

TOP SECRET

30 June 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Staff Meeting Minutes of 30 June 1980

The Director chaired the meeting. [] 25X1

In response to Mr. Carlucci's query, Lipton explained the HAC hearing scheduled for 2 July will be the Committee's final hearing on CIA's budget amendment request [] for FY 1981. [] 25X1

Hetu displayed a notice he is circulating internally which invites employees to avail themselves of OPA's recently produced slide presentation on intelligence and the mission/function of the Agency. [] 25X1

Mr. Carlucci called attention to erroneous press reports over the weekend of CIA clandestine radio broadcasts in Iran aimed at undermining the rule of the Ayatollah Khomeini (see 27 June New York Times article by David Binder attached). Noting that Congressional inquiries can be expected soon on this matter, Mr. Carlucci advised that OLC take the initiative and provide appropriate denials. The Director added that Hetu should contact State's newly appointed spokesperson(s) to ensure henceforth that public comment by State regarding matters involving CIA be coordinated with us beforehand. (Action: LC and PA) [] 25X1

Clarke expressed concern re today's Washington Post front-page column by George Wilson "Soviets Accused of Cover-Up on Anthrax Epidemic" (attached). He said this article stems from Representative Aspin's disregard for Oversight Committee procedures for release of HPSCI studies; he said it also poses serious policy problems for the Administration in its handling of treaty violations with the Soviet Union. He asked if there are any steps we can take to deal with Representative Aspin. A brief discussion followed wherein Mr. Carlucci advised that we bring the matter to the attention of House leadership. The Director asked [] to convey his and the DDCI's concern to Hitz, and requested SA/DCI [] to add this item to the agenda for his next meeting with Secretary Muskie. [] 25X1
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Clarke reported [] (NFAC/OPA) has produced an exceptionally good paper "Cuba's Castro: Reactions of An Aging Revolutionary to His Ailing Revolution." He also displayed a new NFAC report: "Soviet Energy Policy for East Europe." The Director noted he has already read the latter and likes it. [] 25X1

[] noted HPSCI hearings scheduled for tomorrow re four Reserve Releases and a Presidential Finding. Relatedly, the Director questioned the need for [] from the Reserve for evacuating dependents [] 25X1
[] Lipton explained the cost and said he has coordinated this item with SSCI and HPSCI staffers noting he anticipates approval without serious challenge. [] 25X1

[] 25X1

Silver reported the U.S. Court of Appeals recently held 2-1 that State has insufficient grounds for revoking Agee's passport. The Director said despite the court's decision our effort in this regard has been worthwhile. In response to a query from the Director on where we now stand in the Agee case, Silver provided a brief update. [redacted]

25X1

Briggs said he met on Friday with [redacted] consultant to the Agency re review of certain aspects of Agency operations, e.g., the recently completed IG report on our recruiting system. He said also Jim Dick, IOB Counsel, will visit today re two complaints presented to the Board from outside the Agency; Briggs said he believes the Agency will fare well re these complaints. [redacted]

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Wortman reported an accident last week caused by the roofing contractor which involved minor injury to one of our secretaries. He said the accident could easily have been much more serious and that other accidents in the recent past by this contractor have now required the DDA to impose a daily security check on the contractor's work procedures. [redacted]

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25X1

[redacted]

The Director reported briefly from his trip to Africa [redacted] that our field personnel in stations he visited were highly active and enthusiastic. He said he enjoyed the opportunity to sit and chat with working level personnel, e.g., commo specialists and secretaries. [redacted]

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The Director called attention to yesterday's Washington Post article "The Unresolved Questions in the Letelier Case" by John Dinges and Saul Landau (attached). He asked Briggs to look into it. (Action: IG) [redacted]

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[redacted]

Attachments

[redacted]

25X1

NEW YORK TIMES

27 June 1980

U.S. Concedes It Is Behind Anti-Khomeini Broadcasts

By DAVID BINDER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 27 — American officials acknowledged today that the United States was responsible for clandestine radio broadcasts aimed at undermining the Iranian rule of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

The programs, broadcast in Persian from transmitters in Egypt, one believed to be near Alexandria and the other near the Suez Canal, appear to have begun in the middle of May, the officials said, and were set up by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Spokesmen for the C.I.A. and other intelligence agencies, asked about the broadcasts, said they could not help in terms of denials or confirmations.

The idea for the project, one of a number conducted by the C.I.A.'s "unconventional broadcasting" section, was described by the officials as having come up during the winter. President Anwar el-Sadat, who inherited a large radio-transmitting capacity from his predecessor, Gamel Abdel Nasser, is said to have given personal authorization for the use of free time for the broadcasts.

Broadcasts Heard in Teheran

American correspondents who were in Teheran in mid-May said that the nightly broadcasts featured music by Gagoosh, a popular female singer from Iran, and news broadcasts aimed at undermining Ayatollah Khomeini's Government.

The nonentertainment portions of the broadcast, which were identified as coming from "The Free Voice of Iran," contained appeals to the Iranian Army not to engage in combat with Kurdish rebels. Some of the broadcasts indicated support for the exiled former Iranian Prime Minister, Shahpur Bakhtiar, who has been attempting to mobilize anti-Khomeini forces from his base in Paris.

The broadcasts included a call for "liberation of Iran," a description of Ayatollah Khomeini as "racist and fascist" and an appeal to Iranians to "take guns into your hands" in preparation for action.

The C.I.A. connection in Egypt was developed late last year after a White House meeting of the Special Coordinating Committee on Dec. 11 conducted by Zbigniew Brzezinski, the President's national security adviser. The focus of the meeting, about five weeks after 53 Americans were taken hostage, was ways to expand American broadcasts to the Moslem world, including Iran and the 50 million Moslems in the Soviet Union.

Facilities Thought Inadequate

The Special Coordination Committee was appointed by President Carter two years ago to authorize and oversee covert operations by the C.I.A. and other intelligence agencies.

Mr. Brzezinski and his adviser on Moslem affairs and radio broadcast matters, Paul B. Henze, who is a former C.I.A. officer, were described after the meeting as being dissatisfied with the capacity of the Voice of America, which was then broadcasting two hours a day in Persian, and with the American-sponsored Radio Liberty, which was broadcasting a rather weak signal in some of the languages of Soviet Moslems.

It was decided after the meeting, the officials said, to explore the possibility of acquiring air time on the Egyptian transmitters for broadcasts to Iran and Soviet Central Asia.

President Sadat, who was a target of

Iranian attacks long before he provided exile in Egypt for the deposed Shah of Iran, agreed to the White House request, the American officials said. American officials said they believed Egypt had been promised additional transmitter facilities by the United States through the Agency for International Development to compensate for the Egyptian facilities

used by the C.I.A. But a spokesman for the aid agency said the only equipment of which he was aware was a set of radar and radio control centers designed to improve communications for users of the Suez Canal at a cost of \$17.7 million. The equipment for that project arrived in Egypt only last month, the spokesman added.

30 June 1980

Soviets Accused Of Cover-Up on Anthrax Epidemic

By George C. Wilson

Washington Post Staff Writer

The House Intelligence oversight subcommittee accused the Soviet Union yesterday of covering up the facts about an anthrax epidemic at Sverdlovsk in April 1979.

On the basis of secret and open hearings, the subcommittee concluded that the Soviet explanation that people died in Sverdlovsk from eating meat poisoned with anthrax is "incomplete at best and at worst a fabrication."

What really happened, according to the subcommittee report and interviews with U.S. intelligence officials, is that an explosion at Military Compound 19 at Sverdlovsk blew a cloud of anthrax spores into the open air. That compound has long been suspected of germ warfare activity by U.S. intelligence.

A south wind took the deadly anthrax spores to the outskirts of Sverdlovsk, a city of 1.2 million 875 miles east of Moscow. U.S. officials estimate that as many as 1,000 people may have died from breathing in the spores.

Subcommittee Chairman Les Aspin (D-Wis.) said "all arms control conventions" are threatened by the Sverdlovsk cover-up.

Rep. John Ashbrook of Ohio, ranking Republican on the subcommittee, said that Sverdlovsk proves that the United States should not sign any treaties with the Soviet Union "unless they are self-enforcing or if we have the capability to fully monitor them."

On the basis of reports from persons inside the Soviet Union at the time of the epidemic and other evidence, U.S. intelligence officials have concluded that the symptoms displayed by the afflicted Russians at Sverdlovsk could have come only from breathing in anthrax germs, not from eating them in diseased meat, as Moscow said was the case.

By calculating how many anthrax

spores it would take to kill the 40 to 1,000 Russians who are believed to have died at Sverdlovsk from the anthrax, U.S. intelligence officials believe the quantity far exceeded the amount needed for the laboratory experiments allowed under the 1975 biological warfare treaty.

One U.S. intelligence estimate is that 5,000 to 20,000 anthrax spores were released into the open air at Sverdlovsk. However, as the subcommittee noted in its report yesterday, no U.S. intelligence agency has made the corporate judgment that the Soviets definitely violated the treaty.

The 1975 treaty, signed by the United States, the Soviet Union and 111 other countries, prohibits the production of anthrax or any other biological agent for germ warfare. However, laboratory quantities of such germs can be produced to enable a nation to develop defensive measures or conduct peaceful experiments.

The subcommittee in its report noted that the 1975 treaty did not set a specific limit on how much anthrax or other biological agents could be produced before the quantity would amount to a violation. Therefore, said the subcommittee, it would be difficult to prove on the basis of current information whether the Soviets violated the treaty or not.

This leaves it to the nations that signed the treaty to judge "whether the epidemic in Sverdlovsk demonstrates a Soviet violation," the subcommittee said.

It said it had looked into reports that the Carter administration had suppressed evidence and hampered probes by U.S. intelligence agencies of the Sverdlovsk epidemic for fear the findings would keep the strategic arms limitation treaty (SALT II) from being approved by the Senate.

Concluded the subcommittee: "There is no persuasive evidence to support allegations that the U.S. government suppressed intelligence about the outbreak of anthrax in Sverdlovsk, or that it delayed acting on this matter out of concern for SALT II or any other political motive."

Speaking for himself, Aspin said, "The evidence is fairly good that the Soviets have cheated on the treaty dealing with biological weapons. That combined with the lousy way this has been handled by the administration threatens not only this treaty but all arms control conventions."

The State Department insists that it is pressing the Soviet Union to disclose the full story on Sverdlovsk but is trying to do it within diplomatic channels rather than publicly. However, the department concedes that it has not yet received satisfactory replies to its questions about the epidemic.

29 June 1980

The Unresolved Questions in the Letelier

Case

Why were warnings of Chile's plot unheeded? Why was U.S.

evidence withheld?

COOPERATION with "friendly" intelligence agencies was the established practice of U.S. embassies and the CIA abroad, and that included granting visas to known agents to conduct intelligence missions in the United States. But something about the request Ambassador George W. Landau received in late July 1976 from a Paraguayan government official in Asuncion aroused his suspicions.

The official, a top aide to Paraguayan President Alfredo Stroessner, assured Landau that Chilean President Augusto Pinochet himself was asking for a favor. The official said he needed visas immediately for two Chilean Army officers using Paraguayan passports to travel from Asuncion to Washington on an intelligence mission. The mission, he said, had been cleared with the CIA sta-

tion in Santiago and the two men would be in touch with CIA Deputy Director Vernon Walters in Washington.

Ambassador Landau, according to his later testimony, issued the visas for the two men the next morning. But his suspicions led him to take two precautions: He had the agents' false Paraguayan passports photographed, and he sent the photographs to CIA headquarters with a full account of the affair — just in case the Chilean agents were lying about why they were going to Washington.

Landau's action was the first brush by a U.S. official with Chile's secret operations leading up to the assassination of Orlando Letelier six weeks later. In the weeks preceding the assassination of the leftist former ambassador and foreign minister, a flurry of cables and official communications went back and forth between the U.S. Embassy in Asuncion, the State Department, the CIA and the Immigration and Naturalization Service concerning the two Chilean agents, whose real identities — not learned until almost two years later — were Michael Townley and Armando Fernandez, the Chilean secret police agents who led the operation to kill Letelier.

CIA Director George Bush and his deputy, Gen.

Walters, were among those who personally received and acted on Landau's warning. The ambassador's cable, sent via a top secret State Department "back channel," went first to the office of Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

All that raises a series of disturbing questions. U.S. officials at the highest levels knew in advance about Chile's undercover mission in Washington and possessed photos and passport information. Was that information sufficient foreknowledge to have prevented the murders? Once the assassination occurred, was the information turned over immediately to the FBI by the persons and agencies possessing it?

The pictures and the advance information obtained by Landau and others ultimately provided the keys to solving the case. But, unlike fictional spy mysteries, all the pieces of the puzzle did not fall into place with the identification of the guilty. Instead, the U.S. agencies involved in the case imposed an extraordinary mantle of secrecy over the actions of U.S. officials before and after the assassination and over the records and files relating to those actions. Given the secrecy about the extent of U.S. government foreknowledge, the questions we raise can only be partially answered.

According to our reconstruction of events, the Letelier assassination was set in motion in late June 1976. Pinochet's intelligence service had received reports of Letelier's recent visit to Holland to lobby against a \$63 million investment by a Dutch company in Chile and of confidential meetings in New York between Letelier and a prominent leader of Chile's *Contra* Christian Democratic Party. Congress had just cut off Chile's military aid because of human rights violations.

Over the next three months, Col. Manuel Contreras, chief of DINA, the Chilean secret police, dispatched five of his agents on four separate but interrelated missions to Washington to carry out the order to kill Letelier. Of the four missions that made up the Letelier assassination operation, at least two were detected by U.S. authorities.

The first operation got only as far as Asuncion. DINA agents Townley and Fernandez went there to obtain false Paraguayan passports from the Paraguayan intelligence service and proceed on to Washington. After days of delay, they received the passports under the false names of "Juan Williams" (Townley) and "Alejandro Romeral" (Fernandez).

According to Paraguayan intelligence chief Col. Benito Guanes, they said they needed the passports for a trip to the United States to buy weapons and intelligence equipment "for which [they said] they could count on cooperation from the CIA/USA."

Ambassador Landau was told the CIA was aware of the mission, but that it involved surveillance of Chilean Marxists who had infiltrated the U.S. offices of the Chilean copper corporation.

After issuing the visas and photographing the "Williams" and "Romeral" passports, Landau wrote a long top secret cable to CIA Deputy Director Walters, who had been told would be meeting the two Chileans in Washington. That cable remains secret, but we learned some of its contents. In it Landau asked Walters to confirm that the Chilean intelligence mission had been worked out with the CIA. He also sent copies of the passports to the CIA via diplomatic pouch.

Meanwhile, Townley and Fernandez, unaware their pictures were now in the hands of the CIA but suspicious of the long delays in obtaining their false documents, returned to Santiago instead of flying to Washington as originally planned.

Landau's cable, sent July 28 via the State Department's "Roger Channel" to bypass regular distribution routes, reached the desk of CIA Director George Bush. Bush handled the matter because Walters, who was about to retire from the agency, was on vacation in Florida. At State, the cable was routed from Kissinger's office to that of Harry Schlaudeman, assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs.

Landau expected Walters, who had visited Paraguay on agency business only a month before, to take quick action. "I sent a message to Gen. Walters outlining the whole matter and suggesting that I presumed that this matter fell within the scope of his agency and that he was aware of all this. I said that if he did not, I suggested he deny them [Williams' and Romeral] entry at the port of arrival," Landau said in a later deposition.

The CIA reaction was peculiar. A week passed during which Townley and Fernandez, had they followed their original plan, could well have had time to arrive in Washington and kill Letelier. Walters and Bush conferred about the matter, and finally on Aug. 4 Walters called Landau in Paraguay to tell him that the CIA was "not aware" of the Chilean mission, and wanted nothing to do with it. But Walters, as far as is known, ordered no CIA action to stop the Chilean mission or control it in any way.

Judging from his actions, Ambassador Landau was alarmed. He immediately informed the State Department that the visas issued to "Juan Williams" and "Alejandro Romeral" were revoked. He demanded that the Paraguayan official who had requested the visas retrieve the passports from the Chileans and return them so that he could physically cancel the visas.

Landau considered the matter so serious that he ordered lookouts posted at all U.S. consulates and ports of entry to arrest "Williams" and "Romeral" if they tried to enter the United States and to prevent

them from applying for visas in any other country. Landau also made 10 telephone calls to a high Paraguayan official over the following weeks to insist that the Paraguayans return the passports.

In Santiago, preparations began for the second and third DINA missions. Four false Chilean official passports were sent to the U.S. consulate in Santiago with government requests for visas to the United States. On Aug. 17 the visas were issued for passports in the names of "Juan Williams," "Alejandro Romeral," "Armando Faundez" and "Liliana Walker."

Although two of the names were the same as those used in Paraguay, the DINA agents using the identities of Williams and Romeral were not Townley and Fernandez. They were Capt. Rene Riveros ("Williams") and Rolando Mosqueira ("Romeral"), who arrived in Miami Aug. 22, apparently on a mission to "clear" the use of the names in Paraguay by acting as decoys to test whether U.S. authorities would react to their entering the country.

Although the two men were not stopped at Miami Airport, their arrival was detected and reported to Washington. The circumstances and records of that detection, presumably made by INS officials as a result of Landau's lookout notice, remain unclear even within the FBI.

The agents, clearly intending to call attention to their presence, informed Vernon Walters' CIA office by phone that they, "Juan Williams" and "Alejandro Romeral," were in Washington. On Sept. 1, the two men arrived back in Santiago.

What did the CIA do, if anything? We don't know. It would have been logical for those who knew of Chile's ongoing covert operation in Washington to try to find out what Chile was up to, especially in light of the "Romeral-Williams" team's claim in Paraguay that their mission had CIA clearance. It is beyond belief that the CIA would simply have ignored a clandestine operation by a foreign intelligence service in Washington, or anywhere in the United States.

DINA and the CIA were in constant touch with each other through normal liaison channels. Walters' duties as deputy director included liaison with foreign intelligence services and he knew DINA chief Contreras personally. Did he or director Bush order their representative in Chile to tell his liaison counterpart in Chilean intelligence, "Hey, we know you're up to something in Washington, so either tell us what it is or stop it"?

Moreover, it was well known in intelligence circles that DINA had carried out assassination of exile leaders in foreign countries. Given DINA's macabre reputation and Letelier's prominence in Washington, it would not be difficult to speculate that if DINA were planning an assassination in Washington, the target would be Letelier.

One thing is clear: DINA chief Contreras would almost certainly have canceled the remaining operations to kill Letelier if the CIA or State Department had raised ala-

runs about the "Romeral" and "Williams" missions and expressed their displeasure to the Chilean government. An intelligence officer familiar with the case said that any warning would have been sufficient to cause the assassination to be scuttled.

It wasn't. On Aug. 26, Lt. Fernandez, traveling as "Armando Faundez," arrived in Washington with DINA agent "Liliana Walker" (whose real identity has never been established). They conducted "preoperational" surveillance on Letelier.

On Sept. 9, Townley, traveling on an official Chilean passport in the name "Hans Peterson Silva," arrived to head the fourth and final stage of the assassination operation. He received Fernandez' surveillance report, then arranged with four members of a Cuban exile group in Union City, N.J., to help him build and plant the bomb. On Sept. 21 it exploded under Letelier's legs, killing him and Ronni Moffitt, who happened to be riding to work that day with Letelier and her husband Michael, who survived.

Immediately, the assassination was put in the context of prior attacks on prominent Chilean exiles opposing the Pinochet government. Two years earlier, in a hauntingly similar car bombing in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the former chief of the Chilean armed forces, Gen. Carlos Prats, and his wife were murdered. One year before, exiled Christian Democratic leader Bernardo Leighton, an advocate of a leftist-centrist front against Pinochet, was shot down with his wife on a Rome street. Both survived. DINA was widely believed to have been responsible.

It would seem to go without saying that those who had detected DINA's covert operation in Washington prior to Letelier's assassination would immediately tell the FBI all they knew. The passport photos of "Romeral" and "Williams," the Paraguay incident and the actual entry into the United States of Chilean intelligence agents were obviously important leads worthy of highest priority in the investigation.

Moreover, the FBI's man in South America, Special Agent Robert Scherrer, made a major intelligence breakthrough one week after the assassination. He reported that Chile had organized a six-nation intelligence network called Operation Condor, whose functions included interchanging passports for use on missions to assassinate exiled leftist leaders. Paraguay was one of the members, with Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Bolivia and Chile. Scherrer, even without knowing about the "Romeral" and "Williams" affair in Paraguay, concluded in his Sept. 28 cable to Washington that the Letelier assassination "may have been carried out as a . . . phase of Operation Condor." Scherrer's cable was distributed to the CIA and State Department.

What then did Bush, Walters, Landau and others in State and the CIA do with the "Romeral" and "Williams" photographs and information after the assassination?

The Letelier investigation had

been assigned to Assistant U.S. Attorney Eugene Propper and Special Agent L. Carter Cornick of the FBI's Washington field office. Propper, realizing that the investigation could not go far without cooperation from the CIA, met Bush two weeks after the assassination. According to one of those present in that meeting, Bush talked about the importance of Operation Condor to the Letelier case, but did not say a word about the "Romeral" and "Williams" pictures and the Paraguay incident. Nor did Bush, Walters or anyone else from the CIA subsequently volunteer their information about Chile's covert missions to Washington.

Instead, the CIA seems to have done just the opposite. Stories appeared in Newsweek, The Washington Post, The Washington Star and The New York Times saying the CIA had concluded that DINA had nothing to do with the Letelier assassination. In one of the stories, Bush was reported to have personally informed Kissinger of his conclusions about DINA's innocence.

The sources cited in the articles suggested a "martyr theory" for the assassination, according to which leftists may have killed Letelier in order to create a martyr and discredit the Chilean government at a time Pinochet was improving his human rights image.

At the State Department, some but not all of the pertinent information about Chile's secret missions was turned over to the FBI on Oct. 22, one month after the assassination. The information included copies of the photographs of "Romeral" and "Williams" and the fact that two men using those names and official Chilean passports had entered Miami on Aug. 22 (but not that they had also come to Washington).

But the "Romeral-Williams" information and photographs played no active role for the first 10 months of the FBI investigation. When, in July 1977, the photographs were finally put to use, the "Williams" picture was identified and the case was on the way to being solved. The man in the picture, Michael Townley, was turned over to the FBI the following March in accord with a secret agreement signed by Chile under heavy U.S. diplomatic pressure. Townley confessed and became the prosecution's chief witness.

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In the course of the investigation, there were at least five cases of withholding, destruction or concealment of key evidentiary documents. These incidents raise the possibility that an attempt was made from within the U.S. government to sabotage the FBI investigation and divert its

focus away from Chile's military government:

1. For more than a year after the assassination, Assistant U.S. Attorney Propper and the FBI did not receive Ambassador Landau's cable to Vernon Walters fully explaining the Paraguay incident.

2. State Department Chile desk officer Robert Driscoll, who told a superior in a memo that "Romeral" and "Williams" were in Washington around the time of the assassination, ignored instructions to inform the FBI. The memo was given to the FBI from Chile desk files more than a year after the assassination.

3. Immigration and Naturalization Service information — based on I-94 forms filled out by all foreigners entering the United States — on three of the five members of DINA's assassination missions were removed from INS computers. The missing listings were "Romeral," "Williams" (the Aug. 22 Miami entry with Chilean passports) and "Hans Petersen" (the name used by Townley to enter New York Sept. 9, 1976). Moreover, INS officials conducted a file search in 1979 and discovered the disappearance of all paperwork that normally would accompany lookout notices such as those the State Department ordered posted for "Romeral" and "Williams."

4. Someone with access to U.S. citizen registration files in the U.S. consulate in Santiago removed the photograph of Townley on file there.

5. Other evidence in the consulate files was destroyed as well. After Townley's expulsion, FBI agent Scherrer discovered that U.S. Consul Josiah Brownell had ordered the shredding of consular files that would have included the letters from the Chilean Foreign Ministry requesting visas for agents "Hans Petersen," "Armando Faundez" and "Liliana Walker." In mid-1977, Scherrer had warned Brownell that the files might contain evidence in the Letelier case and should not be destroyed.

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The unanswered questions do not diminish the achievement of the U.S. investigators who solved the assassination and whose evidence stood the test of a jury trial in which three Cuban exile accomplices were convicted. But the actions taken willfully to divert the investigation from its course and delay it for at least a year are also crimes. Those actions should be subject to the same scrutiny as the assassination itself. If there are innocent explanations, they should be made public along with all relevant documentation in the case. Only then will the prosecution of the Letelier-Moffitt murders stand as untainted examples of the triumph of American justice.