

10 August 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM: [Redacted]
C/Media Relations

STAT

SUBJECT: Newsweek Questions for Vice President Bush

1. The Vice President's press secretary, Steve Hart, just sent us the attached letter from Robert Parry of Newsweek Magazine to the Vice President in which he asks questions about the Letelier murder, Cuban exiles and Luis Posada Carrilles. Steve Hart asks if we can help with any background, although he assumes that the Vice President will maintain his silence on intelligence matters. The deadline for Newsweek is cob Thursday, 11 August. The Vice President's office needs an answer by noon, 11 August.

2. Also attached are two earlier queries, from the Nation and the New York Times. Hart has not been briefed on the NY Times questions. I suggest that we do that soonest.

[Redacted]

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C/Media Relations/PAO

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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

COVER PAGE

TO: _____

STAT

FROM: Steve Hart _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES: 4 _____
(Including cover page)

DATE: 8/10/88 _____

TIME: _____

MESSAGE:
Per our conversation yesterday, here
are the Newsweek questions. Please
note the deadline.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS WITH THE TRANSMISSION PLEASE CALL.

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

AUG 10 '88 9:55 STAFF SEC A

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Newsweek

1750 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W. • SUITE 1220 • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006 • (202) 626-2000

August 4, 1988

The Vice-President
United States Senate
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20501

Dear Mr. Vice-President:

Newsweek is preparing a story about your year as CIA director and would appreciate answers to the following questions. The article will be in the issue closing Friday, August 12 and we will need the answers by Thursday, Aug. 11.

In July 1976, Chile's intelligence service DINA dispatched an assassination team to kill former diplomat Orlando Letelier. It sought U.S. visas through Paraguay and used false names for its operatives. Worried about the unusual visa request, the U.S. ambassador to Paraguay, George Landau, alerted CIA headquarters in a top secret cable to your deputy, Vernon Walters. Landau said he received a cable back from you saying Walters was out of town and later from Walters denying any knowledge of a Chilean intelligence operation. Considering DINA's violent history and the peculiarity of the visa request, did you or anyone else at CIA check with the Chileans to find out what the operation was all about? Was the FBI notified as is routine in counter-intelligence situations? If not, why not?

After Letelier was assassinated in September 1976, you pledged CIA help to the FBI's investigation, but the CIA volunteered no information about the July 1975 cable exchange. Why not? In early October, CIA leaked a conclusion to Newsweek and other publications, clearing the Chilean government of responsibility in the assassination. Did you agree with the assessment at the time? Were you aware that Chile had carried out assassination attempts -- known as Phase 3/Operation Condor missions -- against other dissidents in Argentina and Rome the previous two years?

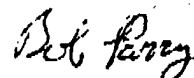
After anti-Castro Cuban extremists blew up a Cubana airline plane in October 1976, investigators discovered the existence of CORU, an alliance of Cuban extremist groups formed in the Dominican Republic in June 1976. Did CIA know about the violent plans of this group and if so what actions were taken? In November 1976, you flew with a senior FBI official to Miami to hear field reports on Cuban exile terrorism. You then toured Little Havana. Did you speak with any Cuban exile leaders and, if so, what message did you convey?

Newsweek

Luis Posada Carrilles was accused of participation in the Cubana airline bombing. He escaped from a Venezuelan jail in 1985 and went to work with Felix Rodriguez on the contra resupply operation at Ilopango Airport in El Salvador. Were you aware of Posada's role in the contra operation -- and what is your view about that participation?

What were you told about Manuel Noriega during your year as CIA chief?

Sincerely,



Robert Parry

AUG 9 '88 12:34 STAFF SEC A

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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

August 9, 1988

Note to



From Stephen Hart

STAT

Attached are the questions from Nation Magazine, FYI. When the Newsweek questions from Bob Perry come in I'll forward them, FYI.

QUESTIONS FOR VICE PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH

Submitted on August 5, 1988, by David Corn, The Nation magazine.

1. According to a Washington Post story (January 2, 1977), in July 1976, Richard Helms, then U.S. ambassador to Iran, sent you a handwritten note complaining that rampant corruption was plaguing a C.I.A. project in Iran called IBEX, a massive electronic and photographic surveillance project. ✓

A. As Director of Central Intelligence, what steps did you take to investigate Helm's charge?

B. What did you do to rectify the situation?

2. According to a recent Donald Gregg deposition, while you were Director of Central Intelligence, you had one meeting in Washington with several Panamanian officials, including Manuel Noriega. According to press reports, the U.S. government, as far back as the Nixon Administration, had hard evidence linking Noriega to drug dealing and criminal activity. U.S. intelligence also had knowledge of Noriega's direct involvement in the brutal 1971 slaying of the Rev. Hector Gallegos, a priest who had organized a peasant cooperative. (See "Why Democrats Can't Make an Issue of Noriega," by Seymour Hersh, New York Times, May 4, 1988.) ✓

A. Were you aware of Noriega's criminal activity prior to your meeting with him?

B. Had you seen any intelligence reports noting his involvement with drug dealing, corruption or the murder of Gallegos?

C. If so, what was your justification for meeting with him?

3. According to interviews with U.S. intelligence officials conducted by reporters Ernest Volkman and John Cummings, the C.I.A. intervened in Jamaican domestic activity in 1976. Volkman and Cummings report that C.I.A. officials and assets assisted the smuggling of weapons and communications equipment to the island and ran a covert campaign against Michael Manley. ✓

A. While you were D.C.I., were you aware of any C.I.A. employee or asset working to undermine the Manley

(continued)

government?

B. Was this an officially sanctioned operation?

4. Following the September 1976 assassination of Orlando Letelier, U.S. intelligence officials said the C.I.A. had ruled out the idea that Letelier was killed by agents of the Chilean military junta (New York Times, October 12, 1976). On November 1, the Washington Post reported that you shared that view. ✓

A. Are these reports accurate?

B. What was your basis for reaching that conclusion?

QUESTIONS FOR VICE PRESIDENT BUSH

(1) According to top secret U.S. government documents prepared in 1975 and 1976, the Central Intelligence Agency secretly secured lenient judicial treatment for at least four major suspected narcotics traffickers between 1972 and 1975. Their names were Gustavo Guerra Montenegro, Frank Matthews, Rafael Alarcon, and Puttaporn Khrankhruan. ✓

--Did you, as Director of Central Intelligence in 1976, ever see such documents? Were you informed about any of these four cases or any other case in which drug suspects received secret pre-trial leniency from the CIA?

--If so, did you take action to change the Agency's policy of securing leniency in order to protect CIA sources and methods?

--If you did not know of such cases, what do you think of the Agency's policy of taking such action?

--Is it still CIA policy to secure leniency for suspected drug traffickers whose trial might disclose CIA sources and methods?

--Would this be CIA policy in your administration?

(2) According to the New York Times, Oliver North, NSC staff member, and Oliver "Buck" Revell, FBI official, secretly sought judicial leniency in 1985 for Jose Bueso Rosa, a Honduran military officer convicted of participating in a scheme to pay for a political assassination with drug profits from the importation of 760 pounds of cocaine.

--When did you learn of North's and Revell's actions on behalf of Bueso Rosa?

--Did you object? When and how?

--If you did not know of North and Revell's actions, do you believe such actions consistent with your drug policies?

--Do North's actions in the Bueso Rosa case in any way modify your view that North is a "national hero?"

3) In June 1983, at the press conference launching the National Narcotics Border Interdiction Service (NNBIS), you stated, "With the help and support of CIA Director Bill Casey, and the entire intelligence community, we expect to be better informed and more knowledgeable regarding the

actions and activities of smugglers."

--Did you ever ask CIA director Casey, either personally or in writing, to provide drug intelligence to NNBIS? Is so, when?

--Did you ever request the Narcotics Working Group of the U.S. Intelligence Board to provide narcotics intelligence to NNBIS? If so, when?

--In retrospect, do you think that the U.S. intelligence system performed adequately in providing timely and accurate intelligence to NNBIS about drug activities in Panama? If not, what do you think the problem was? How would you as President attempt to improve the drug intelligence system?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Jeff Morley
Washington Editor
The Nation magazine
546-2239

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