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7 December 1977

Returned to HSCA
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Mr. Robert Blakey, HSCA Staff Director and Chief Counsel

1. Mr. Cummins brought Mr. Blakey to my office at 1400 today and Mr. Leader and I met with them for about an hour and 20 minutes. The purpose of the meeting was to deliver to Mr. Cummins, for review by Mr. Blakey, an unsanitized copy of the Task Force comments on Book V of the SSC Final Report, as well as two sanitized copies of the same report for review by HSCA Staff members.

2. I described to Mr. Blakey the genesis of the study and, in very general terms, how it had been conducted, emphasizing that it is not a report of the Inspector General in the usual sense, because it was based on work by a Task Force. I stated that the report was, however, assembled and written in its final form by Mr. Leader and me, and we would assume responsibility for any imprecisions.

3. I stated that there may still be materials in Agency files that relate to issues that may be raised, but that on their face did not appear to be relevant. It would take a specific reference to make such pieces of information meaningful. I stated that we were pretty confident that we had covered most of the ground. Reference was made to a couple of items that had turned up since the report was written. These will be turned over to Mr. Blakey at some point.

4. I noted that the Terms of Reference that he would see in the report amounted to a point of departure, and that as we progressed some of the questions seemed unimportant and new ones emerged.

5. I discussed the effect that protection of sources and methods had on the sanitized version. The names of Agency personnel below a certain level were removed; he would see them in the unsanitized version. A press story that was significant because of its reference to a man to have been used in the assassination of Castro posed problems for us. Although the press reference was unclassified, its significance was based on operational information, and we had attempted to develop the story while protecting the man. We had deleted the name of a Cuban

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exile leader who was used by the Mafia. We also had deleted information that would permit the identification of four Cubans, one of whom had served ten years in jail but was now out of jail in Cuba (AMLASH), and three others who are still in jail. In treatment of the AMLASH operation, we had deleted references to places, dates and events that otherwise would have permitted his identification.

6. I said that in one case we had turned up an operation (AMTRUNK) which had been sold to the White House and the Department of State by a prominent journalist who is suspected of being a Communist agent. This suspicion raised security considerations about the operation. I described the role of counterintelligence analysis and stated that CI analysis, in the Agency, is to alert us to exercise care should the Agency have occasion to deal with the man. While there are people in the Agency who believe the man to be a Communist agent, there is no confirmation of it and it would be unfair if the conclusions reached in the CI analysis were untrue and his name had been published. I noted that Mr. Blakey would read this in the unsanitized version and would be able to compare it with the sanitized version.

7. I told him that all of Tab F had been deleted because of the extensive operational detail. The sanitization of this report was affected by the Mexican government denial of the CIA presence in Mexico, the involvement of a former Mexican President, a series of joint operations with the Mexican intelligence service, and the ability to identify persons who had assisted the Agency.

8. I observed that where we express opinions, even if he has reservations about them, we feel that they have merit. We had done our best to understand what we had found and had expressed some attitudes about the various issues raised by our research. I said that after he had read the report he may have questions, and we could discuss them.

9. Mr. Blakey asked if we had reached any conclusions about the Kennedy assassination. I said simply that we had found nothing that bore on the matter. In a general discussion I pointed out that we were addressing the issues raised in Book V of the SSC Final Report and that if it had turned up evidence on the Kennedy assassination we would have reported it, but primarily we were addressing the question of what the Agency had done. This covered the subject of assassination, but we found nothing we thought bore on it directly.

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10. Mr. Blakey asked what I thought about whether anyone had participated with Lee Harvey Oswald. I said that I had no factual information to that effect, but as a personal observation it was hard for me to believe that he would not have told someone what he planned to do. I would have expected him to tell Marina, although from reviews of the recent book, this does not appear to be the case. He offered the view that had the Russians been involved we would have picked up some reporting by now in one way or other. I said that although it might be possible, were such the case, I thought it highly unlikely, given Soviet practice on security. I applied the same reasoning to the Cubans. He asked which Cubans, indicating his interest in the right-wing Cubans. I told him I was speaking of the Castro Cubans, but that if right-wing Cubans had been involved the FBI would be more likely to happen on such information than would CIA. I noted that the present ADDO, Mr. Shackley, had been COS, Miami, during the period in question and could repeat the testimony he had given the Church Committee on the matter; he is quoted in Book V of the SSC Report. In any event, any conspirators would be few in numbers and would have reasons to keep it to themselves.

11. Mr. Blakey speculated about possible connections between Jack Ruby and others. I noted that our study had a few comments on a possible connection between Ruby and Trafficante in 1959, but that we could not take it beyond that. I said again, that the FBI would be more likely to have information on this than would CIA. I said that we had not carried our speculations in the report beyond a possibility of a connection, as we had no factual basis for doing so. He speculated generally about the various alternatives and I replied in effect that I was not inclined to speculate very much without some factual basis and that, in any event, I was not an assassination buff.

12. After Mr. Blakey has read the unsanitized report, and compared it with the sanitized version which is for review by his staff, I expect to hear from him further.

/s/

S. D. Breckinridge

cc: OLC,Mr. Cummins