Council meetings but I think the number of private  
6 talks, including having some staff member there during the  
7 time that I served him, could be counted on the fingers of one  
8 hand. I doubt it came even to the end of the fingers of one  
9 hand.

10 Senator Mathias. Did you as a result of this lack of  
11 personal access ever have any question about whether the  
12 policy you were executing was in fact Presidential policy?

13 Mr. Helms. I didn't have any doubts about it, Senator  
14 Mathias, because Dr. Kissinger and General Haig were both very  
15 articulate fellows and they were able to get those views  
16 across, and when on two or three rather important occasions  
17 President Nixon in National Security Council meetings told me  
18 what he wanted done on certain things in front of the others,  
19 that made it very clear, so I never had the feeling that  
20 because there was a different relationship with President  
21 Nixon I didn't know what he wanted. I felt I did know what  
22 he wanted.

23 Senator Mathias. Did Presidents indulge in euphemisms  
24 as well as Directors?

25 In this connection, historically, you can think of

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Senator Mathias. And yet at the same time you felt that some spark had been transmitted, that that was within the

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1 the permissible limits?

2 Mr. Helms. Yes; and if he had disappeared from the scene  
3 they would not have been unhappy.

4 Senator Baker. Do you think that is good practice or  
5 bad practice?

6 Senator Goldwater. It is the only practice.

7 Mr. Helms. Senator Baker, that is an awfully hard  
8 question to answer.

9 Senator Baker.. Isn't that what we are up against?

10 Mr. Helms. I think it is what you are up against and I  
11 think in a Christian country like the United States of America  
12 which is a Democracy, and so forth, this question of killing  
13 people is a prime moral issue.

14 The Chairman. That indeed is the ultimate question.  
15 The techniques are secondary.

16 Mr. Helms. A prime moral issue and, therefore, I think  
17 that if it comes to be felt by this Committee or otherwise  
18 that things like this and perception of the present day should  
19 be put on a different plain or handled in a different manner,  
20 I could find no objection.

21 Senator Hart of Colorado. Mr. Ambassador, several  
22 paragraphs back, prior to Senator Mathias' questions, you used  
23 a term twist, the term guidelines. That seems to me to be  
24 a fairly specific term.

25 In the period of '61-62 that we are dealing with here,

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1 what were those guidelines and where did they come from. Try  
2 to tie this philosophical discussion down a little more  
3 closely?

4 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, I think that, as we were saying  
5 a bit earlier, and I think, sir, before you came in, the  
6 general effort in the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs and then  
7 in the latter part of that -- let me start again, because you  
8 were not here to go through this.

9 Senator Hart of Colorado. I think I have been here all  
10 morning.

11 Mr. Helms. But this was very early on. Well, anyway.  
12 I am sorry. I got Senator Hart confused, I am sorry.

13 The general injunction was to get rid of Castro.

14 Senator Hart Of Colorado. That came from the Oval  
15 Office of the White House?

16 Mr. Helms. Well, it certainly came to me who was down  
17 in the organization from what I would have regarded as  
18 constituted authority. In other words, it came down the proper  
19 chain, if you want to put it that way, from my Director to  
20 the man above me and to me.

21 Senator Hart of Colorado. Get rid of Castro?

22 Mr. Helms. Yes sir. As I said earlier, there were no  
23 limitations put on the means. And the effort to do that was  
24 presided over by this Special Group, Special Group Augmented,  
25 which I explained earlier.

1 Senator Hart of Colorado. Yes.

2 Mr. Helms. And when I used the word guidelines,  
3 unfortunately I am not a lawyer and sometimes I get into words  
4 that convey different meanings to lawyers than they do to us  
5 lay folks. I am just referring to the kind of thing you saw  
6 in this memorandum of General Lansdale's that here we are going  
7 to do psychological warfare, political, military, economic and  
8 so forth. That was what I was referring to as guidelines.

9 Senator Hart of Colorado. But you would admit, and even  
10 though I think we have established, the Chairman has established  
11 that the purpose of this Committee is not to find a smoking  
12 gun or point a finger at a villain, what we are after is how  
13 these things get started, how they are directed and controlled,  
14 and whether, as Senator Mathias was pursuing, whether people  
15 at the top want to know specifically what is happening. But  
16 the Buck does have to stop somewhere in terms of carrying out  
17 what is the explicit purpose of a mission. Orders to be given,  
18 contracts have to be signed, money has to be authorized.  
19 Somebody has to do those things. And I think that is what we  
20 are all trying to pin down, at this time, under those  
21 circumstances, who was doing those things.

22 And I think the counsel may have been touching one point  
23 or another on the \$100,000, for example, to the Mafia contacts.

24 Mr. Helms. \$150,000? Which era was this?

25 Mr. Schwarz. That was the amount of money authorized

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1 for Phase I. Not in fact paid but authorized.

2 Senator Hart of Colorado. This was a time when the  
3 Ambassador was occupying?

4 Mr. Schwarz. Second in command to Mr. Bissell.

5 Mr. Helms. I know nothing about that operation so I  
6 don't know how it was funded. This is why I was asking. I  
7 wanted to get straight in my own mind what some of this money  
8 was.

9 Senator Hart of Colorado. That is all.

10 Mr. Helms. May I contribute something, please?

11 The Chairman. Yes, certainly.

12 Mr. Helms. As a result of my experiences through the  
13 years, when I became Director I had made up my mind that this  
14 option, if you want to put it that way, of killing foreign  
15 leaders, was something that I did not want to happen on my  
16 watch. My reasons for this were these:

17 There are not only moral reasons but there are also some  
18 other rather practical reasons.

19 1. It is almost impossible in a Democracy to keep  
20 anything like that secret. If you will examine human behavior  
21 you will find that the toughest nut one day six years later  
22 may become just a weakling running for cover, looking for  
23 assistance somewhere. I think it would be almost impossible,  
24 if I may put it that way, to keep such a thing secret for any  
25 protracted length of time. Somebody would go to a Congressman.

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1 his Senator, he might go to a newspaper man, whatever the case  
2 may be, but it just is not a practical alternative, it seems  
3 to me, in our society.

4 Then there is another consideration which comes into  
5 this. That if you are going to try by this kind of means to  
6 remove a foreign leader, then who is going to take his place  
7 running that country, and are you essentially better off as a  
8 matter of practice when it is over than you were before? And  
9 I can give you I think a very solid example of this which  
10 happened in Vietnam when President Diem was eliminated from  
11 the scene. We then had a revolving door of prime ministers  
12 after that for quite some period of time, during which the  
13 Vietnamese Government at a time in its history when it should  
14 have been strong was nothing but a caretaker government,  
15 constantly. In other words, that whole exercise turned out to  
16 the disadvantage of the United States.

17 So when one looks at the scope of this thing this is  
18 why I am contributing the time. After all there is no sense  
19 in my sitting here with all the experience I have had and  
20 not sharing with the Committee my feelings this day. It  
21 isn't because I have lost my cool, or because I have lost  
22 my guts, it simply is because I don't think it is a viable  
23 option in the United States of America these days.

24 Chairman Church. Doesn't it also follow, Mr. Helms --  
25 I agree with you what you have said fully -- but doesn't it

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1 also follow on the practical side, apart from the moral side,  
 2 that since these secrets are bound to come out, when they do,  
 3 they do very grave political damage to the United States and  
 4 the world at large? I don't know to what extent the Russians  
 5 involved themselves in political assassinations, but under  
 6 their system they at least have a better prospect of keeping  
 7 it concealed. Since we do like a free society and since these  
 8 secrets are going to come out in due course, the revelation  
 9 will then do serious injury to the good name and reputation  
 10 of the United States.

11 Would you agree with that?

12 Mr. Helms. Yes, I would.

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes, I would.  
2 The Chairman. And finally, if we reserve to ourselves the  
3 prerogative to assassinate foreign leaders, we may invite  
4 reciprocal action from foreign governments who assume that if  
5 it's our prerogative to do so, it is their prerogative as well,  
6 and that is another danger that we at least invite with this  
7 kind of action, wouldn't you agree to that?

8 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

9 The Chairman. And in that connection, going back to this  
10 same Drew Pearson story on Exhibit 7 --

11 Mr. Helms. Yes, I have it here.

12 The Chairman. I call your attention to the item in the  
13 middle of the page where Pearson asserted, "Castro learned  
14 enough at least to believe the CIA was seeking to kill him.  
15 He is reported to have cooked up a counterplot against  
16 President Kennedy," and then on the facts as the IG report  
17 summarizes them, we read, "This reportedly has come out in the  
18 Garrison investigations. It also was stated by Castillo in  
19 the Philippines under direct interrogation. We have no inde-  
20 pendent confirmation of any sort. Note that Garrison met with  
21 Roselli in Los Vegas in March, 1967."

22 Our testimony to date indicates that Castro did learn of  
23 these assassination attempts. Now just exactly what he learned  
24 is not entirely clear but the fact is that he did learn, and  
25 this of course always raises the suspicion of whether he was

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1 thus furnished with a motive to strike back.

2 Well, who has -- Senator Morgan?

3 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, I cannot believe, sir, that  
4 there couldn't be some commentary from the witness on a matter  
5 of such grave sensitivity as you just suggested.

6 The Chairman. Do you have any comment?

7 Mr. Helms. I have no comment, because I have never had  
8 brought to my attention any convincing evidence that Castro did  
9 have a plot against any of our leaders.

10 The Chairman. Yes.

11 Senator Baker. Any convincing evidence?

12 Mr. Helms. Well, see here, this might be called evidence  
13 on this sheet of paper, and if you say evidence, I say any  
14 convincing evidence.

15 Senator Baker. Do you have any other nonconvincing  
16 evidence?

17 Mr. Helms. No.

18 Senator Baker. But quite apart from the evidence, and I  
19 think the Committee is without any such evidence, my comment  
20 went to motive only. I found it extraordinary when Mr. McCone  
21 testified that the CIA did not supply the Warren Commission with  
22 information relating to its own assassination attempts against  
23 Castro, which attempts preceded the assassination of  
24 President Kennedy.

25 Can you enlighten us in any regard with respect to

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1 why --

2 Mr. Helms. No, sir.

3 The Chairman. -- these disclosures were not made to the  
4 Warren Commission?

5 Mr. Helms. If you want me to make a surmise, Mr. Chairman,  
6 I would be glad to try that, but I have no independent recol-  
7 lection of why.

8 The Chairman. You did not participate in that decision?

9 Mr. Helms. No. My job with respect to the Warren  
10 Commission was to answer inquiries from the Commission and try  
11 to get together the material that they needed for their inves-  
12 tigation and I spent a great deal of time on this, but I don't  
13 remember the question arising about our own operations and  
14 their effect on these matters. But somehow there lingers --

15 The Chairman. Well, can you tell us why that lingers, even  
16 if you must surmise why the CIA didn't feel obliged to volunteer  
17 information of this kind that does run to the question of  
18 motive to the Commission that was investigating the assassina-  
19 tion of the American President?

20 Mr. Helms. Well, there was much -- I mean, after all,  
21 the Castro government in Cuba and the Kennedy government in  
22 the United States, had been at daggers drawn over the Cuban  
23 missile crisis and it was fully public information that there  
24 was absolutely no love lost between the two. The Bay of Pigs  
25 had been attempted, Castro was certainly aware of that. He

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1 was aware of all the circumstances surrounding the missile  
2 crisis and as I say, I don't know whether he became aware of  
3 any plots to get rid of him, but he must have known that this  
4 was going on nonstop among Cuban exiles and backed by the  
5 United States government.

6 As I said, his Soviet intelligence advisors were running a  
7 pretty good line into the Cuban exile community in Florida and  
8 I'm sure they must have known pretty well what was going on.  
9 So having said that, that contributes to the temper of the  
10 time, and when the Warren Commission's investigation was going  
11 on, I had the impression and there are a lot of the staff  
12 around who could confirm or straighten it out, that the Warren  
13 Commission was well aware of efforts to get rid of Castro and  
14 that this was taken into consideration in their deliberations.

15 The Chairman. Senator Morgan?

16 Senator Morgan. Mr. Chairman, I have two or three  
17 matters.

18 Mr. Helms. Good morning, Senator Morgan.

19 Senator Morgan. Let me -- Mr. Helms, you were getting  
20 material together for the Warren Commission, you say, and at  
21 that time you knew of the assassination plots that had been  
22 against Castro, did you not?

23 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

24 Senator Morgan. And you did not think it important to  
25 give that to the Warren Commission?

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1 Mr. Helms. Well, Senator Morgan, I was not the Director  
2 at that time.

3 Senator Morgan. Well you were gathering material.

4 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir; I was following about orders and  
5 requests and I was asked to get together this material but I  
6 certainly was not asked to go and testify before the Commission.

7 Senator Morgan. But I'm asking you now if you were  
8 gathering the material and you had known for about three years  
9 that there were assassination plots and yet you did not think  
10 it important to give this material to the Warren Commission.  
11 That is correct, isn't it?

12 Mr. Helms. Well, the way you phrase the question, you  
13 say I didn't think it was important, I am not trying to fence  
14 with you, sir, I am trying to put the circumstances as I  
15 understood them at the time. I don't recall that I was A,  
16 either instructed or it occurred to me to cover with the  
17 Warren Commission the precise details of the Agency's operations  
18 not because I made a significant judgment not to do this, but  
19 as I said just a moment ago, my recollection at the time was  
20 that it was public knowledge that the United States was trying  
21 to get rid of Castro.

22 Senator Morgan. Well, you know, Mr. Ambassador, I don't  
23 want to argue with you, but this is what disturbs me about  
24 your testimony is that you assume, you thought it was public  
25 knowledge, we never can pin anything down. And you were not

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1 that time just an employee of the CIA. You were in the top  
2 echelon, the management level, were you not?

3 Mr. Helms. Yes, I was, Senator Morgan.

4 Senator Morgan. And you had been a part of the assassina-  
5 tion plots against Castro?

6 Mr. Helms. Well, you know --

7 Senator Morgan. Well this much is true. Is that true,  
8 that part? You were -- in that regard, you participated?

9 Mr. Helms. I was aware that there had been efforts made  
10 to get rid of him by these means.

11 Senator Morgan. And you were charged with furnishing  
12 the Warren Committee information from the CIA, information you  
13 thought was relevant?

14 Mr. Helms. No, sir. I was instructed to reply to  
15 inquiries from the Warren Commission for information from the  
16 Agency. I was not asked to initiate any particular thing.

17 Senator Morgan. Well what I understood you to say to  
18 give information. In other words, you weren't asked for it,  
19 you didn't give it?

20 Mr. Helms. That's right, sir.

21 Senator Morgan. You know also, as one of the leaders of the  
22 CIA, that Oswald had called the Cuban Embassy in Mexico shortly  
23 before the assassination?

24 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, we provided that information.

25 Senator Morgan. You provided that, but did you not then

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1 think it was necessary for you to come forward with this  
2 other information that there had been assassination plots?

3 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, I'm sorry, I didn't.

4 Senator Morgan. No one followed up on the telephone calls,  
5 or the information that Oswald had contacted the Cuban Embassy  
6 beyond the information that was supplied to you by some other  
7 government?

8 Mr. Helms. I don't know sir, anymore, but I thought at  
9 the time Oswald's visit in Mexico City had been investigated to  
10 the maximum extent possible both by the FBI and the CIA.

11 Senator Morgan. Mr. Helms, this is the thing that  
12 bothers me. Everybody seems to think this, or presume this.  
13 Is there anyone who would know whether or not it had been  
14 investigated, beyond just --

15 Mr. Helms. Yes. I think Mr. Rankin, who was the Chief  
16 Counsel of the Warren Commission would know.

17 Senator Morgan. I'm talking about the CIA following up  
18 on Oswald's call.

19 Mr. Helms. Well, it might be possible to find out who was  
20 the chief in Mexico City at that time, and the extent to which  
21 he actually did these jobs. I think with the degree of  
22 specificity which you raised, and quite properly, I think you  
23 would have to get someone who was actually physically present  
24 at the time, and I don't recall anymore who was our Chief of  
25 Station in Mexico.

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1 Senator Morgan. Well, Mr. Ambassador, I will state my  
2 concern and then go on to my other two questions.

3 It concerns me that the CIA knew that Oswald had called  
4 the Cuban Embassy and that this information was furnished to  
5 the Warren Commission, but as far as I have been able to  
6 ascertain from questioning others, there was no effort made on  
7 the part of the CIA or anyone else to pursue Oswald's call  
8 beyond the fact that we received some information [REDACTED] 17

9 [REDACTED] that they had intercepted a telephone call, which --  
10 certainly he was not going to say anything on the telephone of  
11 any consequence. And then knowing that, that if the Warren  
12 Commission was never furnished information about the Castro  
13 assassination plot, I am not one who even a bugger behind ever  
14 tree and I have never questioned the Warren Commission's  
15 finding until this information comes out, and I think somehow  
16 that we need to pin that down.

17 You have said three things this morning that disturb me.  
18 You said you understood that you were to get rid of Castro and  
19 that was your understanding.

20 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

21 Senator Morgan. Then you said there were no limitations  
22 put on the means.

23 That seems to imply to me that murder or assassination  
24 was an accepted means when you said there were no limitations  
25 put on the means. Is that the way you understood it?

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1 Mr. Helms. That is the way I understood it.

2 Senator Morgan. And that had been in the past been an  
3 accepted practice of getting rid of anyone unwanted?

4 Mr. Helms. Well, I don't recall, sir, any comparable  
5 effort, at least during my time, to change another government.  
6 Certainly there were changes at times and there were operations  
7 affecting changes, but I don't recall anything that was  
8 comparable in its effort.

9 Senator Morgan. But, sir, it seems to me that there were  
10 no limitations put on the means, that you imply that assassina-  
11 tion was an accepted practice.

12 Mr. Helms. Well, Senator Morgan, I am not a lawyer. Let  
13 me rephrase what I was trying to get across.

14 I was not to the best of my recollection, ever instructed  
15 not to do some specific thing with respect to the injunction  
16 to get rid of Castro.

17 I realize there are a lot of things that would have been  
18 implausible within the range of rational sense, that one would  
19 not try, so I didn't mean by phrasing it that way that I would  
20 drop an atomic bomb or do something silly like that. I was  
21 simply trying to get across the fact that nobody ever told me  
22 that raids and providing guns and putting in people to try and  
23 get rid of the whole operation of Castro wasn't a perfectly  
24 legitimate way. In fact, I understand it was.

25 Senator Morgan. In fact you understood it was?

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes.

2 Senator Morgan. Why did you understand it was?

3 Mr. Helms. Because I was asked to get rid of him.

4 Senator Morgan. And to get rid of him, you understood that  
5 to mean that killing would be an acceptable way?

6 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

7 Senator Morgan. Well, let me tie it in, Mr. Chairman, with  
8 one final question. I won't impose on the Committee's time any  
9 more.

10 In light of your previous statement that this is a  
11 Christian country and that this Committee has to face up to the  
12 prime moral issue of whether or not killing is an acceptable  
13 way, I believe you said words essentially to that effect.

14 In light of that statement, and that that statement was true  
15 at the time, don't you think it would have taken affirmative  
16 permission or authority to kill rather than just saying it was  
17 not eliminated from the authority or you were not restricted  
18 by that?

19 This is a thing that concerns me about the CIA. The thing  
20 that I want to know is, is killing a part of the CIA's  
21 normal activities? If it is, then I think the American public  
22 may want to abolish it.

23 If you were carrying out specific authority from higher  
24 up then I think I would look at it in a different light.

25 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, killing was not part of the CIA's

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1 policy. It was not part of the CIA's armory. As a matter of  
2 fact, I don't know of anybody that was killed by the CIA in  
3 the sense that you speak about it, where somebody went out and  
4 actually killed a human being starting from here to get to that  
5 individual.

6 I won't say that in some of the limited wars in Southeast  
7 Asia people weren't killed, but in this Castro operation, and  
8 I realize you are pressing me very hard, and I accept this. I  
9 have testified as best I could about the atmosphere of the time,  
10 what I understood was desired, and I don't want to take refuge  
11 in saying that I was instructed to specifically murder Castro, but  
12 that this was getting rid of Castro, if he had been gotten  
13 rid of by this means that this would have been accepted or  
14 acceptable to certain individuals, maybe not to the country  
15 at large, I don't know. But I wasn't running these things in  
16 those days and I was just doing my best to do what I thought I  
17 was supposed to do.

18 Senator Morgan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't pursue  
19 it further.

20 The Chairman. Senator Hart?

21 Senator Hart of Colorado. Just one question. I just  
22 might observe for the record on the last issue there were  
23 four that have been discussed, Trujillo, Lumumba, Diaz and  
24 Castro. We're three for four, so whether we did it ourselves  
25 or not, three of them met rather violent deaths.

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1 During your watch as either Deputy Director of Plans or  
2 Deputy Director of the CIA or as Director of CIA, there were  
3 a number of troubling political leaders around the world, and  
4 I'm going to name several and in the case of each of them, I  
5 wish you would consider whether you, during this time, in any  
6 of those three capacities you've participated in, overheard,  
7 speculated about or participated in gossip concerning the  
8 possible assassination of any of them, Mr. Sukarno, Mr. Nasser,  
9 Mr. DeGaulle, Mr. Allende, Mr. Arafat, Mao Tse-Tung?

10 Mr. Helms. I don't recall discussing assassination of  
11 any of them.

12 Senator Hart of Colorado. Or overhearing anyone else  
13 discussing the assassination?

14 Mr. Helms. No, sir, not to the best of my recollection,  
15 did not.

16 The Chairman. It looks like we're not going to finish  
17 this morning with the questioning. Could you come back at  
18 2:00 o'clock, Mr. Helms?

19 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

20 The Chairman. That will give us a chance to get some  
21 lunch.

22 Senator Hart, I think?

23 Senator Hart of Michigan. I just wanted to clear up,  
24 Mr. Ambassador, an earlier comment of yours. It has to do  
25 McCone and Phase II and Harvey.

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1 Now, my notes have it you said that you did not tell  
2 McCone about Phase II because you really were letting Harvey  
3 go off on a mission that didn't have any prospect of success.

4 Mr. Helms. Well, Senator Hart, may I just refine that a  
5 little bit?

6 I honestly didn't recall that Mr. McCone was not informed  
7 and when I was told that there was evidence that he wasn't  
8 informed, I was trying to scratch my head as to why I didn't  
9 tell him at the time and my surmises are the best I can come  
10 up with. I am really surprised I did not discuss it with  
11 him at the time. My relations with him were good, and so my  
12 surmises are just the best I'm able to do in 1975 over an  
13 episode that took place that many years ago.

14 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, would the Senator yield?

15 Is it your impression that you did tell him?

16 Mr. Helms. No, it isn't my impression that I told him, at  
17 least I don't have any impression, unfortunately. This is  
18 blank.

19 Senator Baker. Go ahead.

20 Senator Hart of Michigan. There is a note in the  
21 Inspector General's file there, page 11, that "Harvey added that  
22 when he briefed Helms on Roselli he obtained Helms' approval  
23 not to brief the Director."

24 Do you find that? It's at the very bottom.

25 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir, that is the sentence to which I

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1 referred.

2 Senator Hart of Michigan. What is your present memory  
3 of this session?

4 Mr. Helms. That's what I meant.

5 Senator Hart of Michigan. All right, you've explained  
6 it.

7 What motive would Harvey have had, to your surmise, to state  
8 as he has?

9 Mr. Helms. Asking me to do it and to get my agreement,  
10 you mean?

11 Senator Hart of Michigan. That you agreed that the  
12 Director not being informed.

13 Mr. Helms. In other words, what was his motive for asking  
14 that? I don't recall that. I believe he's going to testify  
15 before this Committee, isn't he, in which event maybe he recalls  
16 or has some notes from the time. I'm sorry, sir, I don't  
17 remember what his motive was.

18 The Chairman. But you have no reason to think that if this  
19 is in fact his testimony that it was not the case?

20 Mr. Helms. I don't think it was, Senator. I think that  
21 must have had something to do with, you know, the conditions  
22 the time or something.

23 Senator Hart of Michigan. Well, my point -- this is a  
24 minor point, but if you thought you had authority to go from  
25 hell to breakfast in terms of getting rid of Castro, what was

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1 the concern about keeping McCone in the dark?

2 Mr. Helms. I think -- Senator Hart, I think Harvey will  
3 be able to clear this up better than I, but I think that it  
4 probably would have had to do with the fact that it was a  
5 Mafia connection and Mr. McCone was relatively new to the  
6 organization and this was, you know, not a very savory effort.  
7 And it wasn't -- I mean, I am not seeking refuge and saying that  
8 this was a good idea. As I said a moment ago, I very much  
9 regret the whole exercise.

10 Senator Schweiker. Mr. Chairman, I'll wait until we get  
11 back.

12 The Chairman. All right.

13 We'll adjourn until 2:00 o'clock this afternoon.

14 (Whereupon, at 12:48 o'clock p.m., the Committee recesses  
15 to reconvene at 2:00 o'clock p.m. the same day.)

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ATTN: Mr. Helms

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AFTERNOON SESSION

(2:05 p.m.)

Senator Hart of Michigan. The Committee will be in order.

I believe that Mr. Schwarz may have questions.

Did any member of the Committee care to direct any questions to the Ambassador at this time?

Senator Baker. A little later.

Senator Hart of Michigan. Mr. Schwarz?

TESTIMONY OF RICHARD HELMS -- Resumed

Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Ambassador, I would like to see if we could get all in one place the testimony concerning Mr. McCone.

Now, as I heard the testimony this morning, you had four explanations for why you might not have briefed Mr. McCone about the efforts to assassinate Mr. Castro. Let's see if we could discuss each one of them in turn. Can we do that?

Mr. Helms. Surely.

Mr. Schwarz. All right.

I think your first explanation, your first testimony on it was that the matter was only exploratory, or that it wasn't clear that anything was actually going to happen.

Mr. Helms. I believe that. Yes, that certainly is part of it.

Mr. Schwarz. Now, if you would look at the study on page 49 --

Mr. Helms. Yes, I'm at page 49.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. Now, that is a long section that comes  
2 under the heading, April, 1962. That heading is on page 41,  
3 just so we're sure what time we're talking.

4 Mr. Helms. Yes.

5 Mr. Schwarz. Page 41, April '62.

6 Mr. Helms. Yes.

7 Mr. Schwarz. Okay.

8 Now apparently in April 1962 some poisoned pills were given  
9 to a Cuban exile leader through Mr. Roselli. Is that right?

10 Mr. Helms. I don't know that from my own resources. It is  
11 alleged. I don't know whether they were or not.

12 Mr. Schwarz. Well, the study shows that to have happened.

13 Mr. Helms. The study shows this.

14 Mr. Schwarz. And at the same time the study shows that  
15 rifles were given to a Cuban exile, right?

16 Mr. Helms. Yes.

17 Mr. Schwarz. Now, assuming those facts to be true, at the  
18 point that poisoned pills had been handed to a person, it was  
19 no longer so that the matter was only exploratory, was it?

20 Mr. Helms. No, I think that one could say that something,  
21 you know, was being put in train there.

22 Mr. Schwarz. Looking at page 50, the study indicates that  
23 Mr. Harvey was told that the pills were actually in Cuba, at  
24 the bottom of page 50, and indeed had been taken into the  
25 restaurant regularly used by Mr. Castro. Is that so? The very

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bottom of page 50.

Mr. Helms. Of page 50?

Mr. Schwarz. Yes. The last sentence on page 50. Maybe if you read it into the record --

Mr. Helms. Yes, I see. "Roselli reported that the pills were in Cuba and at the restaurant reportedly used regularly by Castro."

We only have Roselli's word for that, I would like to point out.

Mr. Schwarz. Yes, but it was given to Mr. Harvey, right?

Mr. Helms. I beg your pardon?

Mr. Schwarz. It was reportedly given to Mr. Harvey.

Mr. Helms. Roselli said.

Mr. Schwarz. The word was given to Mr. Harvey.

Mr. Helms. Yes.

Mr. Schwarz. And Mr. Harvey stated that he regularly reported to you on the Cuba matter and indeed you would have expected him to report to you, wouldn't you?

Mr. Helms. That's right.

Mr. Schwarz. Now again, assuming that he did report to you, it certainly was no longer a matter that was exploratory, was it?

Mr. Helms. (Nods in the affirmative.)

Mr. Schwarz. Now, according to your best recollection, at that point did you brief Mr. McCone?

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1 Mr. Helms. I do not recall having done so and I don't  
2 recall why I did not.

3 Mr. Schwarz. Okay.

4 A second point that you made about not briefing Mr. McCone --  
5 and this was towards the end of your testimony in the morning --  
6 was that the effort involved the Mafia.

7 Mr. Helms. That was a surprise now that since he was new  
8 in the organization and this was a sort of dubious thing that I  
9 guess what I was trying to say was as my perception of it is  
10 recreated now that I felt that there ought to be a lot more  
11 solid than just going to him and saying we've been in touch  
12 with a fellow in the Mafia to see if we've got Underworld links  
13 to Cuba.

14 Mr. Schwarz. So it had nothing to do with his attitude  
15 towards using the Mafia?

16 Mr. Helms. I was unaware of any attitude he may have  
17 had.

18 Mr. Schwarz. Now he testified in response to this line of  
19 questioning that if he had been told that there was an assassi-  
20 nation effort underway, he would have stopped such an effort.

21 Now, is that, in your judgment, correct?

22 Mr. Helms. I don't know, sir.

23 Mr. Schwarz. Do you have any judgment on it?

24 Mr. Helms. The reason I say I don't know, Mr. Schwarz,  
25 is that elsewhere Mr. McCone states that he went to see Mr.

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1 McNamara in connection with this August 1962 affair and told  
2 Mr. McNamara that he wouldn't have anything to do with this,  
3 but I have no recollection and I don't believe he ever said  
4 anything to me about his not wanting to have anything to do  
5 with it.

6 Mr. Schwarz. And you were close to Mr. McCone in that  
7 period? You were his Deputy for Plans?

8 Mr. Helms. I saw him almost daily.

9 Mr. Schwarz. And is it your belief that if he had made  
10 any such statement to Mr. McNamara that he would have come to  
11 you and told you about it at some point?

12 Mr. Helms. I just don't know why he didn't, but I don't  
13 recall any such statement. And as I said, and I would like to  
14 repeat it, Mr. McCone had given me my job, he had promoted me,  
15 I felt close to him, I felt loyal to him, and I would not have  
16 violated an instruction he gave me if I could possibly have  
17 helped it.

18 Mr. Schwarz. But in any event, it is your best judgment  
19 that he did not indicate that he was opposed to assassinations?

20 Mr. Helms. Not to me.

21 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

22 Then I think this morning in discussing the question of  
23 whether or not you advised Mr. McCone, in another portion of  
24 your testimony you made the point that the general instruction  
25 was to get rid of Castro, number one.

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes. Get rid of the Castro government,  
2 including Castro, but get rid of the whole business.

3 Mr. Scwarz. Number two that that general instruction had  
4 no limitations placed upon it.

5 Mr. Helms. Well to say no limitations is not proper.  
6 It did not have any specific limitations, but the rule of reason  
7 would have prevailed that if somebody had some bright idea of  
8 putting an atomic bomb in Cuba, I certainly would have regarded  
9 that as well outside the permissible parameters and that it  
10 would have either have been stopped or it would have to have  
11 been taken to higher authority or something.

12 Mr. Scwarz. But is it your testimony that -- now let us  
13 take one of the things that the record suggests was actually  
14 attempted, which was to poison Mr. Castro by pills supplied  
15 from the CIA to a Mafia person to a Cuban exile leader and  
16 ultimately to be put in his food.

17 Is it your testimony that that activity was within the  
18 bounds of the general understanding that efforts were being  
19 made to get rid of the Castro government?

20 Mr. Helms. It is my recollection that the answer is  
21 affirmative.

22 Mr. Scwarz. And what is that based on?

23 Is it because -- how do you decide under what you said is  
24 a rule of reason, how do you distinguish now or how did you  
25 distinguish then between accepted activity within the general

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1 instruction and activity that you felt you could not have  
2 taken?

3 Mr. Helms. Well, you see, sir, we're having -- at least  
4 I'm having a difficult time here, because we have one episode  
5 in a long string of activities relating to Cuba that because it  
6 involves the specific word assassination or the elimination of  
7 an individual looms large in this investigation. I understand  
8 that and I understand the reasons for it. But the fact of the  
9 matter remains that with all of the other things that were going  
10 on at that time, I can only say to you as best I can recall  
11 it, that this seemed to be within the permissible part of this  
12 effort.

13 People were being killed in raids and various other ways  
14 and I can only say that bad as it may sound I don't have any  
15 recollection of thinking, well, Lord, this is well outside  
16 anything we were being permitted to do.

17 Mr. Smothers. May I raise a question here?

18 Mr. Ambassador, you indicated, and have throughout your  
19 testimony, that essentially you felt you had your marching  
20 orders, that you had a fairly accurate understanding of what  
21 the Special Group, the Director and other persons who may have  
22 been involved here in the leadership element wanted done. Is  
23 that correct?

24 Mr. Helms. I thought so.

25 Mr. Smothers. Is it also your understanding that Mr. McCone

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25 And he stuck to the line that they were putting

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1 them in when almost everyone else in the Federal government was  
2 saying they were not putting them in and wouldn't be putting  
3 them in and he turned out to be right.

4 And I think in all fairness to Mr. McCone, I think it's  
5 fair to be said that he made himself slightly unpopular with  
6 the President for having been right.

7 Mr. Smothers. This is a fairly small group we're talking  
8 about. Had he been hearing a different drummer from the Presi-  
9 dent and those that the President wanted, that the Special Group  
10 wanted, do you think you would have been aware of the fact that  
11 he was doing something other than that which had been  
12 sanctioned?

13 Mr. Helms. I do, Mr. Smothers, because I think all of us  
14 working on this thing thought that we were going to the same  
15 drummer, walking, marching to the same drummer.

16 Mr. Schwarz. Is it now your testimony that Mr. McCone  
17 was aware of the assassination efforts against Castro?

18 Mr. Helms. No, it is not my testimony, I haven't changed  
19 it. I just wanted to answer Mr. Smother's question. I'm not  
20 changing --

21 Mr. Schwarz. Well I'm not suggesting that you're changing  
22 your testimony. I just want to make sure what it is.

23 Is it your testimony that to the best of your knowledge  
24 Mr. McCone was aware of assassination attempts against Castro?

25 Mr. Helms. I don't know whether he was or not, Mr. Schwarz.

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1 Mr. McCone is an honorable man. He has done his own testifying,  
2 and all I can say is that I do not know specifically whether  
3 he was aware or not. I only can recall that he did not tell  
4 me that he was against it.

5 Mr. Smothers. Was totally dissatisfied?

6 Mr. Schwarz. Well, it is confusing, and Mr. Harvey  
7 stated in 1967 that for some reason, not explained, but for  
8 some reason, he decided and you agreed not to brief Mr. McCone  
9 about the efforts to assassinate Castro.

10 Let's see if we can come at that in a slightly different  
11 direction.

12 Can you think of any reason why Mr. Harvey would say that  
13 if it were not true?

14 Mr. Helms. No, I do not really know why he would say it  
15 if it were not true.

16 Mr. Schwarz. All right, now --

17 Mr. Helms. Or if he did not believe it to be true.

18 Mr. Schwarz. Recognizing that this may be a question on  
19 which you are not sure, what is your best judgment as to  
20 whether Mr. McCone knew about the attempts to assassinate  
21 Castro?

22 Mr. Helms. I have a hard time, this thirteen or so years  
23 after the event, believing that when Mr. McCone was involved  
24 in all of these meetings about trying to get rid of Castro that  
25 he could have ruled out in his mind that somebody might take a

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1 shot at him, or kill him in some fashion or other. I just  
2 cannot believe that that was not a considered part of the  
3 risks inherent in the operation we were undertaking.

4 Mr. Scwharz. Okay.

5 Now, let's turn to May, 1962 for a moment.

6 You knew, in May '62, that there was an ongoing relation-  
7 ship with the Mafia, with Mr. Roselli, is that right?

8 Mr. Helms. Yes.

9 Mr. Scwharz. And you knew -- whether or not you thought  
10 that was likely to succeed, you knew that it was an effort  
11 which involved an attempt to assassinate Mr. Castro?

12 Mr. Helms. Well, in any event, I was in touch with the  
13 Mafia. I knew that we were in touch with the Mafia.

14 Mr. Schwarz. But you did know also that the purpose of  
15 being in touch with the Mafia was to attempt to assassinate  
16 Castro?

17 Mr. Helms. Well, maybe it wasn't all that clear in May  
18 1962. This record is being made, you know, we're digging  
19 kind of a trench here by repetition, and I am not sure it's  
20 fair that we dig that trench.

21 Mr. Scwharz. Well, let's just say that the 1967 record  
22 shows that Harvey was told by Roselli that pills had been taken  
23 to Cuba for the purpose of assassinating Castro in May of 1962.  
24 We have gone over that before.

25 Mr. Kirbow. Mr. Chairman, would the General Counsel yield

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1 for just a moment?

2 I have listened to the testimony from this morning and  
3 this of this afternoon and in all fairness I cannot agree that  
4 that is what the witness said this morning. He has repeatedly  
5 this afternoon disavowed any personal knowledge of what the  
6 purpose, or that there were any pills delivered, or to whom.  
7 And I think that among us attorneys the best evidence of what is  
8 on the record is the document itself.

9 If he has no personal knowledge, I don't think we should  
10 subject the Ambassador to trying to authenticate a document  
11 about which he has and professes no personal knowledge. I think  
12 we put him in a position that is untenable in this regard.

13 I think that he has made it as clear as he could this  
14 afternoon that he had no personal knowledge of those events,  
15 that if Mr. Harvey said so, he believes that Mr. Harvey probably  
16 told the truth at that time.

17 Senator Hart of Colorado. Well, with all respect, I would  
18 like Counsel to continue the final question.

19 Mr. Schwarz. The document we're talking about was a 1967  
20 study and it was prepared for you so that you could brief  
21 President Johnson and did you ever tell anybody you thought  
22 there was something wrong about that, about the document, or  
23 that it was inaccurate?

24 Mr. Helms. No, as I testified this morning, Mr. Schwarz,  
25 I don't recall studying the document 100 percent from the

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1 standpoint of the accuracy of it, every sentence. I was trying  
2 to relate it to some information which I had been given, which  
3 it appeared in a newspaper to try and sort out the facts so  
4 that I could report to President Johnson certain events which  
5 occurred at certain places in time, and I do not recall that  
6 I ever went over this document line by line to check on the  
7 veracity of it, and I certainly never went behind the  
8 Inspectors -- in other words, I didn't talk to the people  
9 individually concerned whom they had interrogated.

10 Mr. Schwarz. But you don't recall telling anybody that  
11 there was something wrong with it.

12 Mr. Helms. No, I don't recall doing that.

13 Mr. Schwarz. Now the document indicates that in May 1962  
14 pills were in Cuba. Now, assuming that was so, the reporting  
15 chain was that Mr. Harvey was expected to report to you, is  
16 that right?

17 Mr. Helms. Yes.

18 Mr. Schwarz. And your assumption is that Mr. Harvey  
19 as a good lieutenant, did report to you, is that right?

20 Mr. Helms. Well he was reporting quite regularly what was  
21 going on. Whether he reported everything or not, I obviously  
22 don't know.

23 Mr. Schwarz. But is it your expectation that he would  
24 have reported a matter like the pills being in Cuba?

25 Mr. Helms. I would have thought so.

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1 conversation. And it seems odd to me only because, if the  
2 Attorney General had been briefed on something it would seem  
3 very logical that it would be very important to brief the  
4 Director at that time on the same thing.

5 Mr. Schwarz. Now Mr. Houston, who was the General Counsel,  
6 confirmed also that to the best of his recollection the Director  
7 was not briefed at his testimony here.

8 Would you look at Exhibit 4 now, which is a memorandum  
9 from Mr. Helms to the Director dated August 16, 1963, subject  
10 Sam Giancana.

11 Senator Mathias. Would Counsel tell us what page it is?

12 Mr. Schwarz. This is a separate document in your folders  
13 of this morning. It is dated August 16, 1963. It has a number  
14 of attachment, including a memo for the Attorney of May '62.

15 Now did you send that memo to Mr. McCone who was the  
16 Director in August 1963?

17 Mr. Helms. Yes, I would have thought so. It is signed  
18 with my initials and it is directed to him.

19 Mr. Schwarz. Was that sent because of a newspaper article  
20 that indicated some connection between the CIA and the Mafia?  
21 You were asked about that.

22 Mr. Helms. I think so. Something generated it.

23 Mr. Schwarz. Now Mr. McCone has testified and the 1967  
24 study states that this was the first occasion on which Mr. McCone  
25 was advised of the CIA's use of the Mafia. Does that accord

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1 with your recollection?

2 Mr. Helms. I don't know. I say here, I assume you're  
3 aware of the nature of the operation. I must have had some  
4 reason for the assumption.

5 Mr. Schwarz. Yes. He stated in that connection that you  
6 and he had a conversation on this day about it. Do you recall  
7 that?

8 Mr. Helms. No, but maybe that's what generated the  
9 memorandum.

10 Mr. Schwarz. Can we consider the attachment, which was  
11 May 14, 1962 and purports to be a memorandum for the record  
12 prepared by Sheffield Edwards reflecting the conversation  
13 between himself and Robert Kennedy and Mr. Houston, the General  
14 Counsel of the CIA?

15 Mr. Helms. That is what it appeared to be, and if Mr.  
16 Houston has testified to this, he's an honorable man, I would  
17 accept that.

18 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

19 The memorandum on May 14, 1962 describes the project as  
20 being completed, refers to it in the past tense.

21 Do you know why the Agency submitted to the Attorney General  
22 a memorandum purportedly reflecting a briefing given to the  
23 Attorney General which described the operation as in the past  
24 tense when the documents indicate that in fact it was ongoing,  
indeed ongoing during that very month?

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1 Mr. Helms. I am not at all familiar any longer with what  
2 causes this confusion. I hope that Mr. Harvey can straighten  
3 it out when you talk to him, but I am not able to tell you  
4 whether this operation was ongoing, whether it had really been  
5 stopped, whether it had been fairly stopped, whether there was  
6 fun and games going on between the officers involved as to, we  
7 will create a fiction that it stopped or go ahead with it.  
8 I just don't recall any of those things at all, I am sorry to  
9 say, and I think anything I say would be unhelpful.

10 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

11 At any point after you became Deputy Director of Plans  
12 and up to the point that you left that job to assume your  
13 higher job, did you instruct the Agency to in effect stand down  
14 from ongoing efforts to assassinate Mr. Castro?

15 Mr. Helms. I don't recall whether there was any time at  
16 which anything specific like that was said. As the operation  
17 was reduced in intensity and reduced in scope, my recollection is  
18 that we were continuing with a certain few operations of which  
19 this gangster business was not one of them. I realized that  
20 Harvey was in touch with Roselli for some time, but I do not  
21 have any impression any longer that after the first few months  
22 there was any real substance to this.

23 As a matter of fact, I have to this day wondered if there's  
24 any substance to it from the very beginning.

25 Mr. Schwarz. Well, let's leave out the Mafia question.

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1 The question I asked was, did you at any time instruct the  
2 Agency to stand down from the effort to assassinate Mr. Castro?

3 Mr. Helms. On Cuba?

4 Mr. Schwarz. Yes.

5 Mr. Helms. I don't recall having done so in any such  
6 specific terms.

7 Is there anything in the record which indicates that I  
8 did?

9 Mr. Schwarz. Well, I'm asking you whether you did.

10 Mr. Helms. I don't recall having done anything that  
11 specific about it.

12 Mr. Schwarz. Now the record demonstrates that in the fall  
13 of 1963 the Agency prepared -- and when I say the record, I  
14 mean the 1967 study.

15 Mr. Helms. Yes.

16 Mr. Schwarz. The Agency prepared a poison pen, a Papermate  
17 pen with a little syringe in it that could be used through  
18 poison to accomplish an assassination?

19 Did you authorize that activity?

20 Mr. Helms. I don't recall authorizing it, and it seems  
21 to me -- is this referring to the Cubela business?

22 Mr. Schwarz. Yes.

23 Mr. Helms. He's the one who was trying to find various  
24 means of getting rid of his arch-rival, Mr. Castro. The record  
25 does show that such a pen was taken to Paris, but I believe

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1 the facts are that this was never taken in the hand of Mr.  
2 Cubela anyplace. He simply did not accept it.

3 Mr. Schwarz. But the Agency prepared it for him, did it  
4 not?

5 Mr. Helms. It was taken to him, I believe.

6 Senator Morgan. Mr. Schwarz, could I interrupt?

7 Who was Mr. Cubela? Was he actually in the Cuban Army?

8 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir. He was, if not the titular head,  
9 at least he was one of the leaders of a group which had been  
10 opposed to Batista but was not the same group which Castro  
11 headed. In other words, this was another group that wanted to  
12 get rid of Batista, but also was intensely interested in taking  
13 over Cuba for itself.

14 Senator Morgan. Was he still in the Cuban Army at the  
15 time all of this was going on?

16 Mr. Helms. I can't recall, sir, whether he was actually  
17 in the Army or not, but he was certainly living in Havana and  
18 he had a post and was well-known to Mr. Castro.

19 Senator Morgan. Well now, this morning you referred to the  
20 fact, talking about the mood at the time --

21 Mr. Helms. Yes.

22 Senator Morgan. -- that Castro was lining everybody up  
23 against the wall and shooting them. They never did shoot him,  
24 did they?

25 Mr. Helms. I understand that he was pardoned in the end --

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1 not pardoned, excuse me. I believe that you're a lawyer and  
2 I'm not. I think the word is, he was supposed to go before the  
3 firing wall and Castro, I believe, put him in jail instead.

4 Senator Morgan. Were you ever satisfied as to who he was  
5 really working for?

6 Mr. Helms. I have never been satisfied with any of these  
7 operations as to exactly who was working for whom. If it was  
8 ever a frustrating time in my life, it was trying to get these  
9 Cubans to do the things they said they were going to do.

10 Senator Morgan. Excuse me. I just wanted to clean up that  
11 one point.

12 Mr. Scwarz. And after the November '63 meeting, at  
13 which at least he was offered a poison pen, and poison for  
14 it, did the Agency arrange to supply him with guns as well?

15 Mr. Helms. I don't know. I think that all through the  
16 Cubela period, there were requests from him for guns of various  
17 kinds, I think there were efforts made to provide-- lay down  
18 caches in Cuba. This is an ongoing preoccupation of providing  
19 caches of arms and explosives and so forth to various groups  
20 that we though might have some possibility of mounting an  
21 operation.

22 I wouldn't question that he had asked for guns and maybe  
23 in the end he was able to get some. Somehow, if my memory of  
24 reading this is correct, he was later put in touch with a fellow  
25 named Artime who was a Cuban in Florida, and the two were sort

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1 of set to work together.

2 Is it not true that when he eventually did get some guns  
3 or something he got them from Artime rather than the CIA case  
4 officer?

5 Mr. Schwarz. And that the CIA arranged that that would  
6 happen.

7 Mr. Helms. Well, I think they put the deal together, but  
8 I don't know whether the Agency actually arranged it or not.

9 Mr. Schwarz. But Cubela was an agent -- now agent may  
10 be the wrong word -- Cubela was a person with whom the Agency  
11 had contact.

12 Mr. Helms. That's right.

13 Mr. Schwarz. And Cubela was a person for whom the Agency  
14 prepared a poison pen and some poison.

15 Mr. Helms. Well, I think I would like -- my perception of  
16 what happened under those circumstances is an accurate one.  
17 The Agency volunteered this piece of equipment rather than his  
18 having specifically asked for it.

19 Mr. Schwarz. And the purpose, if he had accepted, was to  
20 assassinate?

21 Mr. Helms. Was to take care of a request from him that he  
22 had some device for getting rid of Castro, for killing him,  
23 murdering him, whatever the case may be.

24 Mr. Schwarz. Would you turn in that connection to the  
25 Appendix to the report which is a letter dated March 7, 1966

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1 from yourself to the Honorable Dean Rusk, Secretary of State.

2 Mr. Helms. Yes, I have it.

3 Mr. Schwarz. Okay.

4 That is a letter referring to Mr. Cubela's arrest, isn't  
5 it, by the Cuban government?

6 Mr. Helms. Yes, the arrest of Cubela Secades and Ramon  
7 Tomas Guin Diaz.

8 Mr. Schwarz. After their arrest, and based apparently upon  
9 some judicial proceedings, the Cuban Press alleged that they  
10 had been in contact with the CIA in efforts to assassinate  
11 Castro.

12 Is that right?

13 Mr. Helms. Yes, I guess. Is this what the Press said?  
14 Because I notice that the sentence that you're coming to, I  
15 assume, is the one that says the Agency said was not involved  
16 with either of these.

17 Mr. Schwarz. Why don't you read that into the record?

18 Mr. Helms. "The Agency was not involved in either of  
19 these two men in a plot to assassinate Fidel Castro as claimed  
20 in the Prensa Latina news release, nor did it ever encourage  
21 either of these two persons to attempt such an act."

22 Mr. Schwarz. The question is, was that true when you  
23 made that comment to Mr. Rusk?

24 Mr. Helms. Well, interestingly enough, when I read that  
25 just recently, certainly my recollection was that he was not

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1 encouraged to do it, he was the one that was doing all of the  
2 requesting and asking and pushing and so forth with respect to  
3 this issue. But it seems to me that in light of all the  
4 information which is in the 1967 memorandum, this is an inaccurate  
5 statement.

6 Yesterday, I called up the man who recommended my signature  
7 underneath there, Mr. Karamessines, and asked if he had any  
8 recollection of why we had stated the thing this way, and he  
9 said he didn't know either. And it may be until we conducted  
10 that investigation somewhat later we didn't have the facts  
11 straight, or maybe we had the facts straight then, but we did  
12 not have them straight later.

13 In any event, this is not truthful in the light of the '67  
14 memoranda and I don't know why and he does not know why.

15 Senator Baker. Is that Tom Karamessines?

16 Mr. Helms. Yes.

17 Mr. Schwarz. Now, Mr. Fitzgerald was the man who worked  
18 for you, Desmond Fitzgerald?

19 Mr. Helms. Yes, he succeeded Mr. Harvey on these Cuban  
20 operations.

21 Mr. Schwarz. And he is now dead?

22 Mr. Helms. He's dead.

23 Mr. Schwarz. Was he someone who had a close personal  
24 relationship as well as a professional relationship with you?

25 Mr. Helms. Yes, he did, and he did also with the Attorney

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1 General. He was a Harvard College graduate and Harvard Law  
2 School graduate, and I believe they had some things in common,  
3 but I certainly knew him and saw his family frequently.

4 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

5 Now, if we both look at pages 88 and 89 of the report,  
6 under the date October 29, 1963 --

7 Mr. Helms. 88 and 997

8 Mr. Schwarz. Pages 88 and 89.

9 Mr. Helms. I am there.

10 Mr. Schwarz. Our copy has a number of blanks of names.

11 Mr. Helms. Yes.

12 Mr. Schwarz. Could you read into the record what appears  
13 under that date entry? And if you want to use a code name for  
14 someone instead of an actual name, I don't object if the  
15 Committee doesn't object.

16 Mr. Helms. Where do you want me to start reading?

17 Mr. Schwarz. Under the entry 29 October 1963.

18 Mr. Helms. "Desmond Fitzgerald,, then Chief SAS who was  
19 going to Paris on other business arranged to meet with Cubela  
20 to give him the assurances he sought. The contact plan for  
21 the meeting, a copy of which is in the AMLASH file has this  
22 to say on the cover. "Fitzgerald will represent self as  
23 personal representative of Robert F. Kennedy who travelled to  
24 Paris for specific purpose meeting Cubela and giving him  
25 assurances of full U.S. support with a change of the present

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1 government in Cuba.' According to Fitzgerald, he discussed the  
2 planned meeting with the DDP (Helms) who decided it was not  
3 necessary to seek approval from Robert Kennedy for Fitzgerald  
4 to speak in his name."

5 Mr. Schwarz. All right.

6 First, do you recall that conversation with Mr. Fitzgerald?

7 Mr. Helms. No, I do not recall the conversation.

8 Mr. Schwarz. Are you able to cast any light upon the  
9 meaning of the statement purportedly made by you that it was  
10 not necessary to seek approval from Robert Kennedy for Fitzgerald  
11 to speak in his name?

12 Mr. Helms. I don't think that's the way I would have  
13 phrased it if I had been asked at the time, and this meeting  
14 did indeed take place. What I would like to say was, that  
15 given this Cuban of his standing and all the history of the  
16 relationship of trying to find someone inside Cuba who might  
17 head a government and have a group to replace Castro.

18 This was so central to the whole theme of everything we  
19 had been trying to do, that I find it totally unnecessary to  
20 ask Robert Kennedy at that point, should we go ahead with this.  
21 This is obviously what he had been pushing, what everybody had  
22 been pushing for us to try to do, and it is in that context that  
23 I would have made some remark like this.

24 It wasn't that I was being smart or tricky or hiding  
25 anything. I just thought this is exactly the kind of thing

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1 I had been asked -- he's been asking us to do, let's get on  
2 with doing it.

3 Senator Morgan. Mr. Chairman, if I may ask a question,  
4 mainly for the purposes of making a note in the record, Mr.  
5 Ambassador, it would be fair to assume then that if Mr.  
6 Fitzgerald carried out the instructions of advising the Cuban  
7 that he was there as a representative of Robert Kennedy that--  
8 to assume that Castro -- or if he in fact was working for  
9 Castro -- thought that the Kennedys had ordered his assassina-  
10 tion, whether or not they were aware of it or not, would it?

11 Mr. Helms. Sir, when you spoke to me a moment ago about  
12 dealing with these Cubans and who they were working for, and  
13 so forth, I don't know and I don't recall that as of this  
14 particular point there seemed to be any doubt that Cubela wasn't  
15 representing what he claimed to represent, which was a man who  
16 would like to take Mr. Castro's place.

17 In other words, I do not recall that we would have thought  
18 that he was reporting to Castro on his connections with U.S.  
19 agents in Paris.

20 Senator Morgan. One other point.

21 He at one time was arrested and confessed?

22 Mr. Helms. But that is later.

23 Senator Morgan. But at least this was information that  
24 was given to him, was that Robert Kennedy knew what was being  
25 done?

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1 Mr. Helms. You know, it's a peculiar thing, Senator  
2 Morgan, I don't -- I am not familiar enough in detail with all  
3 of the files and telegrams and so forth at the time, but it  
4 seems to me that what Cubela subsequently admitted to when he  
5 was try was the latter phase of the operation. I don't know  
6 that he really went back to the beginning of the operation and  
7 covered all of these things. So that this particular contact  
8 might not necessarily have been in his confession, I believe.

9 Now if I'm wrong, would one of you straighten me out?

10 Mr. Schwarz. Well, I think one thing is worth saying.

11 According to the reports that the CIA got, Mr. Cubela  
12 confessed to an effort to assassinate Castro, but according to  
13 the reports they got, he did not confess to the involvement of  
14 the Central Intelligence Agency.

15 Senator Morgan. Mr. Chairman, one point I was trying to  
16 make for future reference was that if he was in fact double  
17 agent, then we did lead Castro to believe that it was a plot,  
18 that the Kennedys knew of it, whether they did or not. That is  
19 the point I wanted for the record.

20 Senator Baker. I think you might also, for future reference,  
21 point out that according to newspaper accounts, at least, Castro  
22 claims to have known and claims to be in a position to supply  
23 us information about it.

24 Mr. Schwarz. Although I'm not sure he's put a date on it,  
25 but he has said that.

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1 Senator Baker. I wonder how we could go about doing  
2 that. I wonder what he does know.

3 Senator Morgan. How about you as the Chairman of a  
4 delegation go down there.

5 Senator Baker. No, I would yield to you.

6 Senator Morgan. Well, I apologize for taking the Committee's  
7 time, but for me this is really a very crucial point, because  
8 I cannot see how a man who had access going in and out of  
9 Havana to France and all of these other places, I really don't  
10 see how we could have trusted him that much. Of course, I  
11 know you have to trust somebody, and I think if this is a very  
12 real possibility, then we ought to pursue it, and look at it  
13 as we go along in the investigation.

14 Mr. Schwarz. How about as a general problem, Mr. Helms,  
15 how do you know when someone says they're a double agent that  
16 they're not a triple agent, or do you?

17 Mr. Helms. This is one of the most difficult and tricky  
18 aspects of secret intelligence work, and there isn't anybody  
19 who's been in it very long who hasn't been tricked once, twice  
20 maybe many, many times. And you just start each time afresh  
21 taking the same chances and hazards that you took the time  
22 before. And I must confess that it's a most extraordinarily  
23 frustrating business.

24 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, may I ask Mr. Helms a question  
25 in that respect?

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1 It has no doubt happened, but could you give me some  
2 estimate of how many times we have pretty good evidence that  
3 say the KGB infiltrated the CIA?

4 Mr. Helms. Well, Senator Baker, I don't know of any place  
5 where the KGB successfully infiltrated the CIA. Certainly we  
6 found traces of efforts, but may I just say, which I think will  
7 answer your question, during the years that I was Director,  
8 hardly a day passed when I walked into the office that I didn't  
9 wonder if that was going to be the day when somebody was going  
10 to come up with the fact that there was somebody in that  
11 building who had been recruited by the Soviets. I mean, this  
12 is the nightmare of a Director of Central Intelligence.

13 Senator Baker. I don't mean to be spectacular and I'll  
14 ask you one more question in that respect.

15 The rumor is rampant in the Cloakrooms of the Congress  
16 that there were KGB penetrations of Congressional offices, or  
17 KGB electronic intercepts of Congressional conversations while  
18 you were DCI or otherwise. Do you have any information on  
19 either one of those things?

20 Mr. Helms. No, sir. I never saw any reports on that.  
21 At least that I can recollect, Senator Baker. I should be  
22 careful about being categorical.

23 Senator Baker. I understand. I understand.

24 Mr. Schwarz. Were you aware in the fall of '63 that, I  
25 guess peace feelers is the wrong word, but there was effort

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1 underway to try and reach some kind of accomodation with Mr.  
2 Castro?

3 Mr. Helms. In '63?

4 Mr. Schwarz. Yes, in the fall of '63.

5 Mr. Helms. I don't recall that. I thought -- when was  
6 the prisoner exchange? When did that take place? In other  
7 words, the negotiations to get the prisoners of the brigade out  
8 of Cuba in exchange for medicines and so forth?

9 Mr. Schwarz. I think that they were in their height in  
10 '62 and early '63. The tractors and the drugs, and so forth.

11 Mr. Helms. But I don't recall these peace feelers.

12 Mr. Schwarz. Well, let's see if one thing will trigger a  
13 recollection in your mind.

14 Do you recall the name of a French journalist, Jean Daniel  
15 who was in Cuba in the fall of '63, allegedly carrying messages  
16 of good will to Mr. Castro?

17 Mr. Helms. On whose behalf?

18 Mr. Schwarz. On the behalf of the United States govern-  
19 ment.

20 Mr. Helms. I don't recall it, sir. I think the name Jean  
21 Daniel I have heard, but I do not recall him in this capacity.

22 Mr. Schwarz. I have just got one more question on the  
23 fall of '63.

24 The record shows that a crash effort was made to produce a  
25 poison pen and a poison to be used in it which could be given to

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20 Senator Hart of Colorado. I would only add one remark to  
21 the record, pursuant to Senator Morgan's observation, that is  
22 Cubela needn't have been a double agent to have created the  
23 impression in Mr. Castro's mind that the Kennedys themselves  
24 were behind this assassination attempt, if he just caved in  
25 under interrogation himself and he believed he was receiving his

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1 orders from them, the same effect would be achieved.

2 Senator Morgan. Or if he had just talked to one of his  
3 friends as we talked this morning, he can't keep a secret, he  
4 undoubtedly was talking to somebody in Cuba.

5 Senator Mathias. I think Senator Morgan might have gotten  
6 the point, just a little boasting.

7 Senator Morgan. That's right. It's logical the man would  
8 have done a little boasting.

9 Senator Schweiker. I have one question on Castro.

10 Mr. Helms, if in fact Castro did know of these plots, and  
11 it's hard for me to understand that he did not, given all the  
12 facts that we have seen, might this not have precipitated a  
13 climate hounded by the Bay of Pigs that really fostered the  
14 Cuban missile crisis that made Castro go out looking for ways  
15 to get even with us? Is not that a real possibility, that if  
16 in fact we did know of our attempts to kill him?

17 Mr. Helms. Yes, but -- I had always understood that the  
18 Cuban missile crisis was something that was generated by the  
19 Soviets and their desires and that they approached Castro to  
20 do this. Maybe his willingness to go along might have been  
21 affected by it, but there cannot be the slightest doubt that  
22 Castro, when he came to power, must have been keenly aware that  
23 the American government was very antipathetic to him in every  
24 conceivable way.

25 Senator Schweiker: Well, just as you were describing a

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1 moment ago, your frustration and period of unhappiness of  
2 being unable to deal with Castro and the Castro regime, it would  
3 seem to me that you put it on the other foot and that kind of  
4 bitterness and hostility on the receiving end would certainly  
5 engender all sorts of brainstorming and thinking how to get  
6 even and the Soviets come in and say, well, we'd like to put  
7 missiles in, and it would just seem to me that the assassination  
8 attempts, therefore, may well have helped to trigger it, compounded by  
9 the Bay of Pigs, and going back to the point you made earlier  
10 about you wondered about the futility of assassination attempts,  
11 I wonder about the equal and opposite reaction -- the law of  
12 physics, for every action there is an opposite and equal  
13 reaction -- by our assassination attempts or indirect involvement  
14 or direct we certainly set up ourselves for a whiplash foreign  
15 policy that could trigger a nuclear war. I think there are some  
16 real dangers from this.

17 I am glad to hear you say your earlier statement, but it  
18 just seems to me it could well have taken place right in the  
19 Cuban missile crisis itself.

20 You would agree, I would assume, that if in fact he found  
21 out we were trying to kill him, it certainly would have made  
22 him rather receptive to the Russian offer of missiles, I would  
23 assume.

24 Mr. Helms. Sir, I would think it would be fair to say that  
25 Fidel Castro was aware that there were hundreds of Cuban exiles

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1 who would have been delighted at the opportunity of disposing  
2 of him, let alone of the United States government. I think he  
3 was keenly aware that he was a target twenty-four hours a day.

4 Senator Schweiker. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

5 Senator Morgan. Mr. Helms, one other observation and  
6 then I'm going to leave, and I apologize for doing it, but  
7 since we aren't taking notes, the only way I know to jog my  
8 memory later on is to put it in the record.

9 If on the very day that the President was assassinated,  
10 we were talking with Cubela in Paris and telling him that the  
11 pen was being given to him with the full knowledge of Robert  
12 Kennedy, it would seem clear to me that sometime in prior  
13 negotiations that it would have been conveyed to him that  
14 Robert Kennedy had knowledge of what was going on, whether -- I'm  
15 not saying Kennedy did or not, but I'm saying it's fair to as-  
16 sume that Cubela thought that Kennedy was a part of it, and  
17 therefore even in boasting or as double-agent for some time  
18 prior to the Kennedy assassination, may very well have dropped  
19 the word that they were involved.

20 Mr. Helms. Sir, before I answer this question, this  
21 meeting Fitzgerald had was when?

22 Senator Morgan. Was on the day the President was  
23 assassinated.

24 Mr. Schwarz. The poison pen was offered on November 22.  
25 the Fitzgerald meeting is in the latter part of October.

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1 Mr. Helms. I see, it's two or three weeks before.

2 Mr. Schwarz. But the poison pen was passed on November  
3 22.

4 Senator Morgan. That would have been the day that  
5 Fitzgerald would have advised him.

6 Mr. Schwarz. There were two meetings at least with  
7 Cubela. The first meeting is Fitzgerald giving him the advice  
8 of the U.S. government is behind him --

9 Senator Baker. Well, make sure we get the record straight  
10 here. Someplace in this file, I saw the breathless statement  
11 that the very day that President Kennedy was shot in Dallas, we  
12 were in Paris offering some sort of assistance to somebody.

13 Mr. Schwarz. It's just that there are two different  
14 meetings, Senator. There's one -- that day is the day the  
15 poison pen --

16 Senator Schweiker. A preliminary meeting and a passing  
17 meeting.

18 Mr. Schwarz. That's exactly right.

19 Senator Morgan. How long was the preliminary meeting  
20 before the passing meeting?

21 Mr. Schwarz. It was 29 October '63.

22 Senator Morgan. In other words, it was about a month before  
23 the actual passing, so that makes my suspicions even more.

24 Mr. Helms. But in the month before, I don't think we  
25 should go beyond what's written down here, because we've got to

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1 accept something as our series of facts. Cubala did not know  
2 what he was going to get in the October meeting at the time  
3 that he met with Fitzgerald in October.

4 Senator Baker. He knew he was going to get something.

5 Mr. Helms. Well, in other words, he didn't know whether  
6 he was going to get anything or not.

7 Mr. Smothers. If we consider this meeting to be the  
8 possible source of information against Kennedy, mightn't we be  
9 a little bit off the track?

10 Isn't it true, Mr. Ambassador, that Mr. Kennedy had himself  
11 indicated that he desired contact with a Mafia source? Hadn't  
12 he put out a search for Mafia people that might be of help?

13 Mr. Helms. Well, at one time that's correct, he suggested  
14 we might have a look at Underworld figures and so on. I'm not  
15 sure exactly in what part of the Mongoose or subsequent  
16 operations this came up, but I believe at one time in connection  
17 with the Cuban task force activities there was a case officer  
18 actually assigned pursuant to the suggestion to check in New  
19 York, Chicago, places like that and see if there were any  
20 Underworld figures who had ties into Cuba.

21 Mr. Smothers. So pursuant to Mr. Kennedy's request, a  
22 CIA case officer actually began a search for the Underworld,  
23 the Mafia contacts?

24 Mr. Helms. Underworld contacts, I'm not sure they were  
25 Mafia or not.

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1 Mr. Smothers. But persons who had had prior dealings in  
2 Cuba?

3 Mr. Helms. That is my recollection.

4 Some of these facts, I think if you want to run them down,  
5 his recollection is much better than mine, you might try Mr.  
6 Halperin or some of the people who were intimately involved in  
7 the day to day work of this task force who are still alive.  
8 I mean, Harvey is one, but maybe someone from the staff to talk  
9 to --

10 Senator Baker. Which Halperin is this?

11 Mr. Helms. It's Samuel Halperin. It's not anybody who's  
12 known to you. He's now retired from the Agency, but he was  
13 involved in these activities.

14 Mr. Schwarz. Is he the case officer who was assigned on  
15 the Mafia case, is that what you're saying?

16 Mr. Helms. No, he was not. He was in the operation, but  
17 he recalls this.

18 Mr. Schwarz. He recalls the name that you just said?

19 Mr. Helms. Yes.

20 Mr. Schwarz. What was the name of the case officer?

21 Mr. Helms. I don't know. As a matter of fact, the reason  
22 I don't know is that he was giving me, when we chatted about  
23 this for a moment, he was laughing and gave the nickname that  
24 the case officer was given, and I don't remember what his  
25 real name was.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. What was the nickname?

2 Mr. Helms. I have even forgot that. Machiols, or Paqiols,  
3 or some strange Italian name tying into the Mafia business.

4 Mr. Smothers. Do you recall, Mr. Ambassador, about the  
5 timeframe of this request? How long before the events that  
6 we're talking about now in October or November of '63 did this  
7 occur?

8 Mr. Helms. I don't know. I don't know at what period in  
9 the span this matter came up. I'm sorry, I don't.

10 Mr. Smothers. Do you recall during what phase of the  
11 deliberations in the Special Group it might have come up?

12 Mr. Helms. No, I don't. Please, I think honestly you  
13 would be much better advised to ask him and pursue it with him.  
14 Maybe he will remember, but I cannot help.

15 Mr. Smothers. But at the time of your meeting with  
16 Fitzgerald, it was your understanding then that you weren't  
17 saying anything different from what Mr. Kennedy's desire's  
18 were, Robert Kennedy's?

19 Mr. Helms. Well, this seemed to us to be -- this Cubela  
20 business, if it were real and he had the courage that he claimed  
21 to have, it was what we had been looking for all of this time,  
22 of a fellow that constituted an asset inside Cuba who was able  
23 to move in the streets of Havana, had friends, associates,  
24 supporters, who might be of some real use to us. And this  
25 killing business, which was on his mind, and his desire to get

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1 rid of Castro this way, was no part of our plan.

2       Actually, if I recall this, and the Cubela case is one I  
3 do vaguely refer to, you know -- well, we would not only get  
4 good intelligence from him, he was the asset we were looking for.  
5 We didn't want him to blow himself or blow anything else by  
6 getting involved in something like this and have it fail. We  
7 wanted him to stay in place.

8       Mr. Smothers. And I think what you're saying is that with  
9 respect to your advise to Fitzgerald regarding the need to tell  
10 Mr. Kennedy, were you simply exercising a management kind of  
11 judgment simply saying you don't need to go to him with?  
12 This is something I'm sure he's in agreement with?

13       Mr. Helms. Sir, as best as I can recall this kind of  
14 thing, Fitzgerald and I having both of us talked to Robert  
15 Kennedy at various times, this would have been the kind of a  
16 conversation where we would have agreed that, isn't this what  
17 this has all been about. I mean, do you really want me to go  
18 to all of the trouble to go down to the Department of Justice  
19 and go over the same ground again here. Go ahead and say that  
20 from the standpoint of political support, the United States  
21 government will be behind you if you are successful. This had  
22 nothing to do with killings. This had only to do with the  
23 political action part of it.

24       Mr. Smothers. Let me go back for a moment if I might to  
25 another instance where we raised questions about the failure to

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25 Mr. Madigan. Would that necessarily exclude assassination.

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1 Mr. Ambassador?

2 Mr. Helms. May I include again that Major Cubela's  
3 desire for these weapons and this desire of his to hit Castro  
4 by murder or killing was not part of our desires at all. This  
5 was going to ruin our whole plan, if he insisted on this. And  
6 I think you'll find if you get all of the telegrams, you'll  
7 find that there was an enormous amount of temporizing with this  
8 fellow to keep him on the team, to keep him working away at the  
9 job, but to try and persuade him that this was not the way to  
10 go about it.

11 I think this has to show in the record, because Cubela  
12 AMLASH must have loomed reasonably large in this whole Cuban  
13 operation because it was one of the few live ones we got ahold  
14 of.

15 Mr. Schwarz. You mean you wanted him as a spy or a source  
16 of information as opposed to a killer?

17 Mr. Helms. We wanted him as a spy, as a political action  
18 agent. We didn't want him to go around killing people.

19 Senator Baker. What did you give him the pen for?

20 Mr. Helms. Because he was insisting on something and this  
21 was a temporizing gesture rather than giving him some kind of  
22 a gun he had asked for, as I recall.

23 The question was how do you keep this fellow on the track,  
24 how do you keep him going with you. He keeps insisting he  
25 wants this, he wants that, he wants the other thing, and

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1 we want you to go back and do X.

2 Senator Baker. Let me back up and take a run at this for  
3 just about thirty seconds.

4 Mr. Helms. Certainly.

5 Senator Baker. How many plans do you know of in the  
6 Agency that were mounted to assassinate Fidel Castro?

7 Mr. Helms. I don't have any way of coming up with any  
8 other than the ones we have discussed.

9 Senator Baker. Well, how many is that? Can Counsel tell  
10 me? Nine is the figure that comes to mind.

11 Mr. Schwarz. I would say a lot, Senator.

12 Senator Baker. Well, let's see. There was the poison in  
13 the diving suit. There was the depilatory to make his beard  
14 fall off. There were the arms caches, the explosive sea shells,  
15 the cigars, the poison pills, the rifles --

16 Mr. Schwarz. The poison pen.

17 Senator Baker. -- the poison Papermate ballpoint. I  
18 don't know how many that is, but there are a great number. But  
19 there was no question on earth that they were to kill Fidel  
20 Castro, is that true?

21 Mr. Helms. But, sir, the diving suit never went anyplace.  
22 It was never put in anybody's hands. It was just an idea that  
23 somebody had.

24 Mr. Schwarz. But it was bought and the poison was put  
25 inside it.

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes, but it never left the laboratory in  
2 Washington, D.C.

3 And the shell, this was a cock-eyed idea from the outset.  
4 This was the highly intensive imagination of a fellow who  
5 thought, well why wouldn't this be a great idea, but a totally  
6 impractical thing. I mean, I cannot call that a plot.

7 Senator Baker. But there are others, let's not call it a  
8 plot, call it playing with fire, if you want to, but it's sort  
9 of a dangerous thing to do even, just to contemplate with any  
10 official sanction of an organization, killing someone else.

11 It doesn't make any difference really how far it went.  
12 The point I'm trying to make is, it seems to me a long jump  
13 from nine plans to kill Fidel Castro by assassination to saying  
14 that we gave the poison pen to a fellow not to kill him, but it  
15 was to placate him.

16 Mr. Helms. Well, maybe I read these words wrong, and maybe  
17 my recollection at the time is imperfect. But I thought that  
18 this operation was really designed to not only get information  
19 through Major Cubela, but to try and organize a political  
20 action operation inside Havana and at no time was it the idea  
21 of his case officers, or those people in the chain behind,  
22 to use him to assassinate Castro. These ideas came from him  
23 and he kept raising them at these meetings.

24 Am I wrong? The telegrams must show something. Do you  
25 have the telegrams from that period?

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1 Mr. Schwarz. To characterize the record is very hard.  
2 The Ambassador is right.

3 Senator Schweiker. Well, Mr. Ambassador, isn't what  
4 you're saying again and again, as I listen to you on the  
5 subject, sure you scratched some of these on the drawing board,  
6 sure you scratched a few more after you left the door and sure  
7 you scratched a few more after they left for Paris and sure you  
8 scratched a few more here, but if you had thought that one of  
9 them would have worked then it would have been go, and that  
10 really is what the issue here.

11 I mean everytime you say you scratched something or it  
12 didn't get out of the bottle, we didn't let the horse out, only  
13 because it was either hairbrained, dimwitted or numbskulled,  
14 not because that wasn't the objective. So it becomes a little  
15 bit irrelevant to me whether it was scratched here or there.  
16 If your objective was go and you had a good plan you would  
17 have gone, but you didn't have a good plan.

18 Isn't that what you are telling us?

19 Mr. Helms. Sir, I thought that all of this testimony  
20 indicated we thought that these things we were trying to do  
21 were within what we had been told to do.

22 Senator Schweiker. But every time we pin you down on one  
23 of these other plots, you discount it and in essence say, well  
24 that really doesn't count, when in fact it does count. The  
25 only thing that didn't count was that it probably wasn't

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1 workable so you discarded it. That is where we have trouble  
2 communicating.

3 Mr. Helms. Well, sir, I didn't realize I was making any  
4 trouble. I thought that what we were trying to do was to use  
5 me for my perceptions of what I thought the truth was at the  
6 time. I'm doing my best.

7 Senator Baker. Mr. Chairman, if the Senator would yield,  
8 I apologize for injecting a discordant note into otherwise I  
9 think a very, very cooperative session and I think the best way  
10 to get us back on the track is for me to ask this question, if  
11 I may.

12 Was it in your view the general policy of the government  
13 of the United States as proposed to be implemented by the CIA  
14 to kill Fidel Castro?

15 Mr. Helms. I believe it was the policy at the time to get  
16 rid of Castro and if killing him was one of the things that was  
17 to be done in this connection, that was within what was  
18 expected.

19 Senator Baker. And without, as you say, digging the trench  
20 by repetition, you felt that the Agency was acting fully within  
21 the scope of its authority as understood by the Agency?

22 Mr. Helms. Yes, Senator Baker, that is my perception.

23 Senator Baker. Thank you.

24 Senator Hart of Michigan. Did you ever obtain clearance for  
25 any one of the nine, six, ten or twelve that we talked about?

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1 Mr. Helms. I don't know what -- I know, sir, this Cubela  
2 operation must have been a part of the Special Group delibera-  
3 tions because it went on so long and it went through various  
4 phases, and I don't know whether you have those records or not,  
5 but I would have thought that it would be there, and every  
6 aspect of it I would have thought would have been in there.

7 Is this not the case, Counsel?

8 Mr. Madigan. We haven't gotten those records.

9 Senator Baker. I understand we have requested those  
10 records, Mr. Helms, but we haven't received them.

11 Could you give us any advice on where we might find those  
12 records?

13 Mr. Helms. I don't any longer know under whose aegis those  
14 are. Those were, I think, at one time National Security work  
15 or regarded as that. Whether they were stored in the National  
16 Security Council files or the Agency files, I don't know.

17 Senator Baker. Thank you, sir.

18 Mr. Schwarz. Did you look at any of them in preparing for  
19 this testimony?

20 Mr. Helms. No. I don't even know where they are,  
21 Counsel.

22 Mr. Schwarz. After President Kennedy was assassinated on  
23 November 22, 1963 and President Johnson took over, the record  
24 indicates some efforts through Mr. Cubela continued.

25 Now, did the Agency regard whatever marching orders they

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24 Senator Hart of Michigan. Are there any further questions  
25 on Castro?



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1 Mr. Schwarz. You remember Mr. Lumumba?

2 Senator Baker. Let me ask one question. I hate to bring  
3 it up, but I can't resist, since the Ambassador is here and  
4 will not be back anytime soon.

5 To advert to another unhappy period in our life, to go  
6 back to the Watergate hearings, and particularly to the White  
7 House tapes, there was a conversation recorded on those tapes  
8 which was released dated June 23, 1972 which was of general  
9 interest, but one of the things in that tape was a remark  
10 attributed to President Nixon having to do with the cooperation  
11 of the CIA and saying, in effect, that we've done a lot of  
12 things, or protected Helms from a lot of things.

13 Do you have any idea of what he's talking about?

14 Mr. Helms. I have never known, Senator Baker, I have ever  
15 gotten any personal courtesies from President Nixon that I was  
16 aware of. I don't know that he ever interceded for me anyplace  
17 that I know of except to the extent that as President of the  
18 United States and in connection with my official duties he  
19 might have supported a request I had for some assistance in  
20 Laos for some money or something of this kind.

21 But when I read that on that tape I could hardly believe  
22 my eyes, because I had no idea what he was referring to.

23 Senator Baker. Thank you, sir.

24 Mr. Schwarz. I wonder if before turning to Lumumba we  
25 could pick up something relating to your relationship with

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1 President Nixon since that has been raised.

2 The Senators each have a book headed mail opening.

3 I have placed before Mr. Helms the cover two pages and  
4 pages 29 and 30 from a document entitled "Special Report,  
5 Interagency Committee on Intelligence Ad Hoc" dated June, 1970  
6 showing on the second page that you signed that report prepared  
7 for the President.

8 Now is that the report that is referred to as the so-called  
9 Huston Plan?

10 Mr. Helms. If you say it is, I have no reason to quarrel  
11 with it. I just don't remember the official name of that  
12 report, and certainly if it says I signed some report here,  
13 and that's the report, then let us agree that it is.

14 Mr. Schwarz. And you do recall, we talked about it  
15 this morning, that there was an effort in the summer of 1970  
16 that resulted in a document of this sort, right?

17 Mr. Helms. Yes.

18 Mr. Schwarz. Okay.

19 Now, that was prepared at the request of President Nixon  
20 for advice on whether there were threats that were not  
21 adequately being met by the intelligence community and whether  
22 there were restrictions on the techniques available to the  
23 intelligence community that might be changed to make it more  
24 efficient, is that correct?

25

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1 Mr. Helms. My recollection of what they were direct-  
2 ing their attention to was improved and more effective in-  
3 formation developed on domestic affairs in the United States  
4 on not only dissidents but penetrations of foreign intelli-  
5 gence services and activities of foreign intelligence ser-  
6 vices, and so forth. I don't say that other things aren't  
7 covered in the report but my recollection of what the whole  
8 purpose of the exercise was to try to improve coverage in the  
9 domestic field.

10 Mr. Schwarz. And in that connection to tell the Presi-  
11 dent whether there were certain restrictions on the ability  
12 of the intelligence agencies to operate that might be lifted:  
13 is that right?

14 Mr. Helms. Yes, it strikes me that what he had asked  
15 for originally was for a wide-ranging report on all of the  
16 things that got in the way of improving this domestic  
17 coverage from the FBI and NSA and so forth so he could consi-  
18 der what these various obstacles were or were considered to  
19 be, such as laws and traditions and things of that kind.

20 Mr. Schwarz. One of the techniques which the Committee,  
21 including yourself focussed on, was the one called mail  
22 coverage; is that right?

23 Mr. Helms. I assume so. Yes, we have a heading here  
24 mail coverage, right.

25 Mr. Schwarz. And --

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1 Mr. Helms. That is part of, a larger part of the  
2 document. It is (C) and I don't have (B) and (A), what came  
3 before it.

4 Mr. Schwarz. I think breaking and entering and cer-  
5 tain kinds of code restrictions on the NSA.

6 Mr. Helms. I see.

7 Mr. Schwarz. Mail coverage was divided into two  
8 types, covert and routine; is that right?

9 Mr. Helms. This is what it says. I must say these are  
10 distinctions, which are pretty esoteric, let's accept them.

11 Mr. Schwarz. And routine meant just looking at the  
12 envelope, and covert involved opening the letters?

13 Mr. Helms. Yes, let's accept this definition here.  
14 These are new terms to me really and, in other words, they  
15 are not famous trade terms.

16 Mr. Schwarz. In any event, we will accept when it  
17 says covert it means opening the letters?

18 Mr. Helms. I guess so.

19 Mr. Schwarz. Is that what it says in the first  
20 paragraph?

21 Mr. Helms. Covert mail coverage also known  
22 as sophisticated mail coverage or flaps and seals, entirely  
23 surreptitious screening and may include opening and examina-  
24 tion.

25 Mr. Schwarz. Of domestic and foreign mail?

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

2 Mr. Schwarz. You told the President, President Nixon,

3 that is, that "covert coverage may be discontinued".

4 Mr. Helms. This is what the report tells him.

5 Mr. Schwarz. You signed it?

6 Mr. Helms. I signed it.

7 Mr. Schwarz. All right, that wasn't true, was it?

8 Mr. Helms. You see, what I don't know here, sir, I

9 wouldn't knowingly have signed something that I didn't

10 believe to be true, and I don't know whether this was referring

11 to covert coverage by the FBI or somebody else. At least the

12 agency was going to be at that time with this same small

13 operation in New York that had been going for some 20

14 years, but I can't imagine that it was referring to that

15 because otherwise I would be signing something that wasn't

16 true, and I would have no reason for doing it. I could haave

17 it stuck out so I can only assume in the context of working

18 level meetings which produced this report this must apply to

19 something the FBI had been doing or planning to do.

20 Mr. Schwarz. How would President Nixon know that.

21 As far as he was concerned he was reading a document that

22 says flatly covert coverage has been discontinued and he

23 kind of got in a lot of trouble on this, you remember the re-

24 lease of the Huston Plan, and that it went on and President

25 Nixon authorized the opening of mail for at least a short

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Senator Schweiker. If I may inject.

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1 I took a deposition this week and I think one of  
2 the things that might come out there, the FBI might have  
3 terminated their mail covers at that point but not CIA.

4 Mr. Schwarz. The record is clear the CIA's lasted  
5 until February of 1973.

6 Senator Schweiker. I think the deposition I took  
7 indicated that the FBI had terminated theirs sometime before  
8 that.

9 Mr. Smothers. How long had mail cover been going on?  
10 You say about 20 years?

11 Mr. Helms. It was '52, '53, '54. It began somewhere  
12 in there.

13 Mr. Smothers. Was there any particular deliberation  
14 that you remember over this paragraph here on page 28?

15 Mr. Helms. I don't recall any discussion of this report  
16 ever. I mean it was delivered to President Nixon but I  
17 never saw him in connection with it.

18 Mr. Smothers. Then this would not in your opinion  
19 have been an attempt to say one thing in writing to the  
20 President while in fact creating--

21 Mr. Helms. I don't think so. I think you are going  
22 down a blind alley here.

23 Mr. Smothers. I don't want to go.

24 Mr. Helms. You can find out from these other gentlemen  
25 but I can't believe that we would have put this report together

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1 for the purpose of tricking or misleading President Nixon.

2 Mr. Smothers. Can you conceive of any purpose at all  
3 for having this paragraph in here?

4 Mr. Helms. No, except what I believe could be the case,  
5 that we are talking about an FBI effort here.

6 Mr. Smothers. Can you think of anything to be gained  
7 by CIA or any other Agency putting in this report the fact  
8 that coverage had been discontinued?

9 Mr. Helms. Absolutely nothing, and you know this CIA  
10 operation in any event was on a very narrow focus. I believe  
11 in this connection a thought here was to have a great deal  
12 more coverage involving other parts of the world. CIA  
13 operation involved just the Soviet Union and this desire, if  
14 recollection serves at all, to expand this domestic  
15 collection was not necessarily in the field of Russia, it  
16 was in a lot of other fields.

17 I am sorry I haven't shed more light on it but I think  
18 that you might find some of the individuals who were on the  
19 working committee could be more specific about it.

20 Mr. Schwarz. Isn't this the kind of thing that a  
21 President first ought to be informed about or at least  
22 ought not to be misinformed about?

23 Do you agree with that?

24 Mr. Helms. Yes. But, sir, I have a very hard time,  
25 I really do, believing that there was any intention on the

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1 part of any of us who signed that report to mislead the  
2 President.

3 Now, what accounts for this I don't recall any more, I  
4 don't have the whole document, I don't recall the temper of  
5 the times, but it seems to me for this committee to try to  
6 make a case we were intentionally misleading the President is  
7 unfortunate.

8 Senator Hart of Michigan. If you were a high school  
9 teacher and had given an assignment and this turned up  
10 in the assignment how would you grade it in terms of accuracy  
11 and understanding -- if you were the reader of it.

12 Mr. Helms. Senator Hart, I have not read through that  
13 entire report from cover to cover in a long time.

14 Is it not possible that if one read the report from  
15 cover to cover that some clarification might emerge, or am I  
16 wrong?

17 Senator Hart of Michigan. I haven't read it either and  
18 you may be quite right. And I really wasn't familiar with  
19 the thing at all until the last five minute, and let me state  
20 my question with a little preliminary.

21 Did the President ask to be advised with respect to  
22 whatkind of mail covers were going on?

23 Mr. Schwarz. Yes, what kind of restrictions existed as  
24 far as activity that might be undertaken.

25 Mr. Helms. Senator Hart, maybe I can help to clarify.

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1 Senator Hart of Michigan. Let me explain why I react  
2 as I do. And on this one page we have in front of us four  
3 responsible Americans defined two kinds of covers, one which  
4 is unacceptable, and with respect to that these four good  
5 Americans tell the President covert coverage, which is the  
6 one defined here, has been discontinued. And I listened to  
7 the exchange it had not been discontinued.

8 I don't know what kind of case it makes, if any, but  
9 I am trying to find out. Won't you agree that that would mis-  
10 lead a President?

11 Mr. Helms. As I sit here looking at it today I don't  
12 know why it wasn't clarified at the time.

13 Senator Hart of Michigan. It is clear. That is my  
14 point.

15 Senator Baker. This played a major role in Watergate  
16 hearings.

17 Senator Hart of Michigan. You take over.

18 Senator Baker. The document was produced with great  
19 fanfare and there was proof, which was at least uncertain,  
20 that Nixon authorized a go-ahead on the Huston Plan, that  
21 Mitchell was unhappy with it and prevailed on the President  
22 the next day to call it off, and it was never put into  
23 effect. But the entire report, I think, does not add much  
24 to this information.

25 But I would call one's attention to an ambiguity which

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1 I think might be helpful to this conversation.

2 The CIA and military investigative agencies have found  
3 mail cover helpful. Then it goes on to say that  
4 covert coverage has been discontinued because Congressional  
5 hearings involving accusation of governmental invasion of  
6 privacy.

7 Those were hearings of Army spying, not CIA spying. I  
8 suggest that I am not entire clear, maybe this interfaces  
9 with the Army or Defense Department rather than the CIA in  
10 its focus on the question of continuance.

11 Mr. Helms. That is helpful, because really I truly  
12 believe it has to be something like that.

13 Senator Baker. I do know that Senator Ervin was  
14 deeply involved in the invasion of privacy military spying  
15 situation. That was the one I believe that got so much  
16 publicity and related back to the Huston Plan.

17 Mr. Schwarz. I wonder if the sentence that Senator  
18 Baker focussed on which is the second sentence at the top,  
19 CIA and military investigative agencies have found this  
20 information particularly helpful in the past.

21 Doesn't that connote to a reader that both for the  
22 CIA and the military it is a past matter?

23 Mr. Smothers. I think we have really asked the witness  
24 about the extent of his knowledge on this. Maybe we ought  
25 to do a little more work on it. To ask him to speculate on

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1 why the past tense is used I don't think we are going any-  
2 where.

3 Senator Hart of Michigan. If it is the past tense I  
4 means something.

5 Mr. Smothers. I agree. I don't think the witness has  
6 indicated to us he can help us.

7 Senator Hart of Michigan. I would still give it a poor  
8 grade if I was the high school teacher.

9 Mr. Helms. I have to agree with you. I don't think  
10 this is a master piece of clarity.

11 Senator Baker. I think the best thing would be to get  
12 Tom Charles Huston and ask him.

13 Mr. Helms. Senator Baker, I don't want to delay this  
14 proceeding but I thought this thing was put together by a  
15 committee.

16 Senator Baker. I think Huston was the one who probably  
17 produced it.

18 Mr. Helms. Did he actually write it? I don't recall  
19 any more. I know there was some work group meeting and  
20 he was the one who put pen to paper. You would remember  
21 this better than I. But I am really asking for clarification.

22 Was he the one who put pen to paper?

23 Senator Baker. I am told now that may not be the  
24 case. I think he was designated in the White House to produce  
25 the document. But I am told that Sullivan of the FBI and

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1 Angleton at CIA actually provided the material  
2 that went into it. But I guess Huston would be the editor  
3 of it.

4 Mr. Helms. It is the drafter I think we are looking  
5 for.

6 Senator Hart of Michigan. Then I will reserve my grade  
7 for him.

8 Senator Baker. Why don't we ask staff to interview  
9 Sullivan, Angleton and Huston?

10 Mr. Schwarz. We have had Huston.

11 Senator Hart of Michigan. I understand two have been  
12 interviewed.

13 Mr. Aaron. That is correct.

14 Senator Hart of Michigan. The third one should be.

15 Senator Baker. Who has been interviewed?

16 Mr. Aaron. Mr. Sullivan was not under oath.

17 Senator Hart of Michigan. Any further discussion of this  
18 document?

19 I think counsel wanted to take up and finish with  
20 Cuba.

21 Mr. Schwarz. On Mr. Lumumba, you do remember him?

22 Mr. Helms. Patrice Lumumba?

23 Mr. Schwarz. Yes. Was he someone the U.S. Government felt  
24 favorably toward?

25 Mr. Helms. Back at that period of the Congo's history

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1 I didn't -- what I am trying to say is that I am trying very  
2 hard at this late date to place Mr. Lumumba in his proper  
3 political niche. I am relatively certain that he represented  
4 something that the United States Government didn't like but  
5 I can't remember any more what it was.

6 Was he a rightist or leftist?

7 Senator Schweiker. Whatever it was he was marked for  
8 assassination.

9 Senator Mathias. The curious thing I remember, drawing  
10 purely on personal recollection, we actually had him come to  
11 Washington as a guest of the U.S. Government and he stayed  
12 at Blair House and was wined and dined as our greatest friend  
13 at one point, shortly after his accession to power.

14 Senator Hart of Michigan. I think Fidel Castro came  
15 after he came to power. That was the only time Congress  
16 took an early fall recess because they didn't want to stay  
17 around here and have to have a joint session. They quit  
18 for the year.

19 Senator Baker. When are we getting back?

20 Mr. Schwarz. Do you know a man named Justin O'Donnell?

21 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

22 Mr. Schwarz. A CIA agent?

23 Mr. Helms. He used to be an officer in the CIA, yes, sir.

24 Mr. Schwarz. Were you aware that there was a plan to  
25 assassinate Mr. Lumumba?

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1 Mr. Helms. Not at the time. I have obviously learned  
2 about these things subsequently because I obviously read that  
3 report that was made in 1967 at the time so I was conscious  
4 later on that there was, but I have no contemporaneous  
5 recollection of this business about Lumumba.

6 Mr. Smothers. Were you at all involved in that?

7 Mr. Helms. I don't recall having been and I think I  
8 might very well have but I just don't recall this business  
9 about Lumumba.

10 Actually what was wrong with Lumumba, why didn't we  
11 like him?

12 Senator Schweiker. That is the tragedy of the whole  
13 thing. Nobody knows why we wanted to get rid of somebody.

14 Mr. Smothers. Do you have any recollection beyond  
15 what appears in the report or are we just --

16 Mr. Helms. No, I don't.

17 As a matter of fact, interestingly enough, when was  
18 Malcolm X alive? He died but when was it?

19 In any event, it is not important about the dates but  
20 I remember that in a particular era when he was alive a lot  
21 of his followers were very much opposed to the CIA and  
22 were making statements about it and so forth, the  
23 allegations being widespread in that part of the black  
24 community that the CIA had done Mr. Lumumba in, and I remem-  
25 ber making some inquiries at the time to find out if there

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1 was any even remote relationship and was told that there was  
2 not, and actually, too, made some efforts to see if something  
3 could be done to redress this misunderstanding in the black  
4 community. But that is all I remember about it.

5 Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Bissell has testified that there was  
6 at least a plan to assassinate Lumumba. Did you check with  
7 him when you made that check?

8 Mr. Helms. No, he left the agency by that time.

9 Mr. Schwarz. Mr. O'Donnell testified that he was asked  
10 by Mr. Bissell to actually assassinate Mr. Lumumba and upon  
11 hearing that request he went to see a man called Gottlieb.

12 Do you know Mr. Gottlieb?

13 Mr. Helms. [Sidney Gottlieb? Yes.

14 Mr. Schwarz. And was shown some poisons and deadly  
15 viruses, and then he came to your office and he  
16 stated to you that Mr. Bissell had asked him to kill Lumumba  
17 but that he wasn't going to do it, and you said you agreed  
18 he shouldn't do it?

19 Mr. Helms. I don't remember the conversation at all  
20 but I don't have any reason to cavil with it. I don't recall  
21 the conversation.

22 Mr. Schwarz. You can't add anything on that?

23 Mr. Helms. No.

24 Senator Schweiker. What capacity were you serving in  
25 then?

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1 Mr. Helms. I would have been Mr. Bissell's number 2  
2 at that time.

3 Senator Schweiker. Chief of Operations?

4 Mr. Helms. Yes.

5 Senator Schweiker. If they sent poison down to the  
6 Congo, would you have had to know something about that?

7 Mr. Helms. You see, maybe yes, maybe no, Senator  
8 Schweiker, because a Deputy Director could make his own  
9 arrangements without necessarily going through his under-  
10 lings if he chose, and if he had wanted to make specific  
11 arrangements for something of this kind he wouldn't necessarily  
12 have to tell me that.

13 It would be his option that. That is what I am  
14 trying to say.

15 Mr. Schwarz. You had a report prepared on Trujillo also  
16 in 1967. Why did you have that report prepared, incidentally,  
17 since the Drew Pearson column had been limited to Castro?

18 Mr. Helms. I thought this was all done at the same time.

19 Did Mr. Breckenridge have any other recollection?  
20 Weren't these three reports done together because --

21 Mr. Schwarz. They were all done in the spring of  
22 1967.

23 Mr. Helms. My recollection is it was the Drew Pearson  
24 thing that may have triggered this off in President's  
25 Johnson's mind but I believe he asked me for all three of these.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. Do you recall his saying anything spe-  
2 cifically about Trujillo, why Trujillo was included?

3 Mr. Helms. I think he was just trying to check on  
4 various reports that he had heard about how these people had  
5 come to die. You know there were assertions around that,  
6 and I have forgotten any more whether they were newspaper  
7 assertions or just things sort of mentioned by the back of the  
8 hand, but he wanted to know whether the Agency had been respon-  
9 sible for those deaths and that was why I asked to have this  
10 work done.

11 Mr. Schwarz. All right, now, on Diem. I think you told  
12 us yesterday afternoon that he, President Johnson, had a  
13 particular theory about the death of Mr. Diem.

14 Would you recount that for the committee?

15 Mr. Helms. He once said to me that he just wondered  
16 whether President Kennedy hadn't died because he had caused  
17 the death of President Diem of Vietnam, and I remember him  
18 having said this to me because it struck me hard at the  
19 time. I thought this was a peculiar conception, but that is  
20 all I know about it and the conversation never went any  
21 further.

22 Mr. Schwarz. You had the report done on Trujillo and  
23 you reported back to President Johnson about all three matters,  
24 Castro, Trujillo and Diem?

25 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. When you reported on Trujillo, based upon  
2 the '67 report, did you say that the Agency had or had not  
3 had anything to do with the death of Mr. Trujillo?

4 Mr. Helms. I gave him the controversy as I recall it that  
5 want on but said that it was my opinion that the evidence  
6 pointed in the direction of the Agency not being responsible  
7 for his death.

8 Senator Schweiker. On the Diem point, in your CIA  
9 work with South Vietnam was there any link that comes to your  
10 mind as to why President Jonson might have said that?  
11 Any connection at all between Diem and Kennedy that comes to  
12 CIA 's attention?

13 Mr. Helms. No, that was what struck me, Senator  
14 Schweiker. I probably wouldn't have remembered something  
15 like this if it hadn't seemed to be an odd belief to have.

16 My recollection is he said this to me not terribly long  
17 after President Kennedy's assassination and that it  
18 may have been part of the trauma of a conspiratorial theory  
19 of the time and I honestly don't know but it did strike me  
20 as odd.

21 Mr. Schwarz. Isn't he quoted by someone else in the  
22 press linking possibly Lee Harvey Oswald to Cuba, too?

23 Are you aware of that? I think this is just a news  
24 report, this is nothing more than that, that one of the people  
25 who talked to him thought there might be some connection

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1 between Cuba and Lee Harvey Oswald.

2 Mr. Helms. Not long ago, Senator Schweiker, I forget,  
3 I guess it must have been on one of my trips back here, I  
4 don't remember which one, but I was watching a news report  
5 one night and it seemed to me that Walter Kronkite had  
6 some kind of a clip in the news report.

7 Senator Schweiker. Of an interview?

8 Mr. Helms. An interview with President Johnson in which  
9 this was generally adverted to. I don't remember the  
10 exact words. But President Johnson sort of ended up saying you  
11 know I am not entirely sure or something and sort of trailed  
12 off.

13 Mr. Schwarz. Was that the occasion on which President  
14 Johnson said we had at some points been running a Murder, Inc.  
15 in the Caribbean?

16 Mr. Helms. No, that language wasn't used. This was an  
17 interview after he ceased to be President. It was part of  
18 the long series Kronkite made at the ranch sometime after he  
19 left office.

20 Senator Mathias. Was this statement by President Johnson  
21 sort of amoral, was he drawing a moral conclusion?

22 Mr. Helms. It seemed to me to have a heavy overtone of  
23 that.

24 Senator Mathias. Rather than a factual historical  
25 deduction?

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1 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

2 Senator Schweiker. It was clearly a suspicion, if you  
3 saw the film.

4 Senator Baker. I think it was clearly speculative.  
5 But I think the tone of the statement was he had reason to be-  
6 lieve but was not sure that there had been a conspiracy of  
7 some kind.

8 Senator Mathias. That President Kennedy had brought down  
9 the nemesis from the skies on himself.

10 Senator Baker. I think that maybe a second conclu-  
11 sion.

12 I would request, if I may, that counsel obtain a copy  
13 or transcript of that interview and insert that in the record.

14 Mr. Schwarz. Yes.

15 At the time Trujillo died, May 30, '61, you were Mr.  
16 Bissell's deputy then?

17 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir.

18 Mr. Schwarz. Did you have anything to do with the  
19 passage of weapons from the United States to dissidents in  
20 the Dominican Republic?

21 Mr. Helms. My recollection of the Trujillo business is  
22 this was handled largely by Mr. Bissell and the Chief of  
23 the Western Hemisphere Division at that time, Colonel King, and  
24 that I got into it and as the record shows that I got into it  
25 at one point when Bissell must have been away somewhere.

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1 In other words, this authorizing some document or other.  
2 The question has come up about whether or not weapons were  
3 passed in the pouch, the official pouch to the Dominican  
4 Republic, and I was suggesting, as you remember yesterday  
5 afternoon, I don't know whether those records exist any more,  
6 but I was really seriously wondering whether the actual  
7 State Department pouch had ever been used for such a purpose  
8 because I had put a watch dog on the pouch for the simple  
9 reason that we were using State Department facilities, that  
10 they had certain regulations about the kind of things that  
11 should go in the pouch, and I wanted to be certain that year-in  
12 and year-out there were not abuses of the pouch privilege  
13 because of the terrible temptation on the lowest level for  
14 employees to want to send perfume and other customs items  
15 through the pouch to avoid paying duties and so forth, and  
16 that also there are all kinds of abuses that one can make  
17 over a pouch that can't be opened by foreigners or domestics.

18 So, I had the widow of a foreign service officer  
19 periodically on this job to be sure there weren't violations  
20 of the pouch, and if it should come to me there should be a  
21 record whether anybody made an exception, whether I or any-  
22 body else in the Agency for sending guns through the pouch,  
23 there should be something there to indicate that exception  
24 was made.

25 In other words, this is not something that somebody

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1 could do just by saying send this package in the pouch.

2 Mr. Schwarz. The record shows some weapons were sent  
3 through the pouch, the record being the report made to you  
4 in '67. But I asked you, I think, whether you know in  
5 1960 or 1961 that the U.S. Government had supplied weapons  
6 to dissidents in the Dominican Republic.

7 Mr. Helms. I am sorry, Mr Schwarz, I don't remember.  
8 I mean I could have known. I don't think I knew. I don't think  
9 I was involved in that part of the operation. But, on the  
10 other hand, with all of the things that have gone on through  
11 the years it could have been that I have been told about this.

12 Mr. Schwarz. Then I take it also follows you can't  
13 add anything as to whether or not the Agency had authority to  
14 supply guns at all, number one; had authority to supply  
15 guns for the purpose of assassination, number two?

16 Mr. Helms. I thought that when I was reading this I.G.  
17 report that there was a voluminous amount of telegraphic  
18 correspondence and memoranda and so forth about every move  
19 in this whole thing being cleared with the State Department  
20 and so forth.

21 Are these things not covered in that record?

22 Mr. Schwarz. There was a great deal of discussion of  
23 clearance with the State Department. Indeed, there is a man  
24 called Deerborn who is in the State Department who appears  
25 to be a motivating force.

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1           What isn't entirely clear is whether particularly at  
2 the last month the knowledge of the persons on both sides  
3 of the fence or in the Agency and outside is on an equal  
4 footing. All things except for that are clear and I take it --

5           Mr. Helms. I can't help on that. I am sorry, I recall  
6 can't.

7           Senator Hart of Michigan. Do any members have any  
8 questions of the Ambassador?

9           Senator Schweiker. Yes.

10          You gave us your philosophy, Mr. Ambassador, on assassi-  
11 nations a moment ago, and I believe you inferred, and maybe  
12 said to the staff earlier, that during your tenure as  
13 Director of the Central Intelligence Agency there were no  
14 political assassinations that took place.

15          Am I putting words in your mouth?

16          Mr. Helms. No, you are not. I said that.

17          Senator Schweiker. That is correct.

18          I wonder again, for the guidance of this committee,  
19 you haven't gotten into this other area yet, but I think in  
20 view of your one statement and your experience it would be  
21 helpful, what was your policy as Director of Central Intelligence  
22 on what we have read about in the press and media and books  
23 and, et cetera, on termination of assets who have outlived  
24 their usefulness or termination of other agents? I wonder  
25 if you would for the record philosophically tell us your

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1 policy on that while you were Director.

2 Mr. Helms. Yes, sir. These exotic phrases are  
3 euphemisms that are used to describe these purposes, none  
4 of them were indulged in with my permission and I don't  
5 believe they were indulged in at all. I just simply did  
6 not believe in this method of taking care of one's embarrass-  
7 ments, if you want to call it that, and I never authorized  
8 any such actions at any time.

9 As I explained this morning, it is not only the moral  
10 question involved but in our form of country and with our  
11 philosophy and, if you like, theology, it simply isn't an  
12 acceptable way to do business and, therefore, other methods  
13 have to be found.

14 I know in the literature of espionage and secret wars and  
15 so forth, particularly British, French, German, Russian, and  
16 so forth, there are references to the fact when an agent,  
17 secret agent becomes an embarrassment he was eliminated, he  
18 was gotten rid of. But I just don't believe that this was a  
19 viable system, either morally or any other way, for us to  
20 conduct ourselves with people who had gone sour and we just  
21 tried to find other methods of taking care of the problem.

22 Senator Schweiker. In the earlier days, before your  
23 tenure as Director, was this always our policy, or maybe  
24 earlier in the era of the CIA this was not as firmly estab-  
25 lished or left to local option.

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1           What is your recollection, not when you were Director,  
2 but policies preceding that, from your experience?

3           Mr. Helms. I don't recall any incidents of agents that  
4 went sour being eliminated during any of these 25 years.  
5 I really don't recall any incidents of this. I can't say  
6 that other times it might not have happened and I never  
7 learned of it, but I don't know of any.

8           Senator Hart of Michigan. That is all I have.

9           Mr. Schwarz. I think you said now, or you said earlier,  
10 that killing or assassination, killing of agents or assassina-  
11 tions of political leaders were both impractical, because of  
12 the likelihood of exposure, and so forth, and undesirable or  
13 unacceptable to our society, right?

14          Mr. Helms. Yes, that is right.

15          Mr. Schwarz. Now, you also have said that, focussing  
16 on the Castro operation, there the pressure to get rid of Castro  
17 or to overthrow the Castro government constituted an author-  
18 ization, at least an implicit authorization to kill him, to  
19 assassinate him.

20          Is that right?

21          Mr. Helms. Yes, I think that is generally an accurate  
22 phrasing of it.

23          Mr. Schwarz. Now, there is a conflict.

24          Not a conflict but a tension between those two pieces of  
25 your testimony.

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1 Mr. Helms. Right.

2 Mr. Schwarz. Now when you became Director, so that  
3 you were in charge and recognized that you knew that efforts  
4 had been undertaken to assassinate Mr. Castro under the  
5 general instruction to overthrow his government, and recog-  
6 nizing further that it is your attitude or it is your testimony  
7 that you thought that was unacceptable for both practical  
8 and moral reasons, did you take any steps to issue an instruc-  
9 tion to prevent such activity from occurring again?

10 Mr. Helms. Well, I do know that, and I don't recall now  
11 the means that this manifested itself in, but I certainly  
12 made it clear to my senior associates when I was Director,  
13 I simply didn't want this to go on, and I think if you will  
14 talk to them you will find that they understood this very  
15 clearly.

16 Mr. Schwarz. Of course that is what Mr. McCone said  
17 when he took over.

18 Mr. Helms. I understand that. But I mean we can  
19 roll this over and over and over, but may I just say one  
20 thing. As somebody pointed out in the newspaper not long  
21 ago, if someone had killed Hitler in 1938 and '39 it might have  
22 saved the world quite a number of deaths and a very difficult  
23 war and vast expense and all the rest of it. And is it not  
24 possible that even in the good sense of the citizens of the  
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1 United States of America that there are some occasions on  
2 which they seem to think that the provocation is larger than  
3 it is on others and that certain actions would be more accept-  
4 able in one climate than they would be in another climate,  
5 even though in the strict interpretation of law and moral  
6 judgment this might not be the case.

7 I simply have to rest my case this way because it seems  
8 to me history shows this.

9 Senator Schweiker. How do you know when a Hitler  
10 becomes a Hitler and where do you draw the line when a  
11 Trujillo ought to go or Lumumba ought to go, and who makes  
12 that decision?

13 Mr. Helms. It certainly ought to be made at the top of  
14 the government, Senator Schweiker. It certainly ought to be  
15 made by political official who are subject to the will of  
16 the people and the Congress.

17 Senator Schweiker. I have one more question.

18 This is going ahead a little bit, Mr. Ambassador,  
19 based on your 25 years of experience, and having seen now  
20 many of the problems that have come to bear for the Agency,  
21 or all intelligence, including not only the assassination prob-  
22 lems but domestic surveillance problems, and the problem with  
23 Congress and Laos and the war there.

24 What advice could you give this committee to avoid  
25 areas such as this for the intelligence agency of the future

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1 so we do have a strong intelligence agency doing legitimate  
2 intelligence activities yet not hamstringing it but yet  
3 making sure some of the things we have learned the hard  
4 way over these 20-some years don't happen again?

5 What advice could you give to us to do that?

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1 Mr. Helms. Sir, I think that I would like to answer  
2 you by saying that obviously I have given thought to these  
3 matters. I have wondered what it was that if it had happened  
4 differently through the years might have avoided these various  
5 things.

6 I have looked at the law, the statute. I think there  
7 are things that should be changed in it and I think it should  
8 be tightened up in certain respects, but I am also mindful of  
9 the fact that as long as one is dealing with human beings,  
10 written words are not going to be the determining factor in  
11 their conduct 24 hours a day seven days of the week, and that  
12 I would hope that in the future what is called oversight over  
13 intelligence activities been given a fuller opportunity,  
14 because I honestly believe that part of the problem through  
15 the years has been that those people who had oversight over  
16 intelligence activities, or particularly the activities of the  
17 CIA, were senior officials both in the Executive and in Congress  
18 who were so busy and so preoccupied about other matters that  
19 rather short shrift has been given to this activity, and if  
20 there are better oversight or better opportunities to have  
21 extended conversations with members of the Congress, for  
22 example, I think some of these things could be headed off  
23 simply by an indication from a chairman of a committee or  
24 something that this didn't seem to be desirable, or from some  
25 other Senators.

1 For example, let me just take a specific instance.  
2 The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, when I was leaving,  
3 had a hearing about something having to do with police  
4 departments. It was the sense of the Committee that this was  
5 an undesirable activity for the Agency to be helping police  
6 departments directly, so they made a statement to the effect  
7 this should stop. So I believe it was stopped that very day.  
8 There isn't any desire of these people to go beyond what they  
9 have been told not to do. But if you can't get ahold of your  
10 oversight committee or they don't have meetings and you are  
11 busy you go ahead doing as best you can, and I honestly  
12 believe, you know, as I look back in history that Mr. Dulles  
13 would have been very pleased if he would have had a couple  
14 of Senators by the hand when he went into the Bay of Pigs.

15 Senator Schweiker. I think you are perfectly right about  
16 oversight. I couldn't agree with you more. And I think here  
17 Congress itself has been derelict. I agree with that. I  
18 think that is a very serious weakness of Congress on the over-  
19 sight committees. The other aspect I think is important, too,  
20 and I concede the first point is in many cases when some  
21 oversight was tried to be exercised, and let me say very little  
22 was. I don't think the intelligence agencies leveled with the  
23 Congress per se, too, and I think that that is a very serious  
24 problem from those who want to say they want to do a good job  
25 when you don't have that leveling or credibility or whatever

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1 you want to call it, how do we instill that in a system?

2 Mr. Helms. I thought that the Agency's record of level-  
3 ing was pretty good when given the opportunity.

4 Senator Schweiker, I don't recall ever being before one  
5 of the oversight committees set up by Congress and not  
6 absolutely honestly and fairly answering any question I was  
7 asked.

8 Senator Schweiker. Now, how about the war in Laos? I  
9 sat on the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, Mr.  
10 Ambassador, and I think I was on there for eight years, all  
11 during the war, before CIA owned up to conducting a war in  
12 Laos. And I think Stu Symington, who sat on the Select or on  
13 the Committee on Supervision of CIA made the discovery.

14 I can't agree with you on Laos because I sat on the  
15 House and Senate Armed Service Committees when you folks came  
16 a number of times and testified and we had to stumble into  
17 it backwards. I think Senator Symington really did it through  
18 Foreign Relations contacts, even though he was on the Oversight  
19 Committee of the Armed Services. I think there is a case where  
20 I won't agree with you, even though I agree with what you said  
21 about oversight.

22 Mr. Helms. I am under oath. Would you mind if I ducked  
23 this? I can give you no answer except to tell the truth and  
24 I would rather not get into it now, if you don't mind, unless  
25 it is important to you.

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1 Could I talk to you privately about it if you like?

2 Senator Schweiker. Okay.

3 Senator Baker. (Presiding). Are there other questions?

4 Senator Schweiker. One other question I do have. In

5 terms of assassinations, did any member of Congress know of

6 any assassination attempts? In other words, did the Agency in

7 the oversight responsibility level with any members of

8 Congress or oversight committees about assassinations?

9 Mr. Helms. I don't know of any conversations about this.

10 Senator Schweiker. That is all I have.

11 Mr. Madigan. Mr. Ambassador, there have been rumors of  
12 resent vintage that the CIA has contributed money to political  
13 campaigns.

14 Do you know or have any knowledge as to whether --

15 Mr. Helms. Where is that, sir? What political campaigns?

16 Mr. Madigan. In the United States?

17 Mr. Helms. Never to my knowledge.

18 Mr. Madigan. None to your knowledge?

19 Mr. Helms. No sir.

20 Senator Mathias. Ambassador, You, I think explained  
21 very fully and lucidly the way in which you felt you had  
22 authority to act in the very situations, which was a kind of  
23 a blanket authority without restriction, and that once this  
24 was determined, as illustrated by the case of Attorney  
25 General Robert Kennedy, you didn't feel it was necessary and

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1 refresh that authority with each succeeding episode?

2 Mr. Helms. Yes, I would prefer, Mr. Mathias, to say that  
3 we were seeing him so regularly that we felt that we were in  
4 tune with what he desired and what was acceptable.

5 Senator Mathias. There was an exchange of, if not words,  
6 an exchange of ideas and feelings that kept the situation  
7 current and continually kept you reassured that there was no  
8 lack, there had been no change of direction at the highest  
9 levels?

10 Mr. Helms. Yes sir.

11 Senator Mathias. That was true as far as the Castro  
12 situation was concerned?

13 In other situations was there an exchange of ideas in  
14 this same level of intensity?

15 Mr. Helms. I don't recall except on Vietnam as many  
16 regular exchanges on any subject as there were on Cuba. And  
17 to get the attention of the top members of the Government on  
18 a continuing basis on one theme really takes a great deal of  
19 attention to that theme on the part of the White House in  
20 order to generate the fact that the Secretary of State should  
21 attend that meeting rather than that meeting on a specific day.  
22 The power of the President flows into these matters in a strange  
23 way and if the Secretary of State appears at an inter-Govern-  
24 mental meeting it is because he is pretty clear in his mind  
25 that is where he ought to be that day rather than making a

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1 speech in Chicago or something.

2 Senator Mathias. How did you manage then under these  
3 difficult circumstances -- I understand exactly what you are  
4 saying -- manage to be sure that, say, in the Lumumba situation  
5 or Trujillo situation that there was this same kind of con-  
6 tinuing policy, or there hadn't been any change in policy?

7 Mr. Helms. I don't know the Lumumba situation, I don't  
8 know where the idea came from or what the policy was any longer  
9 at all, and the Trujillo situation I think that the record  
10 shows an on-going back and forth between the Agency and  
11 the State Department about the situation in the Dominican  
12 Republic.

13 Here it seems to me we had a situation in which it  
14 stayed in CIA rather than inter-agency committed formally  
15 established dealing with this matter. I know in there, for  
16 example, Assistant Secretary Rubottom's name keeps coming  
17 up again and again so I assume the Agency people were dealing  
18 on a continuing basis.

19 Senator Mathias. Now, after November 22, 1963, when  
20 President Johnson came in, I think your testimony is that you  
21 continued to deal with Attorney General Kennedy?

22 Mr. Helms. I think for a time we did as long as he was  
23 Attorney General. I forget how long he stayed there. But I  
24 recall even seeing him at one time and saying is there any  
25 truth to the rumor you are going to leave and run for the

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1 Senate, and he said yes, it is true. So I must have been seeing  
2 him up to that time. This is just something that occurred to  
3 me at this moment but I do recall asking him that question.

4 Senator Mathias. And you continued to deal on these  
5 matters with him although he didn't stand in quite the same  
6 relationship with President Johnson as he obviously had to  
7 President Kennedy?

8 Mr. Helms. I think on the matter of the Castro business  
9 it would have been with that Special Group rather than him  
10 particularly, because by this time that thing had wound down  
11 somewhat. But I think that he was still involved. I think  
12 that is right.

13 Senator Mathias. So there is a kind of fluidity about  
14 the whole relationship in all of these matters that is very  
15 difficult to --

16 Mr. Helms. Would it be helpful to you if I were to say  
17 over this period of 25 years it has been a very fluid thing,  
18 this busoness of getting clearances and approvals and how  
19 close you are piped in and how close you are not piped in and  
20 oversight and all of these things do change through the years.  
21 It is one of the reasons I think that the establishment of the  
22 Select Committee 25 years later to look at the intelligence  
23 community is a very baluable, wize thing for our country. I  
24 think a lot of things have to be brought up to date. I think  
25 the experiences of 25 years ought to be used to tighten these

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1 things up in the right places. The intelligence community  
2 so-called has kind of grown like Topsy over the years. Here  
3 was an agency and there was another agency and then you add a  
4 third and then you add a fourth and then you find some way to  
5 relate them and find some way to try and coordinate them and  
6 find some way to get Congressional oversight of them and if you  
7 were to start from absolute scratch and one day say let's set  
8 up an intelligence community you might set the thing up  
9 entirely differently and maybe more effectively. So the 25  
10 years later I think it is just fine that this Committee has  
11 seized this problem. It is very difficult one and I don't  
12 believe by circling you are going to find many easy answers  
13 but it is certainly an effort worth making on behalf of our  
14 country. After all, two things. Intelligence is the first  
15 line of defense by good effective intelligence organizations,  
16 but it has to be good, there is no sense in having an intelli-  
17 gence organization like the German one during World War II,  
18 which was no good. That does you more harm than good. I  
19 don't mean to keep saying that word. The other thing is that  
20 in the arranging of the intelligence community, the establish-  
21 ment of some kind of an organization which was set up after  
22 Pearl Harbor and designated the CIA to get material from all  
23 over the Government and give balanced judgments not subject to  
24 political or departmental pressures, as to what they believe the  
25 future holds or what they believe the strength of the Soviet

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1 Union is is very important because if that function falls into  
2 the hands of the self-servers there wouldn't be enough money in  
3 the world to support our military establishment.

4 Senator Mathias. I think that is a very helpful and  
5 useful comment.

6 I think we understand that by whatever means, by whatever  
7 form of human communication was involved that original  
8 authorizations were given even at various times for given  
9 projects. The projects may have altered. I think the  
10 testimony, not only your testimony but Mr. Bissell's and others  
11 has been that a project undertaken to remove somebody in a  
12 political sense might become later a project to remove that  
13 same person in a physical sense. So the projects did alter.

14 But, all pursuant to the original authorization, do you  
15 think that there was adequate political control as this kind  
16 of undulation took place, that a President or a President's  
17 designee, for example, sufficiently aware of the undulations  
18 and had an opportunity to veto the action at some point, at  
19 some critical point?

20 Mr. Helms. I think that the basic thrust of what you are  
21 saying is quite accurate. As a long time, I might put it this  
22 way, bureaucrat, it seems to me one of the great problems of  
23 Government is that one starts something it takes on a life of  
24 its own, then it gets turned off far too late, and I have been  
25 guilty of this in my own work. I know this, but it is also

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1 true of departments of Government. And if the Senate, for  
2 example, every year had put before it a list of all the things  
3 that it had set up the year before, I venture to say there  
4 might be a percentage of them you would like to get rid of a  
5 year later or five years later, but they continue going on and  
6 getting budgeted and employing people and so forth and nobody  
7 gets around to stopping them.

8 Senator Mathias. We have a snuff box on the floor of  
9 the Senate. It is filled everyday.

10 Let me ask off the record.

11 (Off the record discussion)

12 Senator Schweiker. I have one question. Mr. Ambassador,  
13 had the CIA, to your knowledge, ever used Peace Corps or Peace  
14 Corps members as either direct assistants in any way to our  
15 overseas intelligence activities?

16 Mr. Helms. No sir. I say no sir emphatically because  
17 I remember in this case specifically writing a paper making  
18 it clear to everybody that was involved in the clandestine  
19 side of the CIA the Peace Corps was not to be used because  
20 Sargeant Shriver when he was head of the Peace Corpr went to  
21 President Kennedy one day and charged that we were using the  
22 Peace Corps for cover. And I went into prove that Mr. Shriver  
23 was wrong and as a result of this I said there is only one  
24 way to be absolutely certain and that is for me to ban this,  
25 and I am glad to ban it because we didn't need the Peace Corps

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1 and I don't want to corrupt an organization which has a very  
2 clear purpose and shining light and so forth, so I issued  
3 those instructions and I am relatively certain they were com-  
4 plied with through the years.

5 Senator Schweiker. Can you shed any light -- I think our  
6 Peace Corps people were thrown out of Ceylon with the allegation  
7 that they were helping the CIA?

8 Mr. Helms This was a KGB political or psychological war-  
9 fare rather. At that time for years, even very shortly after  
10 the Peace Corps began, that the Soviet propaganda kept  
11 asserting that it was CIA that was under the Peace Corps, it  
12 was CIA, that was in the Arab press and Asiatic press and  
13 African press, and I would assume the Ceylonese press. It was  
14 exactly the same, it was Communist propaganda.

15 Senator Schweiker. There is a written memorandum or  
16 written order that is still in effect on this point?

17 Mr. Helms. It goes back to the early days of the found-  
18 ing of the Peace Corps.

19 Senator Schwiker. I wonder if we could get that for the  
20 record?

21 That is all.

22 Senator Baker. Let me ask you two quick questions.  
23 Would you supply for us now or later in one of your subsequent  
24 appearances some indication of how the CIA interacted or  
25 cooperated with the DIA and the NSA?

1 Mr. Helms. Let me write down this note.

2 Senator Baker. We can give you a copy of the transcript.  
3 What I really want to say is a general description of how CIA  
4 interacted with the other intelligence gathering bodies of  
5 the Government, FBI, NSA, DIA, and others.

6 I understand there are 16 that have a primary intelli-  
7 gence gathering mission.

8 Mr. Helms. Right.

9 Senator Baker. And I really think it might be better  
10 later after you give it some thought.

11 Mr. Helms. Yes, I would appreciate being able to refresh  
12 my memory and on my subsequent appearances, why don't I cover  
13 that? I just wanted to write the notes down to have your  
14 request accurately.

15 Senator Baker. If there are no other questions we  
16 thank you for being a patient and cooperative witness in an  
17 entire day of testimony and the hearing will stand in recess  
18 subject to the call of the Chair.

19 Mr. Helms. Senator Baker, as the Chairman, may I say  
20 that I would prefer not to make a statement to the press or  
21 get involved in colloquy with them. I wanted to say this  
22 before so I don't fly under false colors, that I intend to  
23 sneak out of here as best as I can.

24 Mr. Schwarz. There is a way you can get out from  
25 behind.

1 Mr. Helms. I think we have been trying to contrive this  
2 through the day.

3 Senator Baker. We will be willing accessories to that.

4 (Whereupon, at 4:13 p.m., the hearing was recessed  
5 subject to the call of the Chair.)  
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TOP SECRET

Phone (Area 202) 544-6000

WARD &amp; PAUL

410 First Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003

HELMS EX 3  
6/13/75  
00134 EX 217  
1.5 5.23.75  
ytk  
SECRET/SENSITIVE

14 April 1967

TO: The Director

FROM: John A. McCone

1. No memorandum can be located covering the August 10, 1962 meeting; however, it is highly probable that one exists.
2. Meetings of August 8 or 9, 1962, in the JCS Operations Room (Pentagon) and August 10, 1962, in Secretary Rusk's Conference Room were for the purpose of considering staff proposals for Phase II of operation MONCOOSE. This operation was under the direction of General Lansdale, with Wm. Harvey handling CIA participation (under FitzGerald). At one of these meetings -- probably the meeting in the JCS Room -- I recall a suggestion being made to liquidate top people in the Castro regime, including Castro. I took immediate exception to this suggestion, stating that the subject was completely out of bounds as far as the USG and CIA were concerned and the idea should not be discussed nor should it appear in any papers, as the USG could not consider such actions on moral or ethical grounds.
3. Immediately after the meeting, I called on Secretary McNamara personally and re-emphasized my position, in which he heartily agreed. I did this because operation MONCOOSE -- an inter-departmental affair -- was under the operational control of DOD through the JCS.
4. At no time did the suggestion receive serious consideration by the Special Group (augmented) nor by any individual responsible for policy.
5. Through the years the Cuban problem was discussed in terms such as "dispose of Castro," "remove Castro," "knock off Castro," etc., and this meant the overthrow of the Communist Government in Cuba and the replacing of it with a democratic regime. Terms such as the above appear in many working papers, memoranda for the record, etc., and, as stated, all refer to a change in the Cuban Government.

  
John A. McCone

SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET

*Witness*  
*HELMS EX 4*  
*6/13/75*

16 August 1963

EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Sam Giancana

1. Attached is the only copy in the Agency of a memorandum on subject, the ribbon copy of which was sent to the Attorney General in May of 1962. I was vaguely aware of the existence of such a memorandum since I was informed that it had been written as a result of a briefing given by Colonel Edwards and Laurence Houston to the Attorney General in May of last year.

2. I spoke with Colonel Edwards on the telephone last evening, and, in the absence of Mr. Bannerman on leave, I was with Colonel Edwards' assistance able to locate this copy. As far as I am aware, this is the only written information available on Agency relationships with subject. I hope that this will serve your purpose.

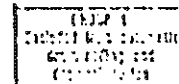
3. I assume you are aware of the nature of the operation discussed in the attachment.

*Richard Helms*  
Richard Helms  
Deputy Director (Plans)

Attachment

3-page memo dated 14 May 1962,  
TS-101486 - Memo for the Record -  
Arthur James Ralletti et al -  
Unauthorized Publication or Use  
of Communications.

TOP SECRET





SECRET  
SENSITIVE

14 August 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director ( )

SUBJECT: Operation MONGOLIAN

1. Action. None. This memorandum is for your information.
2. Reference is made to our conversation on 13 August 1962, concerning the memorandum of that date from General Lansdale. Attached is a copy of this memorandum, excised from which are four words in the second line of the penultimate paragraph on page 1. These four words were "including liquidation of leadership."
3. The question of assassination, particularly of Fidel Castro, was brought up by Secretary McManera at the meeting of the Special Group (Augmented) in Secretary Rusk's office on 10 August. It was the obvious concern at that meeting, in answer to a comment by Mr. Ed McNamara, that this is not a subject which has been made a matter of official record. I took careful note of the comments at this meeting on this point, and the Special Group (Augmented) is not expecting any written comments or study on this point.
4. Upon receipt of the attached memorandum, I called Lansdale's office and, in his absence, pointed out to Frank Head the inadvisability and stupidity of putting this type of comment in writing in such a document. I advised Frank Head that, as far as CIA was concerned, we would write no document pertaining to this and would participate in no open meeting discussing it. I strongly urged Head to recommend to Lansdale that he excise the phrase in question from all copies of this memorandum, including those disseminated to State, Defense, and URDA. Shortly thereafter, Lansdale called back and left the message that he agreed and that he had done so.

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SENSITIVE

EXCISE COPY

SECRET

YES ONLY

5. For your information also, in your absence and since the attached memorandum already had been distributed and in view of the possibility that this might come to the Director's attention, I informally briefed Walt Elder on the above.

*W. K. Harvey*

WILLIAM K. HARVEY  
Chief, Task Force W

Attachment

Memo to Gen Lansdale dtd 13 Aug 62

7600017

YES ONLY

SECRET