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Subject: Church Committee Executive Session of 5/26/76

FYI only. This was the last Executive Session meeting of the Church Committee, immediately prior to its dissolution (and supersession by the new permanent Senate Intelligence Committee). This is the meeting at which the full Committee approves publication of the the Schweiker/Hart Report (what becomes Book V) on the performance of the intelligence agencies in investigating the assassination of President Kennedy. The transcript of this Executive Session was declassified in late '93 and early '94 by the FBI/CIA but, as far as I can tell, sat in fabled "Box 41" of the Church Committee collection -- at the Senate Intelligence Committee -- until last Friday. Today, I took Box 41 to NARA II. I made a copy of the 5/26 Executive Session transcript, however. On the whole, it doesn't add anything substantive to Book V of the Church Report, but there are a few interesting passages. One example: staffer Jim Johnston is briefing the Committee on the extent to which the leadership of both the CIA and FBI kept their own assassination-investigators in the dark about AMLASH and related items when he is asked by Senator Daniel Inouye (not on the Church Committee itself, but the incoming Chairman of the new Permanent Committee): Inouye: Are you satisfied that the only reason for the coverup conspiracy on the part of the top leadership of the FBI and CIA was simple face-saving? Schweiker: No. Johnston: No, Senator, I am not satisfied that that would be the conclusion... there is open the possibility that higher authority in the government... approved the CIA's conduct in this regard. We have attempted to detail every meeting between the President -- President Johnson -- and Director McCone in the relevant time period, November/December 1963... I don't think it is solely limited at this point to a coverup by Agency officials, high level Agency officials. I think the other option has to be kept open.

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