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DOCUMENT NUMBER D6518

DATE 240890

DESCRIPTION FBI-FD302 INTERVIEW SHERROW RE TOGO INCIDENT

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On June 25, 1990, RICHARD L. SHERROW, Explosives Technology Branch, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, (BATF) Laboratory, 355 North Wiget Lane, Walnut Creek, California, telephone number 415-4863165 was contacted for interview concerning his trip to Lome, TOGO, during October 1986. SHERROW furnished the following information:-

SHERROW stated he left Washington D.C. on September 27, 1986, en route to Lome, Togo at the request of the United States Department of State. Accompanying SHERROW was EDWARD OWENS, Firearms Branch, BATF, who is currently still assigned at BATF Headquarters, Washington D.C. Also, a JIM CASEY who represented the Department of State, now believed to be employed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

The purpose of this travel was to inspect weapons and explosives recovered from insurgents during an attempted coup which had been

successfully suppressed by the Government forces of Togo. SHERROW advised it was his recollection local Togo communist rebels and exiles based in Ghana had organised an attempt to overthrow the government by planning to take over the radio and TV stations announcing they were in control of the government. To do so, the rebels had commandeered several taxis and commercial trucks. Heavy casualties were sustained by the rebels. SHERROW and his associates met with the President of Togo who inquired if they desired to interrogate the remaining eight to ten surviving rebels of the 45 to 50 who had been captured. The President of Togo had a North Korean

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body guard. SHERROW advised they declined, having no reason to interview the rebels. SHERROW advised the uprising had not totally been suppressed upon their arrival. Periodically there continued to be gunfire which could be heard in the distance.

SHERROW stated for the first couple of days in Lome, they appeared to be 'getting the run around' and were unable to conduct the desired inspections. During their stay they operated out of the U.S. Embassy in Togo.

SHERROW advised finally, for an unknown reason, the apparent factional infighting in the Togo military stopped and they were given full access to the seized items which were displayed. SHERROW advised the weapons, explosives and related equipment were systematically presented for viewing in a thatched hut, formerly a soldiers mess hall in the military compound in Lome. They were supervised by a Togo soldier, believed to be a Colonel, described as being approximately 6'4", heavy set and having three tribal scars on each cheek. Also present was a government photographer who took lots of pictures, but was never seen to change film.

On several occasions, the Colonel became very upset at the detailed examination being conducted by SHERROW and his associates. At one point, the Colonel drew his weapon in anger.

SHERROW recalls the weapons, etc. were laid out table by table and grouped by type. Handguns, shoulder weapons, explosives, clothing, communications equipment, etc. were arranged table by table in the thatched hut.

Concerning the weapons, SHERROW recalls AK 47's; AKMs; other Bulgarian, Soviet and Czechoslovakian manufactured shoulder weapons; 30 to 40 handguns, including a Walther P-38, which was later traced to have come from Libya; several thousand rounds of ammunition; East German ammunition

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pouches; ammunition boxes with Soviet, French and some English markings, the ammunition including 7.62 millimeter and 9 millimeter calibers; several East German bayonets; five RPG-7s, new Russian rocket launchers still in the plastic with their cleaning rods; rockets from Bulgaria and Russia; two cases of F1 fragmentation grenades, unassembled having their fuses still wrapped and separate; approximately 20 French 1935 fragmentation grenades; one case of French TNT, 250 gram blocks, fresh and like new; 15 to 18 bundles of high nitroglycerin content dynamite which had been wrapped with time fuse and dipped in a wax mixture. These bundles had not been primed with a blasting cap; three heavy duty plastic bags, closed with a brass staple, of C-4 like explosive, approximately two pounds each in a flaked condition. Some of the C-4 like explosive was white, such as used by the U.S. military and others with a slight yellow tint from impurities. This had possibly been remanufactured.

Blasting caps: 50 non-electric blasting caps crimped to various lengths of white coated time fuse, some plier crimped and some appeared to having been crimped by teeth. These blasting caps had aluminum shells, measuring 1 to 1.5 inches, no markings, possible number 6s, appearing to have been commercially manufactured. SHERROW noted there both French and German road construction crews in the country using explosives at that time. Also, there were French military advisors present.

Continuing, SHERROW advised that there were another ten non-electric blasting caps located in a wood box measuring approximately 5" long by 2.5" high by 1" wide. This box had a waxpaper wrapping but had been opened with a pull string opener.

Also, SHERROW saw two electric blasting caps with leg wires cut to approximately 2" to 3". One had both red leg wires and looked similar to a Canadian Industries, Limited (CIL) type with no markings and had been

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triple crimped. The other electric blasting cap had both white leg wires, also cut short. This blasting cap had an '0' on the tip end, not the side. Both could have been possibly number 6s.

No other blasting accessories were included in the recovery such as firing wire, crimpers, blasting machines etc.

SHERROW advised located in the area of the explosives on the table were two electronic timing mechanisms with batteries in place. Each was identical in a sandwich type configuration. That being the top and bottom a thin blue green coloured fibreglass type material with Phillips screws on each four corners forming an almost square box.

SHERROW was displayed an 8" by 10" color photograph of an electronic timing mechanism which he identified as being identical to the middle sandwich portion between the two plastic pieces observed at Lome, Togo. SHERROW stated the exterior surfaces were similar to the consistency and color of the board with four corners drilled as in the photograph. Around the four sides with the Phillips corners as posts was a single piece of black plasticized electrical tape which, when in place, concealed the inside circuit board and battery. On the outside of the bottom of one timer was a double sided piece of sticky tape, white in color, and with protective cover paper which was a shade of green color. This could be used to fix the timer to something. It appears this sticky tape may have been removed from the bottom of the other timer.

Batteries were in place on both timers. The connecting wires had been soldered to the posts. The batteries were six volt British flat remote control style, possibly Eveready brand with flat posts. Each battery was positioned beneath the circuit board, multiple IC chip section between the top and bottom of the sides, sandwich style. Both batteries were in place and were considerably drained of power.

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SHERROW advised he was able to leave Togo with one of the timing circuit boards in his possession, returning to the BATF laboratory. Subsequently, he obtained fresh batteries and was able to work the circuit board which he found to be highly accurate as a timer. SHERROW stated he was unable to understand the need for a relay board on the timer. He indicated this timer could be set from 99 minutes to 99 hours as a timer.

SHERROW described the connector at the end of a wire strand leaving the timer as unique. It had a flat configuration with two slotted screws tighten down the connection. The tip end had two small plug holes, female, to receive compatible male plug. On top of the flat plug surface by the screws was a red light indicator. SHERROW did not see any male connectors among any of the items. SHERROW stated that in his opinion, several of the items on display may have been added to the weapons and items seized by the Togo military, including the two timers, which had been handled and manipulated by unknown parties. SHERROW indicated the Togo military appeared to know the two electronic circuit boards were timers. They were being closely watched by the previously mentioned Colonel. He felt it unreasonable for the now captured rebels to go into combat with unassembled grenades, rocket launchers still in the plastic with cleaning rods etc. HE had no explanation as to the origin of the two electronic timers. Having taken the one timer with the sticky tape bottom, he had no information as to what happened to the remaining timer left behind. SHERROW was unaware of any similar timers having been found in Senegal during 1988

SHERROW advised he and others in his group took photographs. All negatives and photographs taken are in the case file at BATF Headquarters, Washington D.C. SHERROW has contacted CLIFF LUND requesting that he locate this file with the photographs and reports and other details of the

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assignment.

SHERROW noted upon their impending departure a delegation from the Palestinian Liberation Organisation was arriving to review the same weapons, explosives and items which they had examined.

Additionally SHERROW indicated he was able to bring back some samples of the explosives in film cannisters. Some of these items were furnished to Picatinny Arsenal, Dover, New Jersey for examination. While in Togo, he did detonate some of the explosives which functioned as designed.

During the interview at no time was SHERROW advised this enquiry was connected with the ongoing investigation of the Pan American Airways Flight 103.

In conclusion, SHERROW advised he and the others departed Lome, Togo on October 4, 1986, returning to Washington D.C. on October 5, 1986. He expressed his willingness to cooperate in this matter in any way possible.