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16 October 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: Edward Ryan
Deputy Director for Operations Training

SUBJECT: Interview With Staff of the House Select
Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) (S)

1. (S) On 16 October 1978, at the request of Mr. Scott Breckinridge, I met with Messrs. Robert Blakey and Gary Cornwell of the staff of the HSCA. Mr. Blakey said that he had some questions for me that his staff had wanted him to ask.

2. (S) Mr. Blakey wanted me to explain the functions of Division D, which I did in general terms, identifying liaison with foreign SIGINT services, cryptographic procurement, and covert intercept as its three principle missions. Mr. Blakey seemed confused as to the relationship between the CI Staff and Division D, particularly with respect to a possible duplication in their functions. He specifically asked me what CI/SIG was. I said I had not heard that designation, but presumably the "SIG" stood for SIGINT, and I went on to explain the complementary roles of the CI Staff and Division D in the investigation of illegal agents using radios.

3. (S) Mr. Blakey said that Division D had opened a file on Lee Harvey Oswald, and observed that he couldn't see how the functions of Division D, as I'd described them, would explain this. I said I was not aware that Division D had done such a thing, and that the only reason I could imagine for such an action would be if Oswald had been seeking employment as an intercept operator, but even in that case, the Office of Communications, rather than Division D, would have held the file, since all intercept personnel at that time were in that Office. Mr. Blakey asked whether the CI Staff would have had a file on Oswald, and I said only if he were suspected of working for a hostile intelligence service.

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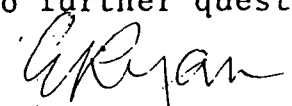
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4. (S) Mr. Blakey observed that every organization has its formal, on-paper structure, but it also has a second, informal structure, which is the one that really determines how the organization works. He can understand CIA's formal organization, but the second one is more difficult for him to comprehend. Speaking of Bill Harvey, he asked whether I knew him. I said I did. This led to a discussion about how it could have happened that Harvey, as Chief, Division D, could have been engaged in operational activity which seemed to have nothing to do with Division D's responsibilities, as a service element of CIA. I said that when I came into the Agency in 1948, Harvey was already a very senior and respected officer: that in subsequent years he had a very close relationship with Mr. Helms, and if the latter had given Harvey some special assignment, Harvey could easily have carried it out in a compartmented way alongside his regular duties. I pointed out that since Division D itself was a compartmented activity, it would not surprise anyone if the Chief of the Division were handling personally an especially compartmented activity. Mr. Blakey wanted to know how Harvey could have gotten personnel and funds to carry out his assignment. I said he would probably borrow the personnel in the name of the Director, and he would get his funds in the regulation manner, probably from an account under the Director's control. But he might not need either: he might use people who would simply handle his needs in addition to their regular assignments.

5. (S) Mr. Blakey asked me if I knew who QJWIN was. I said I of course knew the crypt from its appearance in the Rockefeller Commission Report, and that "QJ" was a digraph for a Luxembourg Station source, agent or operation and I knew QJWIN was a Luxembourger. Mr. Blakey did not pursue the question.

6. (S) Mr. Blakey asked what kind of files Division D kept, and I said they were all devoted to the operational activities of the Division: that, except for our own personnel, there were no files on individuals. Mr. Cornwell asked if Harvey had had any personal files and I said that if he had, he had not left them behind in Division D, and I doubted very much if he had left any behind when he left the Agency. The HSCA staffers had no further questions.


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