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PERFORMANCE OF THE INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES WITH RESPECT
TO THE INVESTIGATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY)
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SUBJECTS : AMLASH

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WARREN COMMISSION
Review Staff: 76-0450
4 June 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Inspector General
ATTENTION : Mr. Scott D. Breckinridge, Jr.
VIA : Chief, Review Staff
SUBJECT : Comments Concerning SSC Draft Report
(The Performance of the Intelligence
Agencies with Respect to the Inves-
tigation of President Kennedy)

1. Attached hereto as Tabs A through C are the undersigned's comments regarding the above-noted SSC Draft Report from a security, factual, and editorial standpoint.

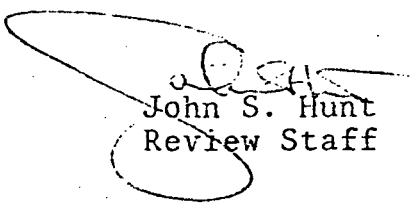
2. It should be noted that the SSC intends to add to this draft report two additional sections, a Conclusions and Recommendations Section and a Chronology. These two sections have almost been completed by the SSC, and will be made available for review by the Agency. As indicated in the attached, the report as written is repetitive, and makes two main points:

a. U.S. Intelligence Agencies were in error by not fully advising the Warren Commission of U.S. involvement with Cuban Exile groups, with specific emphasis on any attempts by the Agency to assassinate Castro.

b. The Agency's involvement with AMLASH became known to Castro, and because of his knowledge of the AMLASH operation Castro retaliated by assassinating President Kennedy.

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3. The attached comments are provided for your information, and it is understood that the draft report is also being reviewed by appropriate representatives of the IG, DDO, and DDA.


John S. Hunt
Review Staff

Attachments:
Tabs A-C

Tab A

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

General --- The paper begins by emphasizing that it did not uncover any evidence that the Kennedy assassination was the result of a conspiracy, but that they did discover evidence that various intelligence agencies were not forthcoming with the Warren Commission. The paper then goes on to leave the impression that the JFK assassination was the result of a conspiracy by Castro in retaliation for our AMLASH operation.

The entire paper is highly repetitive, and begins with a summary, followed by a slightly more detailed version, followed by a more detailed version, etc. etc..... The paper relies heavily on the testimony of current/former Agency employees, with specific emphasis on the individual within CI Staff who stated that he would have altered the manner in which he conducted the investigation of the Kennedy assassination if he had known of the AMLASH operation. The paper hammers away again and again that we were meeting with AMLASH when JFK was killed.

Ray P. ...

As a saving factor, the paper is far more derogatory to the FBI than it is to the Agency, and in short asks why no one in the Executive branch thought to bring the AMLASH and other Castro operations to the attention of the Warren Commission, while admitting that the Agency did an excellent job of reporting and assembling information on Oswald and in immediately reporting our information to the FBI and the Warren Commission.

Specific ---

Page 44 -- Outlines a discrepancy between the testimony of the "desk officer" (not further identified) and Mr. Karamessines regarding a cable concerning Sylvia Duran and Cuban involvement in the assassination. I think this portion should be closely reviewed by those familiar with this cable.

*Book
Oswald
file*

Throughout Report -- The paper spends a great deal of time rehashing the story that Oswald received money from the Cubans in Mexico City, while at the same time clearly demonstrating that this allegation was a fabrication. Since it was a fabrication, and this does not seem to be of question either to the SSC, Warren Commission, FBI, or CIA, there seems to be little justification for such repetitive treatment of this story.

Pages 106 and 107 -- This section criticizes the Agency for not having interrogated AMLASH concerning the Kennedy assassination, in the context that both we and the FBI should have begun extensive interviews with our various Cuban sources to determine if Castro was involved.

Pages 113 and 114 -- Deals with a lead developed concerning a Cuban/American who mysteriously left Mexico City on a twin engine aircraft for Havana shortly before (after ?) the assassination. The paper criticizes us for not thoroughly following up on this lead, despite the fact that we immediately turned the lead over to the FBI to investigate further.

Pages 126 and 127 -- After having spent some time explaining the Agency's and the FBI's mistakes in not informing the Warren Commission about plots to assassinate Castro, the report finally points out that with respect to the "underworld" plots, Robert Kennedy, Allen Dulles, and many other senior officials were already aware of these plots. The report then states "there would have been no clear reason to connect these underworld plots to the President's assassination".

NOTE: Page 128 then goes on to explain that the AMLASH operation was different, since it was made clear to AMLASH that the CIA and the U.S. Government approved of his plans to assassinate Castro. WA

Tab B

FACTUAL OBJECTIONS

Page 12 -- States that "Hoover and other senior officials first learned of plots to assassinate Castro in July 1964".

NOTE: While this is clearly incorrect, Mr. Johnston indicated that the above sentence should read that the officials first learned of the "AMLASH" operation in July 1964.

Page 55 -- paragraph three --- Concerning an Agency cable outlining an unknown passenger in the cockpit of an aircraft to Havana, the following sentence appears: "The cable was received in Mexico City since it may be found in the station's files". This sentence is apparently incomplete, and does not make sense as it is presently written.

Page 56 and 57 -- Discusses the 8 December 1963 cable to JMWAVE to halt all operations pending a high level/Cuban policy review. In this regard, the paper flatly states that one of the operations to be halted was the delivery of the rifles and telescopic sites in connection with AMLASH. I don't believe that the cable, nor other related documents, specify which operations were to be halted.

Page 120 -- In discussing the various Cuban exile groups, and the interest in these groups by the military, FBI, and CIA, the paper does not make it clear that the Agency did not have any operational interest in either SNFE or Alpha 66.

Tot C

SECURITY OBJECTIONS

Page 76 -- paragraph one --- Identifies the source of an allegation that Oswald had received money in Mexico City as a "Nicaraguan". The country should be deleted.

Page 78 -- paragraph two --- Identifies the above source by the name "Alvarado", which should be deleted.

NOTE: All other references to this fabricated story refer to the source as "D".

Page 144 -- middle of page --- Quotes from the polygraph report on AMWHIP. All references to the polygraph, together with the quote should be deleted. If this information is absolutely necessary, then it should be paraphrased so as not to indicate that it was obtained through polygraph.

Page 177 -- top of page --- Outlines information which the Agency provided to the Warren Commission on a suspected KGB agent in the Soviet Embassy, Mexico City (Kostikov). Believe this should be deleted on the basis of sources and methods.

SECRET/SENSITIVE

- Page 10 "Oswald contacted a known KGB agent" with the Soviet Embassy in Mexico. While it is known that Oswald contacted the Vice Consul at the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City, to the best of our knowledge it was for the purpose of obtaining a visa for the Soviet Union. The fact that the Vice Consul happened to be a KGB officer complicates the matter but there is no evidence that Oswald knew this Soviet was KGB. Therefore, recommend this sentence be modified accordingly.
- Page 14 We are not aware of any requests by CIA's investigators for files on the AMLASH operation. It would appear that when the Kennedy assassination was being investigated whomsoever held the AMLASH files did not associate the AMLASH case with the assassination or discern any connection.
- Page 53 Believe the word "technical" should be removed when referring to CIA collection capability in Mexico City.
- Page 79 Alvarado or "D" claimed that he saw Oswald being paid by Cubans to assassinate Kennedy. He volunteered this to CIA and was interrogated. At the request of the FBI Washington, Alvarado was turned over to the Mexican authorities for interrogation. Later Alvarado was polygraphed by CIA with the FBI providing the interpreter. Therefore comment that the FBI was denied access to Alvarado is untrue.

SECRET/SENSITIVE

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Page 113

Re the "intriguing" case of a man crossing the Mexican border on 23 Nov. then flying to Cuba. This case was investigated and pertained to Gilbert Lopez, a U.S. citizen who had secured a fifteen day Mexican tourist card at Tampa, Florida, on 20 November 1963. He entered Mexico on this document at Nuevo Laredo on 23 November 1963 - the day President Kennedy was assassinated. He checked into the Roosevelt Hotel on 25 November 1963. On 27 November he checked out of the hotel and departed for Havana aboard a regularly scheduled Cubana Flight # 465. He happened to be, according to the manifest, the only passenger. The flight had a crew of 9 Cubans, which is normal. He had a courtesy visa to visit Cuba.

On the general question of identifying Kostikov as a KGB officer in Mexico City and his relationship to Department 13 of the KGB, this was checked with appropriate office and feeling is that nothing will be lost by this identification.

~~SECRET/SENSITIVE~~