S E C R E T

2 May 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Chief, Operations Staff

SUBJECT : Review of Agency Holdings regarding Photograph of Unidentified Individual in Mexico City published by the Warren Commission

REFERENCE : Letter dated 15 April 1975 by Mr. David W. Belin, Executive Director of the Commission on CIA Activities within the United States, to Mr. E. Henry Knoche (copy attached to accompanying report)

1. This is further to, and in completion of, my interim memorandum of a few weeks ago.

2. The attachment is a detailed review in narrative, chronological order - together with appropriate commentary - of our extensive holdings on the OSWALD case that have a bearing on the matter of photographs taken by Mexico City Station on 1, 4 and 15 October 1963 of an Unidentified Individual. As a consequence of a combination of analytical error, misjudgement and under the stress of an urgent desire to contribute to the development of the investigation of the assassination, a cropped version of one of the photographs of the Unidentified Individual was introduced into the chain of evidence in the OSWALD case on 23 November 1963 by an FBI representative in Dallas. The successive vicissitudes which have now made this event a cause celebre right down to the present moment are detailed in the narrative.

3. The attached report is not intended to be an answer to the Fensterwald/O'Toole article which Mr. Belin attaches to his memorandum. (I have prepared a paragraph-by-paragraph refutation and comment on that article, which I believe is more appropriately handled by a separate memorandum to Mr. Belin, and I will prepare this as a memorandum if that is desired.)

4. The point of the referenced memorandum is that consideration should be given now to "whether or not the entire matter can be fully disclosed at this time." This submission is designed to make it possible for you, the IG and others whom you may desire to consult to make this decision. The narrative-interpretive summary has been put together in such a way that it discloses no cyptonyms, pseudonyms or other CIA jargon. However, its contents go well beyond what has been released to the public thus far in the Warren Commission documentation. This point must be borne in mind in making a decision on Mr. Belin's question. To remove any question in anybody's mind about our good faith in this matter, the narrative is backed up by copies of actual documentation from our files. It seems to me necessary, in reply to Mr. Belin, that he or his representative review the documentation that backs up the narrative. The documentation has not been keyed into the narrative presentation, but it follows the chronological order of presentation from 9 October into the latest developments in the matter, and there is an overall index to facilitate reference to individual items. [NB: There is only one copy of this collection; this is it.]

5. As noted above, one of the photographs taken in Mexico City on 4 October 1963 was introduced into the Warren Commission public record. However, it was introduced into that record in two cropped versions. The Warren Commission and its staff were made fully aware in the course of their inquiry at Headquarters and in Mexico City of the origins of the photograph, the fact that we had additional photographs of the same individual taken at different times in Mexico City and on the basis of full knowledge of these facts reached their own conclusions regarding the irrelevance of the photograph to OSWALD and the assassination.

6. In fact, we actually hold twelve different photographs of the Unidentified Individual. Each of these are reproduced in the collected documentation backing up the narrative report (see Items 25 - 27). Chief, LA Division,

had indicated in writing to DC/OPS Staff, that he has no objection for Mr. Belin to do whatever is desired with these photographs at this time. It should be noted that Mr. Fensterwald in 1971 - 1972 was actually shown, by Mr. Houston during a visit to the Agency, two of the twelve photographs, other than the one already published in the Warren Commission report. (It is these two that he has published in The New York Review of Books article which Mr. Belin attaches to his memorandum.)

7. It seems to me that whoever makes a decision on whether the entire matter can be fully disclosed at this time should bear in mind that a subsidiary decision must also be made, i.e., whether to crop or otherwise fuzz up the background of the photographs or, alternatively, to publish the entire run of the photographs for the first time without taking out the background. Obviously, none of these questions apply to the passage of this material to Mr. Belin and the Rockefeller Commission itself. I think they should see the entire documentation as it stands. Perhaps after that, the question of what could be discussed and the question of "how?" and "how much?" could be taken up with Mr. Belin himself. My personal recommendation is that the more we can say about this matter in a fully open and final manner, the better off we will be as an Agency. But it is my understanding that there are still sensitive aspects deriving from the fact that the operation which produced the photographs was jointly run with Mexican liaison and as a consequence publication at this time would create additional problems at that level in Mexico. Also, it should be noted that the Ambassador, according to Win Scott's memorandum to J.C. King on 22 November 1963 (see Item 8 in the backup documentation), allegedly played a direct role in the decision to put the photographs into the hands of the FBI in Dallas laterally from the Field. As far as I know, there has not been anything published about this aspect at any time in the past nor have we had any discussions with the State Department about that aspect of the matter.

Raymond G. Rocca

Attachments:
as stated

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