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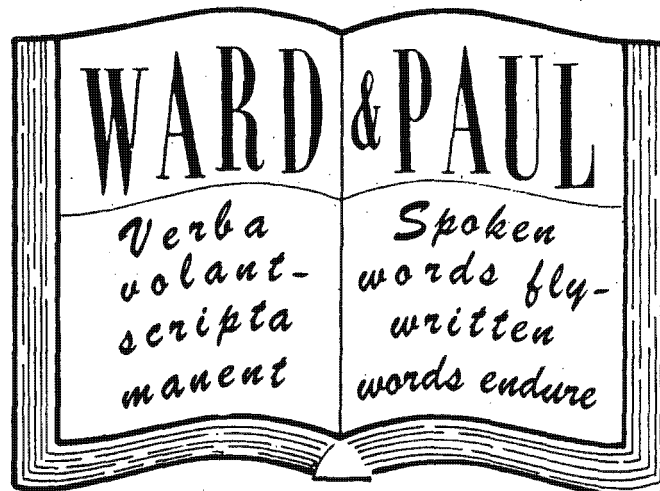
S-7  
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PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION  
ON CIA ACTIVITIES

1 of 2

Deposition of: RICHARD MCGARRAH HELMES

Thursday, April 24, 1975  
Langley, Virginia



TM

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A

C O N T E N T S

Deposition of:

EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR THE  
COMMISSION

Richard McGarrah Helms  
(Resumed)

194

(AFTERNOON SESSION - 297)

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1 had done by having the liaison officer come back and forth.  
2 and my recollection is that I advocated that we just sort  
3 of wait it out and see what happened.

4 MR. OLSEN: Did it enter into your thinking in  
5 that connection, Ambassador, that little could be done by  
6 attempting to compel Mr. Hoover to do anything in any event?

7 THE WITNESS: I didn't think there was a chance of  
8 Attorneys General being able to persuade him to reverse  
9 himself.

10 MR. ROETHE: Do you want to go into a different  
11 area now?

12 MR. OLSEN: Yes.

13 MR. ROETHE: I will sort of rest my thought here  
14 for a few minutes.

15 BY MR. OLSEN:

16 Q Are you acquainted with the general subject of the  
17 handling of a defector by the name of Nosenko?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Did Nosenko defect to the United States at the  
20 time you were the DCI?

21 A I have forgotten exactly what my job was when he  
22 defected. Could you give me the date when he defected?

23 MR. ROETHE: I believe it was in 1965. I think it  
24 was just before you --

25 THE WITNESS: Became Deputy Director?

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1 MR. ROETHE: Yes.

2 THE WITNESS: Because I didn't become Director until  
3 1966, I believe.

4 MR. ROETHE: This was in 1965.

5 BY MR. OLSEN:

6 Q When was it that you became Deputy Director?

7 A I think it was in April 1965.

8 Q In any event, you are acquainted with that whole  
9 situation --

10 A Yes.

11 Q -- are you not?

12 A Yes, I am.

13 Q Who specifically within the Agency had charge of the  
14 initial handling of Nosenko?

15 A Normally, defectors were handled by the Domestic  
16 Contact Division of the Office of Operations, but it seems  
17 to me that this fellow was given a special treatment all his  
18 own and I don't recall who it was that did have him in  
19 custody, whether it was the Security Office, the Counter-  
20 intelligence Staff. I just honestly don't recall.

21 Q Well, would it be of any help if I suggested  
22 to you that the Office of Security was actually in charge of  
23 his confinement?

24 A That is what I was wondering.

25 Q But that the Counterintelligence Staff was the

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1 Agency that directed what was to be done with him and  
2 conducted the interrogations of him and specified the condi-  
3 tions under which he was to be kept, and so on?

4 A Right.

5 Q Does that refresh your recollection?

6 A That helps a great deal because he was held down in  
7 the installation we have here some miles from Washington for  
8 quite some months while an effort was being made to find  
9 out whether he was a bona fide defector or not a bona  
10 fide defector and one of the complicating factors as I  
11 recall it was that he had made some sort of statement to the  
12 FBI when he arrived in this country that he was going to  
13 become a part of the Warren Commission report and we could  
14 not seem to ascertain clearly enough that the fellow was what  
15 he claimed to be and, therefore, the statement might have been  
16 contaminated and might have affected the conclusions of the  
17 Warren Commission. So I think this case went on for a long  
18 time in our efforts to get all of this sorted out. But I  
19 remember this was important enough that I sought a conversa-  
20 tion with the Chief Justice who was Chairman of the Warren  
21 Commission and talked to him, you know, one afternoon -- I  
22 don't know if it was morning or afternoon but I talked to  
23 him in some detail about this matter privately so that the  
24 Warren Commission would not necessarily be misled by this  
25 man's testimony which we were not able to vouch for.

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Q What was it that Nosenko testified about or told the FBI that he had a relationship with the Warren Commission?

A I have forgotten. I am sure it is all in the Warren Commission records and I have forgotten the precise details of it. It had something to do with Oswald's time in the Soviet Union.

MR. ROETHE: Isn't it true that the material was never put into the Warren Commission, that you were successful in convincing them to leave it out?

THE WITNESS: That was my impression.

MR. ROETHE: This is in fact a memorandum you prepared for the records, isn't it, on your talk with the Chief Justice and that is dated June 24, 1964?

THE WITNESS: Well, if it was June 1964, then Nosenko must have defected before that.

MR. ROETHE: I guess you are right. You are right.

BY MR. OLSEN:

Q In June of 1964 your position with the Agency was what?

A I would have been then the Deputy Director for Plans.

Q Did you immediately succeed Richard Bissell?

A Yes. I was his Deputy and then I succeeded him. Yes. That is certainly my signature and it confirms that-  
ever I can recall about this.



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1           Q     Can you tell us what your impressions were as to  
2     the justification of the Agency in retaining for such an  
3     extended period of time the physical custody and person of  
4     Mr. Nosenko?

5           A     We were simply trying to establish his bona fides  
6     one way or the other. We took a very long time and had a  
7     very hard time doing it for reasons, detailed reasons which  
8     I don't recall, but I certainly remember that this was a  
9     very difficult case for us. I even believe we went down to  
10    talk to Mr. Katzenbach when he was the Deputy Attorney General  
11    in an effort to see if there was any way we could get assist-  
12    ance from the Department of Justice about what our responsi-  
13    bilities or our authorities or anything else where in the  
14    case of a defector who put himself in our hands who might be  
15    a spy on the United States and what we could do to somehow  
16    get this whole thing sorted out. Needless to say, the  
17    Department of Justice wasn't able to help us. Since we had  
18    the responsibilities for handling defectors in this country  
19    and we also had the responsibilities for establishing their  
20    bona fides, this was the reason that he was held for so long.  
21    We tried various things. I remember that I asked one of my  
22    Deputies who was then Admiral Rufus Taylor who had been  
23    Director of Naval Intelligence before, to spend full time  
24    attempting to sort out this case, see what we should do next  
25    about it, how we could get it regularized, et cetera. It

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1 just turned out to be a very difficult thing and I agree that  
2 he was kept an inordinate amount of time.

3 Q Was it your feeling that there was just simply no  
4 satisfactory provision of American law to handle this kind  
5 of case?

6 A There really is not, sir.

7 Q And that was your feeling at that time?

8 A Yes. And I don't know of any even now.

9 Q Did you feel that the Agency had in good faith  
10 exhausted all alternatives that appeared to be open to it?

11 A Yes. I really thought so. We spent a lot of time  
12 on this case.

13 Q To try to find a legal or proper way to handle it?

14 A That is right. Proper solution to it.

15 Q Was it the conclusion of the Agency that Mr.  
16 Nosenko just simply could not be released?

17 A That is right. If he was a Russian spy then we  
18 just found ourselves not in a position to be able to certify  
19 that he was not.

20 Q Wasn't there some procedure that was available to  
21 the Government of the United States with respect to deporting  
22 him if his bona fides couldn't be determined in a reasonable  
23 period of time?

24 Q I don't know whether this device has ever been  
25 used. I am not familiar with it.

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BY MR. ROETHE:

Q I take it, if you deported him you would be placing his life in considerable danger.

A There was always that problem. You know, I don't think we have ever deported any defectors no matter how much of a nuisance and pain in the neck they have been. The only ones that have gone back are the ones that asked to go back.

Q Do you recall who was made privy to this particular arrangement under which Mr. Nosenko was being held? Was the White House privy to this?

A Oh, I couldn't --

Q Was the Congress privy to it?

A I wouldn't have thought so. I don't remember ever discussing it with the Congress.

Q You do recall discussing it with the Attorney General?

A Yes, the Deputy Attorney General, he was at that time.

Q Was he told of the specific conditions under which Mr. Nosenko was being held?

A I really don't remember all the details of the session at that time, whether there were some other gentlemen with me and we had just a general discussion of this case.

Q Were you aware of the specific conditions under which he was being held?

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A Yes.

BY MR. OLSEN:

Q What was the purpose of specifying such extremely Spartan conditions for his confinement?

A I believe the feeling was being a Russian intelligence officer that the fact that it was not going to be all that comfortable might lead him over a period of time to be more honest with us than he had apparently been up to that time. This was a very difficult case. I think there were two or three people who had the most intimate knowledge of it on an almost daily basis and I would have no trouble with whatever testimony they gave you. I just don't remember all these details.

Q So that the reason as you understood it and the reason you approved these highly Spartan conditions under which he was held in solitary confinement, with no communications with whatever, no radio, no television, no newspapers, nothing to read, one bare light bulb in a very small cell, with almost no opportunity to see outside, all of these conditions were designed for the purpose of exerting mental pressure on him to come clean?

A That was my understanding of the reasons it was done this way.

Q Have there been, to your knowledge, Ambassador, any other instances in which defectors or others have been

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1        accorded similar treatment by the Agency?

2            A     Well, there was one bad case, I don't know when  
3        it was, many, many years ago, when some Agency interrogator  
4        was interrogating, I think it was some Russian or I think it  
5        was -- I don't know whether it was a Russian or a Balt. or  
6        somebody who got carried away and actually was physically  
7        abusive to this individual. And as soon as that came to my  
8        attention, that was not only stopped but the fellow who was  
9        responsible for it was fired. And it was --

10          Q     Was this at a period of time when you were DDP?

11          A     It must have been or even before that. Maybe I  
12        was Chief of Operations. I can't remember. But it was a long  
13        time ago.

14          Q     Did this occur inside the United States?

15          A     Yes, and it was made abundantly clear at that time  
16        to everybody that nobody was going to be manhandled any  
17        more forever.

18          Q     Is that the only instance --

19          A     Only instance.

20          Q     -- instance in which you know that happened?

21          A     That I recall, yes, and I don't even recall the  
22        year it happened.

23          Q     Do you remember the name of the person involved?

24          A     No, I do not. I think it could be ascertained  
25        without too much difficult.

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- 1 Q Was any personal injury inflicted on the individual?
- 2 A No. He didn't die of it, wasn't crippled, but it
- 3 was just they manhandled him some.
- 4 Q Was it a matter of losing one's temper or systematic
- 5 torture?
- 6 A I don't know. I think this fellow just exceeded
- 7 himself and exceeded his authority and thought by using some
- 8 force he would get some kind of confession out of this fellow.
- 9 Anyhow, I disapproved it and I don't remember the details.
- 10 Q Has there been any instance that you know of in
- 11 your entire career with the Agency, Ambassador, in which
- 12 a defector, an employee, an agent, an operative connected with
- 13 the Agency, has been killed?
- 14 A I know of none.
- 15 Q By the Agency?
- 16 A I know of none. I recall none.
- 17 Q Or at the behest of the Agency because of his being
- 18 a security risk or a traitor?
- 19 A Non, sir. I know of none.
- 20 Q Are you acquainted with a former employee of the
- 21 CIA by the name of Copeland?
- 22 A Who?
- 23 Q Copeland.
- 24 A Miles Copeland?
- 25 Q Miles Copeland.

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A How could I have avoided him.

Q In a fairly recent book called "Without Cloak and Dagger", Mr. Copeland describes a category of situations in which penetrators, defectors, that is, defectors from the United States, people who have furnished sensitive information to foreign governments, disposed of with extreme prejudice, the implication being that they are killed, and that this is a practice that is employed by the Agency from time to time.

A I do not believe Mr. Copeland.

Q Do you know of any such instance occurring within the Government of the United States?

A I do not.

Q What is your impression as to the source of such information and representations by Mr. Copeland?

A Mr. Copeland is a fancifier. What is more, he is a liar. What's more, he is one of the most dishonest son of a bitches I know.

Q Is it your impression, then, that this matter is just a figment of his imagination?

A That is my distinct impression.

Q Was his departure from the Agency anything that you had something to do with?

A No. I think he quit to go to work for some oil oil company in the Middle East. It is only in recent years

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1 that he has become a novelizer, fancifier, a general expert  
2 in London on the BBC on intelligence. And he is just full  
3 of baloney.

4 Q You aren't equivocating on that subject at all  
5 with us, are you?

6 A Not at all. Sometime privately I will tell you about  
7 a passage at arms I had with him at dinner in Georgetown  
8 some years ago. I must say -- can we go off the record  
9 just one second?

10 Q Sure.

11 (Discussion off the record.)

12 BY MR. OLSEN:

13 Q I would like now to turn to the matter of the relations  
14 between the Agency and the Warren Commission in  
15 connection with this study of the assassination of President  
16 Kennedy. I take it that the Nosenko case was at least one  
17 instance in which the Chief Justice was briefed on a matter  
18 that was not covered in a general briefing or presentation to  
19 the Warren Commission as a whole, is that true?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Was the Nosenko matter also one that was not presented  
22 or investigated by the staff of the Warren Commission?

23 A I don't remember any more but I don't think it  
24 was. I just don't know. I just honestly don't remember.

25 Q What was the --

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1           A     I mean, they must have had something to do with  
2 it because the statements made that the FBI had to come to  
3 the Commission in some form or other must have gone through  
4 the staff some way.

5           Q     What I am asking about was did the staff of the  
6 Warren Commission ever have access to CIA personnel or  
7 records relating to the Nosenko matter?

8           A     I don't think so. I don't -- it is not my impression  
9 but this is sometime ago now and for the record -- if the  
10 records show differently I would like to be corrected but I  
11 don't know.

12          Q     I am just asking for your best recollection.

13          A     I don't recall it.

14          Q     Were there other matters, Ambassador, relating to  
15 the work of the Warren Commission which were of a similar  
16 nature, that is, where the Chief Justice was briefed on a  
17 matter but it was not revealed to the Warren Commission as  
18 a whole or the staff?

19          A     I don't know, Mr. Olsen, of any others. I don't  
20 know whether John McCone ever talked to him privately about  
21 something or anybody else from the Agency. I don't recall  
22 talking to him about any other matters. That is Chief  
23 Justice Warren. I don't believe I ever saw him on another  
24 occasion privately.

25          Q     What position did you occupy within the Agency

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1 during the period of 1960 and 1961?

2 A 1960 and 1961 --

3 MR. ROETHE: That is leading up to the Bay of Pigs.

4 THE WITNESS: 1960, 1961. I would have been the  
5 Chief of Operations. In other words, sort of the No. 2 man  
6 in the Deputy Directorate for Plans.

7 BY MR. OLSEN:

8 Q This was immediately behind Richard Bissell?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And you stayed in that position, then, until 1964,  
11 did you say?

12 A No.

13 Q Or 1965.

14 A I thought that Bissell left in 1962.

15 Q Oh, he did. About February 1962.

16 A Then, I would have become the Deputy Director for  
17 Plans at that time.

18 Q You were then in those two positions as Director  
19 of Operations?

20 A Chief of Operations it was called.

21 Q Chief of Operations, and the Deputy Director for  
22 Plans was well acquainted with the entire operation on a  
23 broad basis involving the Bay of Pigs, the planning leading  
24 up to it?

25 A No, not necessarily. The Bay of Pigs was Mr.

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1 Bissell's work on that. I didn't have hardly anything to do  
2 with the Bay of Pigs. There were other things to be done in  
3 the Directorate for Plans besides the Bay of Pigs and that  
4 was his particular baby and I stayed out of it.

5 Q I see. So that -- was this true, then, all the way  
6 up until the time he left the Agency?

7 A Well, after the Bay of Pigs was over, I don't  
8 know what -- how long it was that he stayed on after that.  
9 Let's see. The Bay of Pigs was in what, the spring?

10 Q April 1961.

11 A And how long did he stay on?

12 Q About ten months.

13 MR. ROETHE: Not quite a year.

14 BY MR. OLSEN:

15 Q Did you take over any role from Mr. Bissell with  
16 respect to the followup to the Bay of Pigs after that  
17 disaster?

18 A Well, after I became Deputy Director for Plans  
19 there were all these ongoing operations about Cuba which  
20 we covered yesterday with -- who was it -- Mr. Belin went  
21 into this in great detail about the Mongoose Operation and  
22 all that business, the assassination theories and how this  
23 might be done and that might be done. We spent a long time  
24 on that yesterday afternoon.

25 Q Well, you were acquainted, then, with the fact that

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1 after the Bay of Pigs venture there continued to be a very  
2 substantial amount of CIA activity among the Cuban exiles and  
3 other Cuban emigres in the southern part of the United  
4 States?

5 A Oh, yes. We had a big station in Miami and there  
6 was big pressure from the Kennedy Administration, from  
7 President Kennedy himself and the Attorney General, et cetera,  
8 to upset the Castro regime. No question about that. I mean  
9 the records are just copious on that. The Government records  
10 should be. I don't know where all the Mongoose records are,  
11 whether they were kept in the Department of Defense or here,  
12 but there were certainly lots of records.

13 Q Well, the Agency was very much involved, then,  
14 in that effort of the Kennedy Administration?

15 A Yes.

16 Q And the Agency continued to sponsor and finance and  
17 help organize Cuban groups, revolutionary groups, anti-Castro  
18 groups in the southern United States?

19 A Yes, certainly.

20 Q Were you at that time acquainted, then, with the  
21 fact that a great many Cubans or Cuban-Americans were  
22 involved in these CIA organizations?

23 A Was I aware of this?

24 Q Yes.

25 A Yes.

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1 Q Were you aware of the fact that these Cuban groups  
2 and individuals largely became aware of the fact that these  
3 were CIA operations?

4 A Well, the way you put the question --

5 Q Answer the question any way you would like,  
6 qualify it or --

7 A Sure. I just was -- what I was trying to get at was  
8 that this effort at the time that I believe you are referring  
9 to was almost a Government-wide effort. The FBI was involved.  
10 The Immigration and Naturalization Service was involved.  
11 The Customs was involved. The Coast Guard was involved. The  
12 Army was involved. I believe the head of the Mongoose Task  
13 Force was sitting over in the Pentagon. In other words, it  
14 was such a coordinated Government effort on this problem that  
15 I don't know what the impression of the Cuban emigres in  
16 Miami was in those days, whether they thought --

17 Q Was the State Department also involved?

18 A Yes, sir. I think they helped out with an interro-  
19 gation center down there, and so forth.

20 Q So you don't have any impression as to whether the  
21 Cuban-Americans were involved in these organizations, were  
22 identifying themselves with the United States Government in  
23 general or the CIA specifically?

24 A No, I really don't know. I think they were almost  
25 all Cuban emigres, weren't they? They hadn't had time to

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1 become U.S. citizens. Most of them were pretty fresh out  
2 of Cuba.

3 Q Most of them had left Cuba in 1959 or 1960?

4 A Somewhere, or were even coming out at the time this  
5 was all going on.

6 Q Were you acquainted at that time -- I am talking  
7 from the time you took over as Deputy Director for Plans in  
8 1962 -- with the fact that there was among these Cuban emigres  
9 a high level of hostility to Fidel Castro and the Castro  
10 government?

11 A That was my impression.

12 Q Were you also aware of the fact that there was a  
13 high degree of interest in disposing of Castro and his  
14 administration among these people?

15 A I think there was a high degree of interest on the  
16 part of the U.S. Government for changing the Government of  
17 Cuba. No doubt about it.

18 Q Was there also a high degree of interest in that  
19 same objective on the part of the Cuban emigres?

20 A Well, I had always thought so because most of the  
21 emigres that were in Florida at the time had fled from  
22 Cuba because they were anti-Castro. They obviously would like  
23 to have gotten back under a more benevolent government and  
24 resumed their life in their own country, so I think most of  
25 them were rather dedicated to the cause of upsetting the Castro

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1 government.

2 Q Do you know whether there was during this period  
3 of 1962 and thereafter a great deal of talk among the Cuban  
4 emigres of plans to assassinate Castro?

5 A I don't know about plans to assassinate him. An  
6 awful lot of suggestions were made all through this Governmen  
7 about how one got rid of Castro, how one got rid of his  
8 government. Whether the Cuban exiles in Miami were talking  
9 about assassination plots or were trying to work things out.  
10 I don't recall specifically. I just recall that during this  
11 period there was a major effort made to carry out sabotage  
12 in Cuba, to do what we could to agitate the Castro government,  
13 and all kinds of plans and theories and options were put  
14 down and discarded or tried or whatever the case might be.  
15 A lot of theories were enunciated which weren't practical.  
16 There was a great deal of effort being put into this. I  
17 believe they showed me a memorandum yesterday which I wrote  
18 after talking to the Attorney General at one point which  
19 indicated very clearly the dissatisfaction of the President  
20 and the Attorney General with the success of the efforts  
21 up to that point. I mean, that is one of the exhibits in  
22 yesterday's testimony when Mr. Belin was here.

23 Q Now, after President Kennedy was assassinated in  
24 November 1963, and after it became known to you that the  
25 individual, Lee Harvey Oswald, was believed very broadly to

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1 have done the shooting, that Oswald had had some activity  
2 in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee or one-man operation in  
3 New Orleans, in that direction, that there were at least  
4 reports that he had attempted to penetrate the anti-Castro  
5 groups in New Orleans and possibly elsewhere, did anything  
6 get suggested to you -- did you hold any conversations with  
7 anybody about the possibility that the assassination of  
8 President Kennedy was a retaliation by Oswald against the  
9 activity, the talks and plans to assassinate Castro?

10 A No. I don't recall discussing that with anybody.  
11 I don't recall the thought ever having occurred to me at the  
12 time. The first time I ever heard such theory as that  
13 enunciated was in a very peculiar way by President Johnson.  
14 I don't even remember what time it was. I heard him say in  
15 my presence -- I don't know that the comment was even directed  
16 at me -- that because President Kennedy had been responsible  
17 for the death of the President Diem of Vietnam that this was  
18 why President Kennedy had been shot himself, and I couldn't  
19 see how the two things were even remotely connected, plus  
20 the fact that I think it would be pretty hard to demonstrate  
21 that President Kennedy assassinated Diem or shot him or  
22 anything like that. Maybe he put into effect the course of  
23 events but that is the only connection with the assassination  
24 I ever heard but I never heard of retaliation by attempts  
25 on Castro's life.

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1 Q I am not asking you about a story, Ambassador. I  
2 am asking you whether you ever had thoughts run through your  
3 mind as to whether or not there was a relationship between  
4 Oswald's contacts with the Cubans and his support for the  
5 Castro government, his attempts in September 1963 to get a  
6 passport to Cuba, to travel to Cuba, his attempts to penetrate  
7 anti-Castro groups. Did the connection ever enter your  
8 mind?

9 A I don't recall its having done so.

10 Q Was this matter of the Agency's or the United  
11 States Government's plans and efforts and attempts to  
12 assassinate Castro ever discussed with anybody from the  
13 Warren Commission?

14 A You say attempts to assassinate Castro?

15 Q Yes.

16 A Which attempts were these that you are referring  
17 to?

18 Q Well, I assume that the matter was gone into at some  
19 length yesterday, that you indicated that you didn't.

20 A There was some indication, et cetera, but it is  
21 not clear to me from the question you are asking me -- I am  
22 not fencing with you. I am just trying to answer your  
23 question. I am just trying to find out what you are saying  
24 that these -- there were attempts to assassinate Castro. Castro  
25 still seems to be alive and well even today and what I am not

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1 clear about is that having said that there were these attempts,  
2 that they were ever carried out to the extent or even  
3 attempted or did they ever get any place that they would have  
4 attracted Castro's attention. I have no evidence of this.  
5 At least, it was never brought to my attention. Maybe it  
6 was brought to other's attention but not to my attention.

7 Q I take it, then, that you never felt that it was  
8 necessary or desirable that anybody from the Warren Commission  
9 ever been advised, told, about the fact that there had been  
10 any plans developed or efforts undertaken to assassinate  
11 Castro.

12 A I didn't discuss it with the Warren Commission.

13 Q Did you ever participate in any conversation with  
14 any other official within the Agency concerning the desira-  
15 bility or non-desirability of revealing that matter to the  
16 Warren Commission?

17 A Nobody ever mentioned it to me. And I wasn't  
18 Director of the Agency. I wasn't deciding what was going to  
19 the Warren Commission and what wasn't. I was just answering  
20 inquiries from the Warren Commission.

21 Q Did you ever hold some conversations with either  
22 Mr. Harvey or Mr. Bissell about the desirability of briefing  
23 Mr. McCone on what was going on?

24 A We covered that yesterday. I don't recall this  
25 conversation that is alleged to have taken place. I don't

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1 recall it at all.

2 Q In any event, to the best of your knowledge,  
3 nobody from the Warren Commission was ever advised that  
4 there had ever been any plans of the Agency or the U.S.  
5 Government to assassinate Castro?

6 A I didn't talk to the Warren Commission about it.  
7 I don't know whether anybody else in the Agency might have.

8 Q The prosecution that was undertaken in New Orleans  
9 by District Attorney Jim Garrison of a man by the name of  
10 Clay Shaw --

11 A Yes.

12 Q -- was a matter which was of some interest to the  
13 Agency, was it not?

14 A Well, my recollection of Garrison is that Garrison  
15 was trying to subpoena me to come and testify in some trial  
16 in New Orleans. This is what attracted my attention to  
17 Garrison, plus his reiterated statements that the CIA was  
18 responsible for the assassination of President Kennedy, and  
19 that was how I knew about Jim Garrison. I obviously followed  
20 in the papers about the Clay Shaw trial, and so forth, which  
21 I gather finally ran its course. I forget what happened. Was  
22 Shaw exonerated?

23 Q Yes. I believe he was acquitted, if my memory  
24 serves me correctly.

25 Now, was there anything beyond the attempts of Mr.

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Garrison to subpoena you that was of interest to the Agency in connection with that case?

A Well, I don't --

Q And the general statements and allegations?

A I thought the man was sick, Garrison. I always have thought he was sick.

Q He alleged, did he not, that the Agency had connections with a number of different people, including somebody by the name of David Ferrir and Oswald and Shaw?

A I guess so, yes.

Q And others.

A I guess so. Now that you mention them, these names are familiar to me.

Q You undertook in connection with that case, did you not, to have the matter checked out thoroughly within the Agency?

A Yes, sir.

Q To determine whether there were any such connections.

A I believe so. I believe so.

Q Had the Agency ever had any contacts with Clay Shaw of any nature at all?

A My recollection was that at one time or other he was approached by the Domestic Contact Service for some purpose. Was this correct? Somehow -- this will be in the records. Somehow I had the impression that -- you know what

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1 the --

2 Q I do know the Domestic Contact Service is --

3 A Yes, and it seemed to me that at one time the  
4 records showed he had been approached by them in some  
5 connection or other.

6 Q Shaw was engaged in the import-export business, was  
7 he?

8 A I don't remember what his business was. I remember  
9 he was a homosexual or something.

10 Q Was the Agency interested in preserving from dis-  
11 closure the fact that he had been contacted by the Domestic  
12 Contacts Service?

13 A I don't recall, sir. I don't recall whether this  
14 ever became an issue one way or the other.

15 Q Did Garrison ever succeed in subpoenaing you?

16 A No.

17 Q Was anybody from the Agency ever called to testify  
18 in that case?

19 A Not that I recall.

20 Q Did the matter of the Garrison prosecution of Shaw  
21 interest the top officials of the Agency sufficient to have  
22 it be the subject matter of morning conferences?

23 A It might have been mentioned. I don't really  
24 remember whether it was in a morning conference or where it  
25 was but it certainly would have been a topic with the wild

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1 assertions he was making. I remember even watching him once  
2 on the television with my mother and he was such a convincing  
3 son of a gun that I thought by the time it was over I had  
4 better straighten my mother out about my life, and I have had  
5 conversations with various people from New Orleans about  
6 Garrison, through the years, like Eddie Hebert and Moon  
7 Landrieu, and so forth, so I have a pretty good fix on what  
8 kind of a character Garrison is.

9 Q Did the Agency have any contacts, according to the  
10 studies you caused to be made within the Agency on that case,  
11 did the Agency have connections of any nature whatever at any  
12 time with Lee Harvey Oswald?

13 A Not that I ever heard of. I don't think that  
14 any examination that was made ever indicated that anybody  
15 from the Agency had been in touch with Oswald. I have never  
16 seen one piece of paper to this effect.

17 Q And did Mr. Belin go over with you yesterday the  
18 matter of the Agency's role in reporting on aspects of  
19 Oswald's trip to Mexico City in September 1963?

20 A I don't recall that he did yesterday.

21 MR. HARDY: No, we didn't go into that.

22 THE WITNESS: But isn't that exhaustively covered  
23 in the Warren Commission report?

24 BY MR. OLSEN:

25 Q There are aspects of it that are not covered in

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1 Warren Commission report.

2 A Are there? I didn't realize that.

3 Q As I gather kind of second-hand here within the  
4 Commission's staff, the Agency had a bug in the Cuban Consulate  
5 in Mexico City.

6 A I don't think that was true.

7 Q Didn't the Agency pick up a telephone conversation

8 A I thought that what happened was -- I mean, look,  
9 this is a long time ago, and I am sure that somebody would  
10 be delighted to pull out the records on this but my recollec-  
11 tion is that the Agency in connection with the Mexicans had  
12 a camera which photographed people going in and out of the  
13 Cuban Embassy and that they had in connection with our over-  
14 all operations in Mexico City a centralized telephone tap which  
15 tapped all kinds of lines, and one of them was the Cuban  
16 Embassy but there was no bug in the Cuban Embassy that I  
17 ever recall.

18 Q I see. Well, then, I appreciate your straighten-  
19 ing me out.

20 A That is my best recollection.

21 Q OK. This was a generalized telephone tap?

22 A This is a pretty sensitive item but for years the  
23 Mexicans and the Americans have been working on the Soviets,  
24 the Chinese, the Cubans, and so forth, through a very large  
25 maze of telephone taps done at a central place. I mean,

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1 these aren't lines put on right there at the Embassy. They  
2 are way back in a central location.

3 Q And was it this that accounted for the fact that  
4 there was some later attempt to pick out a person who  
5 appeared to be an American going into the Soviet Embassy?

6 A Yes. There was some photographs of a man who has  
7 never been identified. Nobody has ever figured out who it  
8 was as far as I know. Time was spent endlessly figuring  
9 out who this man might be. The FBI went over it, we went over  
10 it, everybody you can think of went over it and as far as I  
11 know, he has never been identified.

12 Q How did it happen, as you recall now from the  
13 investigations conducted at that time, how did it happen  
14 that his picture got picked out of all the pictures that  
15 had been taken of people going into the Soviet Embassy and  
16 have it accompany this report to the FBI?

17 A I'm sorry. I have really forgotten what -- I think  
18 it was an FBI photograph, too, wasn't it? Weren't they the  
19 ones that made the photograph or picked it out or something,  
20 because they have an operation in Mexico, but I don't remember  
21 now just what the division of labor between the two organi-  
22 zations was. But in any event, let me get on with this. I  
23 don't know why the photograph was picked out. I have no  
24 recollection any more.

25 Q Ambassador, was there anything whatever relating

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1 to Agency actions in Mexico City or elsewhere in Mexico and  
2 connected with the trip by Lee Harvey Oswald there that was  
3 not revealed to the Warren Commission?

4 A Not that I am aware of, sir. Not that I am aware  
5 of.

6 Q Was there information that had been obtained from  
7 highly sensitive sources within the Soviet Union relating  
8 to any involvement about Lee Harvey Oswald with the KGB  
9 or any other instrumentality of the Soviet Union that was  
10 not revealed to the Warren Commission?

11 A Not that I am aware.

12 Q Is there anything at all, Ambassador, that you know  
13 of today relating to the investigation of the assassination  
14 of President Kennedy that was not fully and openly revealed  
15 to the Warren Commission except the Nosenko matter which  
16 was a matter on which the Chief Justice alone was briefed?

17 A Sir, I would like to answer your question by saying  
18 that I was not the Director of the Agency at that time. I  
19 was the Deputy Director for Plans and I was, therefore, the  
20 recipient of many inquiries from the Commission to check  
21 out information overseas and do a variety of things in  
22 connection with the Commission's work. I thought we were  
23 enormously conscientious in helping the Commission and I  
24 thought when it was all over we had done an absolutely first-  
25 rate job and I do not recall any of these things that you

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1 mention having been held back. I thought we were very forth-  
2 coming with the Commission because the President, President  
3 Johnson at the time, wanted the Commission helped in every  
4 way possible. We did all kinds of things to help them in  
5 their work that we probably ordinarily would not have done.

6 Q Then, do I take it that your answer would be that  
7 so far as you are now aware, there was nothing that was held  
8 back from the Warren Commission except the details of the  
9 Nosenko matter as to which the Chief Justice alone was  
10 briefed?

11 A That is right. That was my distinct impression.

12 Q Are you aware of any particular, Ambassador,  
13 in which the Warren Commission did not fairly present to the  
14 American public the results of its investigation that had  
15 CIA aspects to it?

16 A Not that I know of, sir. You know, I have been one  
17 of the ones that as these various books have come out and  
18 allegations made, and so forth, thought to myself, my  
19 God, how could the Warren Commission have done much more  
20 than it did? It seemed to me they had a very good staff of  
21 lawyers and they were very conscientious and hardworking and  
22 the FBI helped, CIA helped, and everybody helped as far as  
23 I know, and I always thought the Warren Commission report  
24 was probably first class. I haven't read it all, it is too  
25 long.

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Q Do I take it that your answer would be that you know of no matter that was not fairly revealed to the American public by the Warren Commission insofar as CIA aspects of that investigation are concerned?

A Sir, if there was I am not aware of any.

Q There are, Ambassador, certain matters of this -- on this subject which we feel obliged to have made a matter of record. It isn't that we are cross-examinng you from the standpoint of believing something different than you believe necessarily.

A Oh, I accept that. I want to give you the best answer I can.

Q Did you ever encounter or know of any information being turned up of Oswald having been in contact with an organization in New Orleans or elsewhere that was in effect being sponsored by the CIA?

A I don't know.

Q Such as the Cuban Revolutionary Front?

A I don't recall anything about this matter.

Q And no records of any kinds were ever turned up indicating Oswald had contact with an Agency sponsored Cuban group?

A I don't know, Mr. Olsen. It may have been. It may have been in the records. I just don't recall it.

Q There has been some testimony that has been received

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1 by the Commission --

2 A Is this the Rockefeller Commission?

3 Q Yes. The Rockefeller Commission, in which an Agency,  
4 past Agency official, has expressed the opinion that Premier  
5 Castro had a pretty effective intelligence operation going in  
6 this country among the Cuban emigres. Would that accord  
7 with your own impression?

8 A I really don't know. I do know that the Russians  
9 have done what they can to improve the Cuban Intelligence  
10 Service but how effective the Cuban Intelligence Service has  
11 been in its work in the United States I have no way of knowing.

12 Q Has this Agency within your knowledge, Ambassador,  
13 ever been penetrated by a foreign intelligence agent?

14 A I don't know, sir. I hope not. We recognize that  
15 we are target number 1 for the KGB. That has been told us  
16 by various defectors. Over the years we have done our level  
17 best to fend off efforts. We have identified what we thought  
18 were a couple of probes in this direction at various times.  
19 But if the Agency has ever been penetrated I am not aware of  
20 it, although I have to say that anybody who is Director of  
21 the Agency every day when he walks into the building wonders  
22 whether if that is the day that somebody will be turned out  
23 that might be a penetration of the Agency, but I know of none.

24 Q Have there been any instances that you know of in  
25 whatever capacity you have had with the Agency in which a

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1 debate has raged within the Agency as to whether a particular  
2 employee is an agent of a foreign government?

3 A Well, I think that, you know, as we were saying  
4 earlier, just this afternoon, from time to time there has been  
5 a feeling that maybe that fellow might have been a recruiter  
6 or this individual might have been, investigation is conducted,  
7 in an effort to see if this is the case. One hopes that the  
8 investigation is good and adequate enough to clear the  
9 individual. We have used the polygraph wherein there was  
10 some question about these things. We have used all the  
11 techniques that were reasonably available to us to try to  
12 prevent this happening and I don't know. There we are.

13 MR. ROETHE: Were there occasions when you terminated  
14 employees under your authority to terminate without any  
15 question because you thought there may be some suspicion that  
16 could not be eliminated?

17 THE WITNESS: I can't remember during my time as  
18 Director this happening. I believe that before I became  
19 Director there were a couple of cases that were of dubious  
20 validity about individuals who were thought possibly to  
21 have had some unsatisfactory connections and were terminated,  
22 but the case was never proved against them as far as I was  
23 aware. And I don't know of any cases that as Director I  
24 terminated that way. At least I can't think of any. It would  
25 be very easy to ascertain this, though, and I wish you would.

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