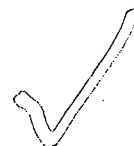


re CIA IR-15



Assassination Records Review Board
600 E Street NW • 2nd Floor • Washington, DC 20530
(202) 724-0088 • Fax: (202) 724-0457



December 18, 1997

Mr. John Pereira
Chief
Historical Review Group
Center for the Study of Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C. 02505

CIA HAS NO OBJECTION TO
DECLASSIFICATION AND/OR
RELEASE OF CIA INFORMATION
IN THIS DOCUMENT

John 3/30/00

Re: Status of CIA Responses to Assassination Records Review Board's Requests for Additional Information and Records

Dear John:

I am writing to follow-up on our telephone call earlier today and to convey my serious concern about the status of CIA's responses to the Review Board's requests for additional information and records. Although CIA has completed its responses to several requests, and many others have been answered in part, a significant number of requests have not been answered — including some that were made more than two years ago. On many occasions we have been assured that responses would be forthcoming, only to have promised dates come and go without answers. It is now extremely important that these requests be answered promptly so that we may conduct a proper follow-up if necessary. The issues that we can now identify as being of the highest priority are identified in the text below by double asterisks (**)¹ and we request that they be answered within the next month. We request that the remaining requests be answered by April 1, 1998.

The remainder of this letter is divided into two parts: first, a listing of the formal requests for information and records, and second, a listing of the informal requests for information and records. Please let me know if your understanding of any of the following points differs from ours so that we can resolve any potential discrepancies.

¹As identified more fully below, the issues are: CIA-1 Organizational Material, CIA-6 Cables and Dispatches, CIA-13 Backchannel Communications, CIA-IR-03 HTLINGUAL Documents, CIA-IR-04 Disposition of Angleton Files, CIA-IR-07 Claude Barnes Capehart, CIA-IR-15 Electronic "take" from Mexico City, CIA-IR-21 DRE Monthly Operational Reports, CIA-IR-22 "A" Files on Clay Shaw and Jim Garrison.

Mr. John Pereira
December 18, 1997
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CIA-IR-12 Contacts with Journalists or Publishing Houses.

The Review Board seeks to determine to what extent, if any, CIA might have attempted to influence any journalists or publishers regarding public discussion of the assassination. This request, originally discussed in March 1997, was raised at the DO follow-up briefing on April 1, 1997. CIA has had no response and no time frame for a response.

CIA-IR-13 Office or Person Dealing with Organized Crime and Cuba.

The Review Board requested that CIA make a particular personnel file available. The file was made available by CIA for review. The Review Board seeks a full and accurate formal response to this request detailing any and all searches made and the results of those searches. Once a formal statement is provided, this request will be complete.

CIA-IR-14 Breckinridge Files.

CIA (OGC) will determine the disposition of the files of Scott D. Breckinridge. CIA has had no response and no time frame for a response.

****CIA-IR-15 Electronic "take" from Mexico City Station.**

The Review Board has for some time been attempting to determine whether it has had access to all of CIA's surveillance "take" from the Cuban and Soviet facilities in Mexico City at the time of the Oswald visit and in the immediate wake of the assassination. On numerous occasions, the Review Board has asked whether there was any surveillance take in addition to what is currently in the collection.

On March 18, 1997, the Review Board provided additional leads to CIA to assist it in answering these questions. The DO has agreed to check Headquarters records for the file referenced in HMMW 12454, to search for the crypts cited in this document, and to search for HMMA 20307 and other cables or dispatches cited in this document.

In addition, the DS&T will query its offices for possible records on Mexico City and Cuba and for the present location of Staff D records. Regardless of the

Mr. John Pereira
December 18, 1997
Page 10

outcome of these particular searches, the Review Board continues to seek a full accounting for all surveillance conducted during the relevant time periods.

CIA-IR-16 U-2 Files.

DS&T has provided a folder title printout of U-2 materials for Review Board examination and has checked for records filed under Richard Bissell's name. The Review Board staff continues to review these indexes. The DS&T should continue to search for OSP files.

CIA-IR-17 DS&T Records on Castro Assassination Plots.

The DS&T records should be searched for any records on Castro assassination plots. The Review Board will provide possible search query suggestions from the 1967 IG Report.

CIA-IR-18 DO Office.

The Review Board has requested orally information about a particular DO office. Since January 1997, CIA has had no response and no time frame for a response.

CIA-IR-19 Computer Searches.

The Review Board has requested that full computer searches be conducted on all of the following people and organizations. The results of the searches should be documented. Once formal documentation of the completed searches has been provided, the request is complete.

Name	Results/Comments
1. Spas Raikin	This request is complete.
2. Leo Cherne	ARRB awaits documentation.
3. Hunter Leake	ARRB awaits documentation. HRG is checking for a DCD file.
4. Marilyn Dutz Murret	This request is complete.
5. John McVickar	ARRB awaits documentation.
6. Andy Anderson	ARRB awaits documentation.

NOT OFFICIAL REQUEST
January __, 1997

Mr. John Pereira
Director
Historical Review Group
Center for the Study of Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC 20505

Became CIA IRIS

"Electronic take"

new J
87-27-97
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2000

Re: Request for Additional Information and Records No. CIA-19
(Surveillance Operations in Mexico City)

Dear John:

As you are aware, there has been a great deal of interest surrounding the reported trip of accused assassin Lee Harvey Oswald to Mexico City in September and October of 1963. Information that has now been publicly released reveals that CIA had in place several surveillance operations targeting Cuban and Soviet facilities or personnel in Mexico City. For more than one year, the Review Board staff has attempted to ascertain to what extent CIA's records related to this surveillance are complete.

It is our goal to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that we have identified and reviewed all documentation and operational reports relating to *all telephone, electronic, and photographic surveillance the CIA had targeting the Soviet and Cuban establishments in Mexico City from September 1963 through December 1963* (hereinafter "Surveillance Operations"). Although we are aware that the HSCA requested records on the Surveillance Operations, the records in the Sequestered Collection now appear to us to be somewhat incomplete and somewhat inconsistent. We would like to assemble as complete a collection as possible of all types of reporting vehicles used by the Mexico City Station and Headquarters regarding the Surveillance Operations. We are also trying to reconcile possible gaps in operational activity and operational reporting, and in order to do so would like to review all logs pertaining to these operations and all original negatives from the photo surveillance operations.¹ Therefore, we wish to pose a series of questions and request for records.

Request No. 1. It is the Review Board's understanding that the following operations targeted, in part, Cuban and Soviet facilities and personnel at the time

¹For example, to our knowledge, photographic take from LICALLA and LILYRIC were never made available to any of the investigative commissions in the past.

Mr. John Pereira
January __, 1997
Page 2

of Lee Harvey Oswald's visit to Mexico City: LIPSTICK; LIEMPTY; LILYRIC; LICALLA; LIMITED; LIENTRAP; LIONION; LIERODE; LIFEAT; and LIENVOY. Did CIA have any other surveillance operations that targeted Cuban or Soviet facilities or personnel in Mexico City during September and October of 1963? If so, please identify the operations.

Request No. 2: The Review Board has identified the following types of documentation that appear to have been regularly prepared in the course of conducting operations similar to those identified in the preceding paragraph.

- Project Files
- Monthly Operational Reports
- Annual Reports
- Requests for Project Renewal
- Reviews of Project Renewal
- Authorizations of Project Renewal/Project Action Reports
- Quarterly Project Progress Reports
- Project Charts

- Photo technician monthly reports
- Resuma
- Equipment Studies
- Reports on testing of newly installed cameras as part of LIONION

- Basehouse Agent Logs
- Technical Services Division (TSD) Logs
- Negatives from photographic production
- Transmittal Manifests²

Communications (cable, dispatch, backchannel).

In addition to the documentation identified above, were there any other forms of documentation prepared with respect to the Surveillance Operations?



²According to the Lopez report, in a 6/19/64 cable, MEXI 9440, Mexico City Station alerted Headquarters that "they were sending up the negatives from the pulse camera coverage of the Cuban Embassy," and that "All available negatives and five packages of undeveloped film were sent to Headquarters by transmittal manifest #252572. (See pp.20-21)

Mr. John Pereira
January __, 1997
Page 3

Request No. 3: Did CIA conduct any form of microphone or electronic surveillance (other than telephone line intercepts) of Cuban or Soviet facilities or officials in Mexico City during September through December 1963? If so, please identify, with specificity, the operations.

Request No. 4: Please provide all original records and copies of records for the Surveillance Operations as follows:

For the period July 1963 through December 1963:³

Project Files
Monthly Operational Reports
Annual Reports
Requests for Project Renewal
Reviews of Project Renewal
Authorizations of Project Renewal/Project Action Reports
Quarterly Project Progress Reports
Project Charts

For the period 1 September 1963 through December 1963

Photo technician monthly reports
Resuma
Back Channel Communications
Equipment Studies
Reports on testing of newly installed cameras as part of LIONION

For the period 26 September - 3 October 1963

Basehouse Agent Logs
Technical Services Division (TSD) Logs
Negatives from photographic production
Transmittal Manifests⁴

³In order to clarify that time periods requested, let me provide the following illustrations. For example, if hypothetical Operation "X" against a Soviet establishment in Mexico City was in effect in October, 1963, we are requesting records for Operation "X" from July through December of 1963. However, if a hypothetical surveillance Operation "Y" was in effect from January through August (but not September through December), we are not requesting any records related to Operation "Y."

⁴According to the Lopez report, in a 6/19/64 cable, MEXI 9440, Mexico City Station alerted Headquarters that "they were sending up the negatives from the pulse

Mr. John Pereira
January __, 1997
Page 4

→ In addition, we request reports in the project and related files that make reference to activities during September and October 1963. In requesting these files, we are asking the CIA to conduct new and comprehensive searches of Agency files which go beyond what is contained in the Sequestered Collection. This request should be interpreted in its broadest sense and extended to include any other surveillance operations that were targeted against the Soviet and Cuban installations during the time of Oswald's visit. For example, if there were additional TSD operations, wiretapping, microphone surveillance (bugs), or technical surveillance other than those listed above, we request any files and/or logs that exist on such.

In the event that any file has been destroyed, we request that all information pertaining to such destruction be provided. We anticipate that the results of these searches and a written explanation of missing material will be included in the Agency's Final Compliance Statement.

In requesting access to these materials, we are not designating them "assassination records" as of yet. Nor are we, at this time, requesting that copies be given to the Review Board.

We would appreciate your response by March 7, 1997. If this does not provide you with sufficient time, please let us know, in writing, by what date you believe you will be able to respond to this request.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

T. Jeremy Gunn
General Counsel and Associate Director
for Research and Analysis

camera coverage of the Cuban Embassy," and that "All available negatives and five packages of undeveloped film were sent to Headquarters by transmittal manifest #252572. (See pp.20-21)

SECRET

9 January 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR: J. Barry Harrelson, JFK Project Officer

FROM: DS&T Information Management Officer

SUBJECT: JFK Records

REFERENCE: Assassination Records Review Board
Letter dtd 18 December 1997

1. This is in response to the latest inquiry from the Assassination Records Review Board. Specifically, DS&T was tasked with the following items:

a. CIA IR-07

Request: Information on Claude Capehart

Results: Medical Report on Capehart relevant to GLOMAR Project (Status: Requested from AARC, 9 January 1998. Document will be sent to you.)

X-ray of skull of Capehart dated 10 March 1974. Not relevant to JFK timeframe but will be made available to you upon request.

b. CIA IR-15

Request: Electronic "take" from Mexico City Station

Results: Operational Monthly Reports (3), dates: 1-30 September 1963; 1-31 October 1963; and 1-30 November 1963. (Enclosed)

CL: 0524507

CL Reason: 1.5(c)

DECL On: Sources marked OADR

Date of Sources: Oct-Dec 1963; 7 April 1975

DRV FROM: Intel Reports and Memo

SECRET

Faxed to Mary Ann O'Sa 7/17/97
 Re Question raised at 18 March meeting
 (These notes rec'd from Michelle) ~~SECRET~~
 Mr. J. Barry Harrelson
 April 16, 1997
 Page 10

DRAFT

(IR 15 & 18 topics for discussion at
 July 29 review session)

CIA-IR-14 Breckinridge files.

CIA (OGC) will determine the disposition of the files of Scott D. Breckinridge.

**CIA-IR-15 Electronic "take" from Mexico City Station.

The Review Board has for some time been attempting to determine whether it has had access to all of CIA's surveillance "take" from the Cuban and Soviet facilities in Mexico City at the time of the Oswald visit and in the immediate wake of the assassination. On numerous occasions, the Review Board has asked whether there was any surveillance take in addition to what is currently in the collection.

On March 18, 1997, the Review Board provided additional leads to CIA to assist it in answering these questions. The DO has agreed to check Headquarters records for the file referenced in HMMIA 12454, to search for the crypts cited in this document, and to search for HMMIA 20307 and other cables or dispatches cited in this document. The DS&T will query its offices for possible records on Mexico City and Cuba and for the present location of Staff D records. Regardless of the outcome of these particular searches, the Review Board continues to seek a full accounting for all surveillance conducted during the relevant time periods.

22302?
 1-30 Sept
 6p. Rpt

CIA-IR-16 U-2 files.

DS&T will provide a folder title print out of U-2 materials for Review Board examination, check for records filed under Richard Bissell's name, and search for OSP files. DS&T has also contacted Lockheed for assistance.

CIA-IR-17 DS&T Records on Castro assassination plots.

HRG will furnish the 1967 IG Report to provide possible search query suggestions for DS&T follow-up.

CIA-IR-18 DO Office.

The Review Board has requested orally information about a particular DO office. We understand that you are collecting the relevant information.

"Operational Sewie / Defector Staff"



22 January 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: (U) Chief, JFK Declassification
Project/HRP/OIM/DA

FROM: (U) Fredrick C. Wickham, Jr.
Chief, External Support Group/IMS/DO
Central Intelligence Agency

SUBJECT: (U) DO Response to Informal Request CIA #15 *IR*

REFERENCE: (U) ARRB's Memorandum dated 18 December 1997,
RE: Status of CIA Responses to
Assassination Records Review Board's
Requests for Additional Information and
Records *^*

(U) This memorandum is submitted in response to informal request number 15 (CIA IR #15) from the Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB).

**CIA-IR-15 Electronic "take" from Mexico City Station

(S) The Directorate of Operations has checked Headquarters records for files referenced in HMMW 12454 and for files on the crypts cited in this document and searched for HMMA 20307 and other cables or dispatches cited in this document. As previously explained, the crypts in HMMW 12454 have been researched. The dispatch was apparently written in haste and in truncated language without correct knowledge of the operational crypts for the specific operations in Mexico City. The crypts in the dispatch are the more generic crypts for teltap operations, not for the then-current operations in Mexico City, which are in question.

(U) "Surveillance" is a term that is too broad for a meaningful/productive search, because it is the nature of CIA's charter to conduct surveillance.

Fredrick C. Wickham, Jr.
Fredrick C. Wickham, Jr

CL BY: 2103140
CL REASON: 1.5(c)
DECL ON: X1
DRV FROM: MIS 5-82

~~SECRET~~

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2000

3 February 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: T. Jeremy Gunn, Esq.
Executive Director
Assassination Records Review Board

FROM: J. Barry Harrelson
Senior Reviewer

SUBJECT: Re: ARRB Request CIA-IR-15, For Information
On CIA's Electronic "Take" in Mexico

The following is a partial response to referent request.

use document located - provide copies

The Agency has made specific searches for files referenced in HMMW 12454 and for files on the crypts cited therein. It has also searched for HMMA 20307 and other dispatches and cables cited in the document. The crypts within HMMW 12454 are the more generic crypts for telephone tap operations and not those of the operations extant in Mexico City during the periods asked about, namely the time of Oswald's visit and the period following the assassination of President Kennedy. Our best judgment is that the dispatch was written in haste and in truncated language without correct knowledge of the operational crypts for specific operations in Mexico city.

The DDS&T search for records resulted in the Mexico City September, October and November 1963 Operational reports, HMMA's 22307, 22482, and 22608. All three of these are in the sequestered collection. We are awaiting their response on Staff D records.

rewrite

Reference is made to that part of CIA-IR-15 which asks if the Agency has any other "surveillance take" from the Soviet and Cuban facilities in Mexico City beyond what is already within the JFK collection. While we have conducted some searches, it would be helpful to our research if we could further define what is sought.

Gunn is interested in "bugs"

J. Barry Harrelson
Senior Reviewer

DO - DCI

CIA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Robert M. McNamara, Jr., Esq.

July 15, 1998

Page 9

In addition, the Final Declaration should confirm whether or not CIA has saved any 1963-64 files of the Mexico City Station (and certain files from another station). If those files have not been retained, please confirm that fact in the Final Declaration. To the extent those files have been archived, however, then please confirm that they have been examined for the purpose of determining whether they contain assassination records.

2. CIA Should Identify More Specifically the Records It Has Released
Relating to Oswald and the Assassination of President Kennedy

We recommend that CIA identify more specifically the CIA files that have been, or will be, placed in the JFK Collection at NARA. Although we leave this to CIA's discretion, we recommend that, to the extent practicable, CIA attach a non-classified listing of the files encompassed within the CIA-HSCA Sequestered Collection. We believe that an identification of the files within the CIA-HSCA Sequestered Collection will demonstrate the breadth and variety of assassination records being made public by the CIA.

3. CIA Should Specifically Account for Certain Important Record Groups,
Including Any Destruction of Assassination Records

We request that CIA, in its Final Declaration, account for any important records regarding the assassination that may have been destroyed or that otherwise cannot be located.

For example, CIA has reported that the original surveillance tapes that recorded the Oswald telephone conversations with the Cuban Consulate and Soviet Embassy in Mexico City were destroyed, and that CIA has no copies of these audio recordings. However, CIA apparently has preserved certain recordings from Mexico City that post-date the assassination (see ¶ A.2 of this letter). We assume that CIA will provide a complete accounting for these records in its response to Review Board request CIA-IR-15, which relates to CIA's "electronic take" from Mexico City for the relevant time period. That response should be attached to the Final Declaration (CIA may also want to attach any formal explanation of this issue that it previously provided to the HSCA). We want to ensure that CIA explains the circumstances for the destruction of the audio recordings of the Oswald telephone calls in Mexico City, confirms that no copies of this audio surveillance has been retained by CIA, and gives a full accounting of the post-assassination Mexico City tapes.

We also request an accounting of certain records of former CIA Director John McCone. In reviewing his files, we noted that certain documents on the assassination (or dated

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2000

17 September 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR: Ms. Laura Denk
Executive Director, ARRB

FROM: J. Barry Harrelson
Senior Reviewer

SUBJECT: Re: ARRB Request CIA-IR-15, For Information
On CIA's Electronic "Take" in Mexico

1. The following is in response to referent request.

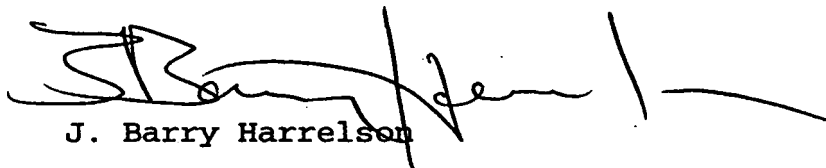
2. Over the years, there have been a number of efforts to determine if any electronic surveillance audio tapes made during the period Oswald visited Mexico (26 September - 2 October 1963) still existed. The Directorate of Operations has again made a thorough search of its records system as well as the index to retired records trying to locate any such tapes or documentation which would shed light on their disposition. In addition, the Agency has discussed this question with operational experts whose professional opinion is that, most likely, the tapes in question were recycled for further use and never sent to headquarters for retention. The normal operating practice within the Mexico City station was to recycle audio surveillance tapes after transcribers had listened to them and made transcripts of those parts with intelligence value.

3. With respect to the issue of messages between Mexico City and CIA headquarters which referred to "tapes" being sent, we offer the following. Messages between field stations and headquarters use operational jargon and shortened sentence structures that can sometimes cause misunderstandings. Our best judgment is that those references within field messages which referred to "tapes" being sent really intended "transcripts" of, or "information" from, audio surveillance tapes, not the actual tapes.

4. In addition to the above, there is a possible explanation for the personal recollections of some people about tapes being sent to headquarters. During the DO search for the tapes in question, it located approximately 185 audio surveillance tapes of the Soviet and Cuban facilities in Mexico City for the period 22 November 1963 to early January 1964 -- the day of and the days immediately following the assassination. These tapes have been declared assassination records and are being processed for release to the National Archives.

5. In conclusion, based on the search efforts that were undertaken and the studied opinions of operational experts who were consulted, the Agency is satisfied that the audio surveillance tapes made during Oswald's visit to Mexico do not exist and almost certainly were recycled in the normal course of business before their potential value was known.

6. This concludes the Agency's action on CIA-IR-15. If you have any question about his matter, please advise.



J. Barry Harrelson