Hearings to End:

Assassinations Unit to Probe Ruby’s Links to Organized Crime; Hears Ford on FBI

Ford Testimony

The committee heard from former President Ford Sept. 21 as part of its examination of the handling of the investigation by the FBI and other federal agencies. Ford, then a House member, served on the Warren Commission.

Ford admitted that the Warren Commission investigation probably would have been broadened had the commission known of CIA plots to kill Castro.

Ford, one of only three surviving members of the commission, said knowledge of the CIA plots “certainly would have required the commission to extend its inquiry into those operations.”

“But I don’t think they, in and of themselves, would have changed the conclusions,” he added.

Ford testified that he didn’t understand why the commission had not been told about the CIA plots when one of its members was Allen W. Dulles, a former director of the intelligence agency.

“I had the feeling then that we were getting all the information from the agencies, including the CIA. Obviously, some information, such as on the assassination plots, was not given to us,” Ford said. “Why we weren’t given it, I frankly don’t understand.”

Ford added that former CIA Director Richard Helms had given the commission a long memorandum on the possibility of a conspiracy involving Cuba.

Ford acknowledged that for a time he briefed a top FBI official about organizational problems when the Warren Commission was beginning its work. He said there were only two such briefings, and that they stopped when the investigative phase began.

FBI Witnesses

James H. Gale, a retired assistant director of the FBI, told the committee Sept. 20 that Oswald should have been on the FBI’s list of subversives, but even if he had, it would not have prevented the assassination.

Gale said he was in charge of the investigation that led FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover to discipline 17 FBI employees for not putting Oswald on the list.

James R. Malley, a former FBI inspector who supervised the FBI investigation in Dallas, said the bureau had conducted a thorough investigation of various conspiracy theories before agreeing with the Warren Commission conclusion that Oswald acted alone.

Malley said the possibility of a conspiracy was a constant preoccupation, and that the bureau had looked into the possibility of Cuban involvement and the possible involvement of organized crime in the assassination.

Told by committee investigators that some FBI officials directly involved in organized crime cases had never been asked about the case, Malley insisted that crime syndicate connections had been checked and that other organized-crime agents in the bureau must have been contacted.

Malley said he had never heard Hoover object to the Warren Commission. Hoover reportedly was unhappy with the formation of the commission.

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