

6 January 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Daniel Manelli, House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee Staff, re Haiti Invasion of 1966

1. I met with Messrs. Robert Lishman, Chief Counsel, Daniel Manelli, Staff Attorney, and James Kelly, Investigator, Special Subcommittee on Investigations, House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, in Mr. Lishman's office, 2323 Rayburn Building, at 11:00 a.m. and reviewed with them certain testimony provided by CBS representatives with regard to the abortive invasion of Haiti attempted by the Masferrer group in 1966. The meeting was completely informal and resulted from Mr. Manelli's call of yesterday afternoon requesting that I meet with him this morning.

2. In brief, Mr. Manelli outlined that CBS representatives, primarily Mr. Jay McMullen, CBS producer, have presented in appearances before the Committee information relating to contacts with the Central Intelligence Agency which, if not rebutted in the record, will tend to cloud the issue by leaving unresolved the question whether governmental approval or national security interests were in fact involved in the particular matter of the abortive Haitian invasion of 1966.



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4. It is apparently the feeling of Representative Harley Staggers (D., W. Va.), Chairman of the full Committee, Representative John Moss (D., Calif.), who actually occupied the chair during much of the hearing, and the Committee staff that the allegations by CBS that they had tacit approval of CIA, if CIA hadn't actively fostered the invasion attempt, are patently ridiculous. Nevertheless, the allegations are contained in the record.

5. Mr. Lishman requested that consideration be given formal denial of the allegations by a letter from the Director to the Chairman. After discussion of the point at some length, he suggested that if such a letter is not feasible consideration be given to appearance of an Agency representative in executive session to repeat the information already provided (by the undersigned) that information received by the Agency on this matter had routinely been passed to the FBI and the Bureau of Customs who have the prime responsibility in the Executive Branch in such matters. This would allow the Committee in their report to deny the CBS allegations of governmental approval and identify the "denial" on the basis of testimony taken in executive session without further identification of the testimony as to source.

6. The meeting was a very friendly one. Almost complete deference was shown for Agency security considerations and judgments in this matter. It was also noted as an aside that information has been received over the weekend by the counsel that CBS may be mounting a counteroffensive against the Committee on the general theme of ridiculing the Committee and its Chairman for their "bumbling" in national security affairs about which they know nothing. I advised Mr. Lishman that I would relay the Chairman's request and that I saw no need, at least for present, for a formal request by letter from the Chairman for Agency assistance in this matter.

7. Mr. Houston has been advised.

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[Redacted]
Assistant Legislative Counsel

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