
Agency Information

AGENCY : ROTH,BARRY
RECORD NUMBER : 178-10003-10272

RECORD SERIES : ACCESSION 78-58 (UNPROCESSED)

AGENCY FILE NUMBER : UNTITLED (HELMS AND CHILE)

Document Information

ORIGINATOR : ROCKEFELLER COMMISSION
FROM : HELMS, RICHARD
TO :

TITLE : DEPOSITION OF RICHARD MC GARRAH HELMS, APRIL 23, 1975

DATE : 04/23/1975
PAGES : 3

Released under the John F. Kennedy
Assassination Records Collection
Act of 1992 (44 USC 2107 Note).
Case#:NW 53310 Date: 06-14-2017

SUBJECTS :

JOHNSON, LYNDON B.
HELMS, RICHARD
DIEM, NGO DINH
CONSPIRACY THEORIES, CIA INVOLVEMENT
ROCKEFELLER COMMISSION

DOCUMENT TYPE : DEPOSITION
CLASSIFICATION : Top Secret
RESTRICTIONS : Consulted
CURRENT STATUS : Withhold
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 07/26/1993

OPENING CRITERIA :

COMMENTS : Attached to 1781000310270. Selected pages from longer deposition. Response begun on last page is incomplete. Declassification marking may be for special access only.

178-10003-10272

Langley, Virginia

Wednesday, April 23, 1975

Deposition of Richard McGarrah Helms, called for examination by Counsel for the Commission on CIA Activities, the witness having been previously duly sworn by the President's Commission on CIA in the offices of the Central Intelligence Agency, Langley, Virginia, at 9:37 a.m., on Wednesday, April 23, 1975, the proceedings being taken down in stenotype by S. Susan Hanback and transcribed under her direction.

APPEARANCES:

On behalf of the Commission:

WILLIAM SCHWARZER, Esq.

GEORGE A. MANFREDI, Esq.

TIMOTHY S. HARDY, Esq.

David Belin, Esq.

DECLASSIFIED

Auth:

Date: OCTOBER 18, 1976

By: WILLIAM G. HYLAND

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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1 Castro, one was, Trujillo, and do you remember what the third
2 was?

3 A. Diem.

4 Q. And I think you have already testified about that.

5 A. I just did, because President Johnson had raised the
6 cases with me and I thought that since he had done it he might
7 have raised them with President Nixon and early in his Admini-
8 stration I wanted to get him straightened out on this.

9 You know, to this day I am not persuaded that President
10 Nixon doesn't still believe that the Agency didn't have something
11 to do with the demise of President Diem of Vietnam and there
12 absolutely no evidence of this in the Agency records and the
13 whole thing has been, I mean, rather -- what is the word I want
14 -- heated by the fact that President Johnson used to go around
15 saying that the reason President Kennedy was assassinated was
16 that he had assassinated President Diem and this was just
17 justice. He certainly used to say that in the early days of
18 Presidency and where he got this idea from I don't know. I
19 don't know how many of you had the privilege of trying to argue
20 with Presidents about things like that but you tend to be a
21 loser.

22 Q. Let me just digress on that one point for the moment.
23 Before we get back to Mr. Castro. After the election in Chile,
24 I believe it was in 1970 where Allende derived a plurality,
25 President Nixon called you or contacted you to ascertain if

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1 mean inquiries -- complete openness necessarily with other
2 committees of the Congress.

3 MR. HELMS: No, because I may have been mistaken
4 about this but under Mr. Dulles and I believe under Mr. McCone,
5 I had always had the impression that the Congress had set
6 up these oversight committees as to be the only committees
7 in which these secret covert actions and secret intelligence
8 operations were to be unveiled and I was -- therefore, this
9 was my guideline. If I was going to talk to the Congress I
10 talked to those Congressmen. When I testified before other
11 committees, I tried to avoid lying or being guilty of any
12 illegality, but I also tried in some cases to duck these
13 questions so that I wouldn't be in the position of having to
14 come forward in a different context with a different committee
15 on matters which I thought were the proper business of the
16 oversight committees.

17 MR. BELIN: Well, now, the final area of my inter-
18 gation relates to charges that the CIA was in some way
19 conspiratorially involved with the assassination of President
20 Kennedy. During the time of the Warren Commission you were
21 Deputy Director of Plans, is that correct?

22 MR. HELMS: I believe so.

23 MR. BELIN: Is there any information involved with
24 the assassination of President Kennedy which in any way shows
25 that Lee Harvey Oswald was in some way a CIA agent or an agent

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