

January 26, 1998

Mr. J. Barry Harrelson
Historical Review Program
Office of Information Management
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC 20505

Re: Request for Additional Information and Records No. CIA-XX
(Surveillance Operations in Mexico City- Bugs and Microphones)

Dear Barry:

The Review Board staff has reviewed all the project files in the CIA Microfilm Collection in an attempt to determine whether documentation of all known surveillance operations aimed at the Cuban and Soviet installations in Mexico City during the time of Lee Harvey Oswald's visit through the assassination of President Kennedy has been adequately accounted for. For purposes of comparison, the Review Board staff did examine the project files covering periods outside the window. However, this request is primarily targeting the September through December 1963 timeframe. Another goal of this effort was to determine whether there were any gaps in operational reporting during that specific timeframe.

The Lopez Report, which chronicles the HSCA's understanding of CIA electronic surveillance at the time of Lee Harvey Oswald's visit to Mexico City and reveals details of telephonic and photographic surveillance, was used as a frame of reference for the Review Board's effort in re-examining the project files. However, a closer review of the project files revealed additional evidence of other surveillance activities targeting the Cuban and Soviet Embassies, including plans for installing wall bugs and hidden microphones, as well as evidence of more than one basehouse covering the Cuban Embassy.¹ This is particularly interesting since, according to CIA's own record and interpretation of events, Oswald was inside the offices of both the Cuban and Soviet Consulates during his sojourn in Mexico City. Although the records do not confirm that additional operations involving the use of bugs or microphone surveillance coincided with the Oswald visit, the Review Board staff would like verify for the record whether or not such additional surveillance was active during the critical September-December 1963 time frame. We have seen specific references to bugging operations but

¹See HMMW 12454 and HMMA 20307 which were previously referenced in our letter of April 11, 1997, p. 11.

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it has not been verified when such operations commenced or whether they coincided with Oswald's visit to Mexico City.

Based on the files made available to the HSCA, it is our current understanding that the field of electronic surveillance which could have possibly collected intelligence on Oswald's activities in Mexico City consisted of the following projects:

PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEILLANCE

Soviet Compound

LIEMPTY - overall, multi-purpose project

Photo Basehouses:

LIMITED: Primary base covering front gate

LILYRIC: Secondary base also covering front gate

LILYRIC: Covered back courtyard of Soviet compound

Cuban Compound

LIONION

Photo Basehouse:

LIERODE : Covered main entrance to Embassy, with coverage extended to Consulate entrance commencing late September 1963 by means of additional camera.

TELEPHONIC SURVEILLANCE

Covering both Soviet and Cuban lines:

LIENVOY: taps on Embassy lines

LIFEAT: taps on residence lines

ARRB requests that the CIA provide verification that the above list represents all electronic surveillance targeting the Soviet and Cuban compounds in Mexico City during the period in question, including any additional operations target the diplomatic residences and internal offices. ARRB staff has discussed this subject with HRG staff most knowledgeable on the technical aspects of this subject. HRG staff have provided oral confirmation that there were no bugs, wiretaps, nor hidden microphones in either the Cuban or Soviet Embassies during the period of the Oswald visit. In order to satisfy this request, we ask that CIA conduct an additional search for records on this subject, limiting the search to the timeframe of September to December 1963, and that a response in writing

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documenting the results of this search be provided to the ARRB by XXXX, 1998..

Thank you for your continued cooperation and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

T. Jeremy Gunn

Executive Director