

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA **TAB II**  
DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY  
INVESTIGATION INTERVIEW

In the matter of:  
  
INTERVIEW OF  
  
ARMANDO RAMIREZ

Friday,  
  
October 4, 1996  
  
Conference Room, 4th Floor  
  
700 Army-Navy Drive  
  
Arlington, Virginia

The interview was convened, pursuant to notice,  
at 9:00 a.m.

**BEFORE:**

LANCE MROCK, Inspector  
  
GILBERT BRUCE, Inspector

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## P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(9:00 a.m.)

1  
2  
3 INSPECTOR MROCK: Let the record reflect  
4 that today is Friday, and the date is October 4, 1996.  
5 The time is approximately 9:00 a.m., and I am  
6 Inspector Lance Mrock. Also present at this interview  
7 is Inspector Gilbert Bruce. We are conducting this  
8 interview at the OPR office at DEA Headquarters. The  
9 proceedings are being documented by Ms. Karen Hantman  
10 of Neal R. Gross, Court Reporters and Transcribers.  
11 A full transcript of this proceeding will be made.  
12 Your statement will be taken here under oath, and the  
13 transcript of these proceedings will constitute your  
14 formal DEA statement.

15 Would you like an opportunity to review a  
16 copy of this deposition?

17 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. If yes, you will  
19 be given an opportunity to review the transcript and  
20 to make the necessary corrections.

21 This interview concerns OPR investigation  
22 PRM2 950075, which is entitled Thomas K. Solis and  
23 Armando Ramirez. This interview is being conducted to  
24 obtain information regarding the allegations that are  
25 under this investigation. The interview will result

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1 in a -- in the preparation of a sworn deposition.

2 The interview concerns allegations of  
3 falsification of official records, unprofessional  
4 conduct, and failure to supervise which have come to  
5 the attention of DEA management. You are being  
6 interviewed because you may have information regarding  
7 these allegations. We will be discussing these  
8 allegations at length today.

9 I have two forms that I am going to read  
10 to you as I am required to do under both the  
11 Department of Justice and DEA regulations. The first  
12 of these forms is entitled warning and assurance to  
13 employee required to provide information.

14 I will read the form at this time. "I am  
15 Lance Mrock and this is Gilbert S. Bruce of the Office  
16 of Professional Responsibility, Drug Enforcement  
17 Administration, United States Department of Justice.  
18 In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, I want to  
19 advise you that the authority to conduct this  
20 interview is contained in Section 8313 of the Planning  
21 and Inspection Manual and Title XXVIII of the Code of  
22 Federal Regulations Section .138, delegation of  
23 authority to the administrator of DEA in personnel  
24 matters, and Section .100 to .104, redelegation of  
25 various authorities. This inquiry pertains to the

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1 above allegations that we have mentioned. This  
2 purpose of this interview is to obtain information  
3 which will assist in the determination of whether  
4 administrative action is warranted. You have a duty  
5 to reply to these questions.

6 Agency disciplinary action including  
7 dismissal may be undertaken if you refuse to answer or  
8 fail to reply fully and truthfully. Neither your  
9 answers nor any information or evidence gained by  
10 reason of your answers can be used against you in any  
11 criminal proceeding, except that if you knowingly and  
12 willfully provide false statements of information in  
13 your answers, you may be criminally prosecuted for  
14 that action. The answers you furnish and any  
15 information or evidence resulting therefrom may be  
16 used in the course of Agency disciplinary proceedings  
17 which could result in disciplinary action including  
18 dismissal. I have read the above warnings and  
19 understand my rights and responsibilities stated."

20 Please take a few minutes to read, sign,  
21 and date the form. Do you understand your warning and  
22 assurances as they have been given?

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, I do.

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: All right. Let the  
25 record reflect that Armando Ramirez has acknowledged

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1 receiving and understanding the warnings and  
2 assurances that have been given and so-signified by  
3 signing and dating this form. The form will now be  
4 witnessed and signed by inspectors Mrock and Bruce.

5 Before we go any further here, I want you  
6 to understand the following information. By virtue of  
7 this being a compelled interview, neither your answers  
8 or anything gained from your answers could be used in  
9 any way in a criminal complaint or other criminal  
10 proceeding. This is strictly an administrative  
11 inquiry. However, we do want you to know that if you  
12 knowingly and willfully provide false information, you  
13 could be prosecuted for that information and that  
14 action along, regardless of the administrative nature  
15 of the inquiry. Do you understand that?

16 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, I do.

17 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. I also must  
18 mention that in addition to the possible criminal  
19 exposure, any sustained act of untruthfulness are  
20 subject to disclosure under Brady and Giglio  
21 principles. What this means is that should you be a  
22 witness in a criminal prosecution, any acts of  
23 untruthfulness which are committed now are  
24 discoverable during that proceeding under Brady. This  
25 could affect your ability to perform your job as a

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1 special agent in that it could preclude you from  
2 testifying in court. Do you understand the  
3 ramifications if you don't respond truthfully at this  
4 point?

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, I do.

6 INSPECTOR MROCK: All right. The second  
7 form I am presenting you is entitled Acknowledgement  
8 of Directive to Maintain Confidentiality of Office of  
9 Professional Responsibility Investigations. "You are  
10 being interviewed by Inspectors Lance O. Mrock and  
11 Gilbert S. Bruce of the Office of Professional  
12 Responsibility, Drug Enforcement Administration,  
13 United States Department of Justice, concerning  
14 allegations of misuse of office, unprofessional  
15 conduct, falsification of official records, and  
16 failure to supervise. Under authority of DEA Planning  
17 and Inspection Manual 83, Internal Investigations,  
18 Subchapter 8302D7, Authority of DEA Inspectors, you  
19 are hereby directed not to disclose to anyone except  
20 for an attorney whom you have retained to represent  
21 your interests in this matter that 1) you have been  
22 interviewed by representatives from the Office of  
23 Professional Responsibility concerning this matter;  
24 and 2) the fact that the Office of Professional  
25 Responsibility is conducting an investigation into

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1 this matter. You retain the right to discuss this  
2 matter with your attorney. Failure to comply with  
3 this directive may be grounds for administrative  
4 action against you."

5 Please take a few minutes to read, sign,  
6 and date this form.

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Could you do the  
8 first paragraph for me, please?

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. I'm sorry -- all  
10 right, I see what you are saying here, yes. I will  
11 have to make a pen and ink -- excuse me. I have just  
12 made a pen and ink correction on the initial  
13 allegations on the form for acknowledgement and  
14 directive to maintain confidentiality. I added the  
15 printed statement "failure to supervise" and have  
16 initialed that for Mr. Ramirez. Do you understand the  
17 confidentiality directive you have been given?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, I do.

19 INSPECTOR MROCK: Let the record reflect  
20 that Mr. Ramirez has acknowledged receiving and  
21 understanding the confidentiality directive that has  
22 been given and so-signified by signing and dating this  
23 form. This form will now be witnessed by inspectors  
24 Bruce and Mrock.

25 I will now swear you in. Will you please

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1 stand and raise your right hand?

2 Do you solemnly swear or affirm that the  
3 statement you are about to make shall be the truth and  
4 nothing but the truth?

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I do.

6 INSPECTOR MROCK: Thank you.

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Can I ask you  
8 something about that oath?

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: Yes, sir.

10 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Under the  
11 Chapter 83.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: Yes.

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I believe that  
14 I am not compelled to do anything under oath. Is that  
15 how you understand that? Do you understand it that  
16 way?

17 INSPECTOR BRUCE: No.

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No?

19 INSPECTOR MROCK: The only option that I  
20 think you have is to either swear or affirm. Some  
21 people prefer not to swear so they affirm under oath.  
22 That is the only distinction that I am aware of.

23 COURT REPORTER: Excuse me sir, could you  
24 please take your document off the microphone?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Sure, I'm sorry.

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1 COURT REPORTER: Okay.

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Okay. My only  
3 question under the oath section of Chapter 8313,  
4 conducting professional responsibility investigations  
5 -- 8313.11, the oaths, "Section 303, Title V of the  
6 United States Code authorizes DEA inspectors to  
7 administer an oath to witnesses during the course of  
8 an investigation involving employee irregularities and  
9 misconduct. However, this authority is discretionary  
10 in that an inspector is not compelled to take  
11 testimony under oath, nor is a witness compelled to  
12 give testimony under oath. This authority and policy  
13 extends to all special agents assigned to a PR  
14 investigation." Now I don't know how you all would --  
15 go ahead.

16 INSPECTOR BRUCE: What that means is that  
17 it is a discretion of the investigator to either take  
18 or not take an interview under oath or a statement  
19 under oath. If the investigation investigators decide  
20 that the interview should be done under oath, then it  
21 is required to be done under oath. That is what that  
22 means.

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Okay. I just  
24 wanted to check on that.

25 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Fine. We will

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1 continue.

2 Please state your full name and position  
3 with the DEA.

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: My name is Armando  
5 Ramirez. I am a special agent. Right now, I am a  
6 country attache in Panama City, Panama.

7 INSPECTOR MROCK: How long have you been  
8 employed by the Federal Government?

9 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Since June 20th,  
10 1970.

11 INSPECTOR MROCK: All right. All that  
12 time with DEA and its predecessor agencies?

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: The Bureau of  
14 Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs.

15 INSPECTOR MROCK: Thank you. Who is your  
16 immediate supervisor?

17 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: My immediate  
18 supervisor is Rick Barrett.

19 INSPECTOR MROCK: During what period of  
20 time were you the resident agent in charge of the  
21 Brownsville resident office? Approximately, if you  
22 can't give us an exact date.

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, I can't  
24 really remember when I -- I was there for I believe  
25 four years. Around 1990 to -- or 1989 -- something

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1 around there -- 1989, 1990, 1991.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: Until approximately?

3 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: November 1, 1992,  
4 when I showed up in Panama.

5 INSPECTOR MROCK: And since that time you  
6 have been a country attache in Panama City office?

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is correct.

8 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. While you were in  
9 the Brownsville resident office, did you supervise an  
10 agent by the name of Thomas K. Solis?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, sir, I did.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: During what approximate  
13 time was that? Was he there during the entire same  
14 time period that you were there?

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: When I arrived,  
16 yes, he was there. And when I left, he was still  
17 there.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. What was your  
19 relationship with Agent Solis?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: A supervisor agent  
21 relationship -- a personal, sociable relationship.

22 INSPECTOR MROCK: You had a friendship  
23 with him where you socialized with him off the job  
24 also?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: All the agents

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1 that I had in Brownsville, we would socialize too.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: How many agents were  
3 under your supervision at the Brownsville?

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: In the beginning,  
5 I had only 6 agents, I believe, approximately. I then  
6 created a provisional task force and my TO went up.  
7 But I don't remember how many state and local guys  
8 came in.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: Several, however?

10 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Several. More  
11 than 5.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: You were the only  
13 supervisor in the office when you arrived, is that  
14 correct?

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is correct.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: During the course of  
17 time that you had Agent Solis under your supervision,  
18 how did you evaluate him?

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: He was an  
20 excellent agent. He was smart, a good writer. He had  
21 no police experience. He had a senior partner that I  
22 put him in with, another higher grade, 12 or a 13.  
23 All in all, I thought he was a good, well-rounded  
24 agent. I saw his personnel file with the school that  
25 he attended and his evaluation of what they thought

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1       how good he did, that type of thing. The past  
2       performance records by the last RAC there in  
3       Brownsville. I did that to all the agents.

4               INSPECTOR MROCK: Who was the previous RAC  
5       there before you were there?

6               SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Jim Castillo.

7               INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. You said that he  
8       was assigned to a senior agent. Do you remember what  
9       senior agent you assigned Agent Solis to?

10              SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, sir, I don't.  
11       I believe it was either Tony Tomallo or a gentleman by  
12       the name of Aguilar.

13              INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. One of the  
14       allegations in this investigation against Agent Solis  
15       is that he falsified the facts in a DEA-6 report. I  
16       am going to show you a DEA-6 report dated July 12,  
17       1991, in DEA Case M9910019, File Title Armando  
18       Ramirez, which was prepared by Special Agent Solis.  
19       Initially would you identify the signature of the  
20       supervisor at the bottom of the report?

21              SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: It apparently  
22       looks like mine. This is a bad copy, but I am sure  
23       this is mine.

24              INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

25              SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: In fact, you can't

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1 even see that T.K. Solis signed it. There is some  
2 scribble in here. I think this is exactly a copy of  
3 what we both signed.

4 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Would you take  
5 the time to read the report and just advise us when  
6 you are done reviewing it? Have you had sufficient  
7 time to --

8 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, I have.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: All right, sir. Would  
10 you initial and date anyplace on the bottom of the  
11 report? Thank you. You can hold onto that for a few  
12 minutes here. The next question that we have here is  
13 are you aware that facts contained in this report were  
14 falsified in any way by Agent Solis?

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Am I aware that  
16 this was falsified by T.K.? No.

17 INSPECTOR MROCK: That the report contains  
18 any facts which Agent Solis falsified?

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, I was not  
20 aware of that.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did you ever tell or  
22 instruct Agent Solis to write the report in such a way  
23 so that it would look like a confidential source was  
24 unable to contact DEA and that DEA was therefore  
25 unable to get a country clearance in this case?

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1 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did you give him any  
3 instructions regarding changing the contents of this  
4 report that you can recall?

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

6 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did you ever tell Agent  
7 Solis to include information which was not true in any  
8 DEA-6 report or teletype?

9 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

10 INSPECTOR MROCK: What did you say to T.K.  
11 Solis after the seizure in this case regarding the  
12 problem over the failure to obtain a country  
13 clearance?

14 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember.

15 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did you discuss it at  
16 all or mention anything about the requirements of a  
17 country clearance that you can recall?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I remember, very  
19 sketchy, about the country clearance and the  
20 operational plan that we were going through a  
21 regulation to obtain those things. But when that was  
22 not done or it was not agreed upon, we then basically  
23 told them that the operational plan was denied for the  
24 informant to go to Mexico.

25 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

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1 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Let me make this  
2 clear because again it has been back in 1991, I  
3 believe.

4 INSPECTOR MROCK: Right.

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: July 12, 1991.

6 INSPECTOR MROCK: That is correct.

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: And it has been  
8 more than what 6 years now almost? Since I wasn't  
9 taking notes -- I know one thing when we attempted to  
10 get country clearance, the informant declined to do it  
11 the DEA way. So we stopped the investigation. It  
12 just can't be done any other way. He cannot go to  
13 Mexico and he was told that.

14 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Our understanding of the  
15 way the investigation proceeded was that there were  
16 ongoing negotiations with a Colombian in Mexico by the  
17 name of Javier Pardo, and that the informant, Otto  
18 Chacon, was continuing negotiations with Pardo about  
19 moving or transporting loads of cocaine for him into  
20 the U.S. from Mexico, and that the investigation  
21 proceeded along those lines. That was the plan. That  
22 once things were in place, the CI would obtain cocaine  
23 and transport the cocaine out of Mexico for Pardo. Is  
24 that the way you understood the way the investigation  
25 proceeded?

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1                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember  
2 it. I really don't remember it that well. I know  
3 that he was approached, but I don't even know whether  
4 I remember. Because I read the report, it was Pardo.  
5 Guadalajara had something to do with this. The thing  
6 here is that the informant -- the investigation or  
7 what DEA wanted from the SAC on down -- Reuben Monzon  
8 and Jim Morgan and Fred Ball and myself and T.K. Solis  
9 and Mexico -- was that there was some people  
10 attempting -- approaching the informant to transport  
11 narcotics into the United States. Okay?

12                   To do that, Mexico requested that the  
13 informant go to Mexico, pick up the narcotics, and  
14 take it to a safe airport controlled by the MFJP.  
15 That is how we were going to do it. And when the  
16 informant was told that, he said no, because the MFJP,  
17 the Mexican Federal Judicial Police, are too corrupt.  
18 In fact, my understanding is that the bad guys,  
19 whether Pardo or whoever, are paying these people off  
20 and it would be my death on this thing. So he said no  
21 and so -- it's not a -- it is a no deal. We are not  
22 going to do it period.

23                   INSPECTOR BRUCE: Although the cables that  
24 were written with regards to an operational plan as  
25 you described the pick-up, and then -- then a landing

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1 at an MFJP controlled airport, those were -- those  
2 were done subsequent. Really this controlled delivery  
3 we are talking about was done I think on July 10,  
4 1991. The operational plan that called for the  
5 informant going down and picking up the load and as  
6 you described it Mexico City said fine, but here is  
7 how it is going to be done. He will pick it up all  
8 right, but he is going to have to land in Mexico too  
9 at an MFJP controlled strip. That cable traffic or  
10 that operational plan really wasn't transmitted until  
11 the end of July, after this controlled delivery had  
12 already gone down.

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: True. But I knew  
14 what the policy is and discussing the debriefing of  
15 the plan, I mentioned that -- and talking to Mexico of  
16 what was going to happen.

17 INSPECTOR BRUCE: But was there any  
18 formalized operational plan or cables with Mexico  
19 regarding this first load?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember.

21 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Because I don't think  
22 there is any -- there doesn't seem to be anything in  
23 the file regarding that.

24 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes. I remember  
25 discussing it. I mean, it is brought up -- the

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1 subject was brought to the table with the agent about  
2 an investigation. It is hard to conceive. Even  
3 though this was not our first ton case of cocaine,  
4 which is a very sizable amount, serious dope. But  
5 you've got to play it if it is there. Even though you  
6 don't give too much -- things are not corroborated and  
7 it is just the informant talking, there is a lot of  
8 legwork that needs to be done on this thing.

9 INSPECTOR BRUCE: True. Now on July 5,  
10 Chacon was debriefed by T.K. Solis and a state agent  
11 by the name of Adan Ballesteros. At that time, he  
12 indicated that negotiations were underway with Pardo  
13 in Mexico and that Pardo had made arrangements to move  
14 a load in and that the plan was to get that load in  
15 around July 6. T.K. Solis wrote a debriefing report  
16 to that effect, which again you signed off on.

17 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I was probably in  
18 the debriefing myself, but I don't remember it. It  
19 has been a while.

20 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Yes. Well at that time,  
21 knowing the situation and the need for country  
22 clearance, I mean what direction would have been given  
23 to Chacon with regard to that? I mean, here he is  
24 saying, hey, we are getting ready to go down and pick  
25 a load up from Pardo. He is putting it together. I

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1 mean --

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Then I would  
3 expect an operational plan and write a cable and send  
4 it on out.

5 INSPECTOR BRUCE: What it seems like, and  
6 I am just -- this is my, after reading the reports and  
7 seeing how things progressed -- it almost seems to us  
8 that what you had were one CI that was really involved  
9 in the negotiations with the Colombians in Mexico, and  
10 it is almost like these things went on and on. I  
11 think this carried on for a year or something before  
12 this controlled delivery, off and on. And it almost  
13 seemed like the impression you get was that Chacon was  
14 negotiating with Pardo and your office was pretty much  
15 saying, hey, you know, almost kind of like let us know  
16 when this thing is together.

17 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Pardon me?

18 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Let us know when this  
19 thing is together. I mean, this thing just kept  
20 dragging on and dragging on.

21 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember.  
22 You know it probably was for a whole year that this  
23 was going to happen and that this was going to happen  
24 and that this was going to happen. Of course, it  
25 eventually did happen. But what I am saying, there is

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1 a whole year of investigation coming back and forth  
2 with this Pardo thing and with Armando Ramirez file  
3 title guy. I just can't sit here and tell you exactly  
4 what happened day by day because I am human and it has  
5 been 6 years and I don't remember.

6 I just thought that at the time that  
7 everything was on the up and up. I had no reason to  
8 believe that I was being lied upon. Not by their  
9 actions. And I am talking about T.K. and I am talking  
10 about the DPS agent, Ballesteros, and by this  
11 informant. I saw their eyes and I never thought that  
12 they were pulling the wool over my eyes. I thought  
13 that everything was on the up and up. That was my  
14 personal feeling on T.K. Solis. I had never any doubt  
15 that he was telling me the truth of what was going on.

16 I am surprised to hear, Inspector, that  
17 the case was over a year long of them attempting to do  
18 it every week and not happening. They knew what the  
19 rules were. The rule is that Mexico had to give us  
20 permission to do that type of operation. They knew  
21 the rules because I told them what the rules were and  
22 they read it in the manuals and they read it on the  
23 regulations. I am talking about T.K. Solis, not the  
24 other two guys.

25 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Okay. So when Solis --

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1 and I will tell you he has -- tells us that he was  
2 unaware of any need for country clearance for Mexico -  
3 -

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: He is wrong. He  
5 is absolutely wrong. That would have given us a free  
6 hand. Why worry about -- then go get the dope and  
7 bring it over. Why was there a big hold-up when we  
8 said, no, you can't go unless you go to a Mexican  
9 Federal Judicial Police controlled airport? He said,  
10 I am not going to do it.

11 INSPECTOR BRUCE: But see, that is the  
12 thing. This first delivery didn't seem like there was  
13 a hold-up. The first delivery seemed like the only  
14 thing that was holding it up was Pardo in Mexico. And  
15 when that load was together, the informants flew down  
16 and picked it up and brought it back. There didn't  
17 seem to be any restriction on their activity at that  
18 time.

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I am sorry, I am  
20 missing the boat here. Are you talking about more  
21 than one load?

22 INSPECTOR BRUCE: I am talking about this  
23 first controlled delivery that is in the DEA-6.

24 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Was there more  
25 than just this one?

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1 INSPECTOR BRUCE: There was -- there was  
2 later on.

3 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That we knew about  
4 it? That we wrote up?

5 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Well, no.

6 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Well, you see then  
7 -- when you are talking like that to me --

8 INSPECTOR BRUCE: No, no, no. I am  
9 talking about this first load.

10 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: July 10.

11 INSPECTOR BRUCE: The one controlled  
12 delivery of the 1,055 kilos. There doesn't seem to be  
13 any preparatory work with Mexico over the possibility  
14 that these guys are going to go into Mexico and bring  
15 this load out. But at the same time, there seems to  
16 be ongoing negotiations in -- if not specific but  
17 tacit approval through debriefings and things that  
18 when this load is ready, Chacon and the other  
19 informant, Robert McLean, are going to fly down and  
20 pick this stuff up and bring it right back into Texas.

21 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I wonder if DPS  
22 was directing these informants. I don't think they  
23 are here and abide by DEA rules and regulations of  
24 what they can get their informant to do by going into  
25 Mexico and negotiating. I just don't know what their

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1 rules and regulations are. I wouldn't be surprised  
2 because they work on the border just like we do, and  
3 they also have an understanding with the Attorney  
4 General of Mexico on the Governor -- the Texas  
5 Governor, law enforcement. But I don't know what  
6 those rules are of them going over and working Mexico.

7 INSPECTOR BRUCE: But these seem to be --  
8 these seem to be -- you see, these were debriefings  
9 and these were things that were being put down in DEA  
10 reports -- DEA-6's. So the appearance is that -- when  
11 I say your office, Brownsville RO, at least T.K.  
12 Solis, who was writing the reports, is involved in the  
13 debriefings. He knew what these guys were planning.  
14 And there doesn't seem anywhere to be anything that  
15 says wait a minute, we have to make more plans than  
16 just, "hey when it is ready, you guys go ahead and get  
17 it."

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Oh, absolutely.  
19 I would think so. I think I called -- and I can't  
20 remember, but I think I called Mexico and talked to  
21 Ralph Saucelo and Tommy Telles, Mike Vigil. Who else?  
22 In this case, this was a significant violator that I  
23 knew about in Mexico and Mexico was very interested.  
24 Extremely. This was a violator that they wanted. And  
25 I remember coordinating with them and talking to them.

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1 And then sometimes I did call and I would say, "I  
2 believe that this informant went to Guadalajara over  
3 our objections." I didn't know that the guy had been  
4 down there.

5 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Okay. Again, I guess  
6 that was after this time?

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't know. I  
8 don't remember. I really don't. It has been 6 years.  
9 I can only go by, one, out of working on the border,  
10 you usually have over 200 cases -- about 10 or 12  
11 people. Not making an excuse, but it is -- I think  
12 you have to put that in the formula.

13 INSPECTOR MROCK: Could you go back once  
14 more and summarize? We have talked about this issue  
15 a lot, but could you possibly summarize? What was  
16 your procedure in Brownsville if an agent had a CI  
17 that could go and bring loads out of Mexico into the  
18 United States or was negotiating for loads from  
19 Mexico? Would you just summarize that briefly?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: If an informant  
21 would come down and tell us that he could get a load,  
22 as in a controlled delivery, I would have to set an  
23 operational plan that would be approved by my ASAC --  
24 my associate SAC and my SAC. After which it would be  
25 turned over to Mexico for their approval. Once

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1 everybody had approved it, even the desk up here --  
2 cocaine desk -- then it would be a go. But not until  
3 all those checks were in place.

4 INSPECTOR MROCK: Were you responsible for  
5 handling the contacts with Mexico or did your ASAC  
6 take care of that? Who was basically the person  
7 directly responsible for that?

8 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is a hard  
9 question. I can't tell you. I talked to Mexico and  
10 I know that Fred Ball talked to Mexico. And I know  
11 that Ralph Saucelo and Monzon talked to each other  
12 about these cases. But I couldn't pinpoint and tell  
13 you who exactly worked this. I think I worked a lot  
14 of this one, but I know also that there was  
15 communication in the ASAC level between Fred Ball and  
16 I think Tommy Telles. I don't remember.

17 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did you personally make  
18 SA Solis aware of all these requirements during the  
19 course of this investigation?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: Back to the problem  
22 again regarding the country clearance. After this  
23 load was seized, did you discuss the failure to have  
24 a country clearance with ASAC Fred Ball in McAllen?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Do that question

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1 again on me. I don't understand.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you recall having a  
3 meeting with ASAC Fred Ball subsequent to the seizure  
4 in McAllen regarding the failure to have obtained a  
5 country clearance on this particular case?

6 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't recall  
7 that.

8 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. You don't  
9 remember if there was a meeting with ASAC Ball at all  
10 subsequent to this?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: If we had a  
12 meeting, we stopped by. I used to go once a week to  
13 McAllen.

14 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: But I don't  
16 remember if it was specifically this particular case.  
17 I know that he wanted to see us to congratulate T.K.  
18 Solis on a case well done, and we did stop by. I  
19 don't remember if it was right after the case or if it  
20 was several days later that we stopped by. And other  
21 matters.

22 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Did Agent Solis  
23 attend this meeting? Do you recall if he was present  
24 during your conversations with --

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I remember T.K.

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1 Solis showing up in McAllen to get a pat on the back  
2 on a case well done. But I don't remember when.

3 INSPECTOR BRUCE: But you don't recall  
4 yourself and Fred Ball and T.K. sitting down and  
5 discussing the country clearance problem with this  
6 particular seizure?

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember  
8 that. No, sir.

9 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Okay. Was there a  
10 perceived problem for not having gotten country  
11 clearance?

12 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't know. I  
13 never thought that there was a problem, not getting  
14 country clearance.

15 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Well, I mean you've got  
16 1000 and something kilos of cocaine that an informant  
17 flies out of Mexico and that you end up with a  
18 controlled delivery on.

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No. But we told  
20 him what T.K. had told me about what had happened. We  
21 had told that to everybody down the line of what T.K.  
22 said had happened about that guy taking off and the  
23 circumstances surrounding that.

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: Would you again give us  
25 basically a summary of what T.K. told you took place

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1 regarding the country clearance -- the issue?

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Well, basically he  
3 called me up and said that -- early in the morning and  
4 mentioned to me that the informant was in Harlington  
5 and he had at least a ton of cocaine that had been  
6 brought in. He said -- I don't remember what the  
7 words were but he basically said that he was basically  
8 kidnapped and taken over there and couldn't call DEA.  
9 I immediately called all my line supervisors and  
10 talked to Mexico and told them exactly what T.K. had  
11 told me. The agenda on this thing was to attempt to  
12 do a controlled delivery and arrest the owners of the  
13 cocaine.

14 INSPECTOR BRUCE: What was the response of  
15 -- you say you called your supervisors, I assume Fred  
16 Ball for one. What was his response to hearing about  
17 that?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't recall  
19 what he said.

20 INSPECTOR BRUCE: How about Mexico? What  
21 was their response?

22 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Where did he pick  
23 it up at? Where did he pick it up? You see, we had  
24 a chance to go over there.

25 INSPECTOR BRUCE: How about why was he

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1 there? I mean they didn't --

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: They didn't argue  
3 that fact.

4 INSPECTOR BRUCE: They didn't accuse you  
5 guys of trying to run one by them down there?

6 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

7 INSPECTOR MROCK: Let's -- you've already  
8 -- the fact that Otto Chacon was a confidential source  
9 has already been mentioned, I believe, in this case.  
10 You are familiar with Otto Chacon, is that correct?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is correct.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. And he was a  
13 confidential source for DEA Brownstone?

14 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: And I believe DPS  
15 originally.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Do you recall how  
17 Chacon became a confidential source for DEA?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, I do not.

19 INSPECTOR MROCK: We basically have been  
20 told that the DPS brought Chacon to DEA due to the  
21 fact that he was able to do major traffickers in  
22 Mexico and that DPS was aware that DEA could arrange  
23 the necessary country clearances for bringing these  
24 loads out. Is that an accurate description?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is an

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1 accurate statement, yes.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: So Chacon was more or  
3 less equally a DEA and DPS informant? He was a joint  
4 informant I guess you would say?

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Once he became a  
6 DEA informant, he became a full DEA -- there is no  
7 such thing as a part-time DEA informant. Now he is  
8 into the rules and regulations of DEA.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. How did the  
10 actual supervision of Chacon work? How was that  
11 arranged?

12 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: As any other DEA  
13 informant would work.

14 INSPECTOR MROCK: What do -- do you know  
15 what investigations Chacon initiated for DEA? Was  
16 this the only case?

17 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't now.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: You did participate in  
19 regular debriefings of Chacon, right?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, I did. Let  
21 me explain that one. My method of being there on the  
22 90-day debriefings or any other debriefings, I usually  
23 stop by, meet them, talk to them, and see what the  
24 issues are of concern. I then ask them if they have  
25 gotten paid, who paid them, how many agents paid them.

1 If there is anything that he wants to talk to me that  
2 the agents are doing wrong -- if he wants to talk to  
3 me by myself. Just bring the issues out. And when  
4 that is -- I am not going to sit two or three hours on  
5 a debriefing. But before he leaves, I want to stop by  
6 and mention if there is anything or any concerns that  
7 he has. But I am not going to be there on a full  
8 debriefing for hours. I just know what the issues are  
9 and what the concerns are. I usually leave -- but the  
10 agent can call me at any time. I am around the corner  
11 in my office. That is usually the way it is.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: You remain available in  
13 case anything would --

14 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Exactly. And if  
15 there is another CI around, then I do the same thing.  
16 We have had situations where we have had several CIs  
17 around and I am not going to sit there on all of them  
18 for hours. I just don't have that time or that  
19 luxury.

20 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Do you recall any --  
21 during these debriefings or your contact with Chacon  
22 any specific issues that --

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: None, none  
24 whatsoever. No.

25 INSPECTOR BRUCE: How many personal

1 contacts would you say you had with Chacon?

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't know.

3 INSPECTOR BRUCE: How -- are we talking  
4 about a couple of meetings or --

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I can't tell you  
6 that. There were more than that. Absolutely more.  
7 I just don't remember.

8 INSPECTOR MROCK: And do you recall about  
9 how long a period of time?

10 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, I do not  
11 recall.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you know of any  
13 problems specifically that arose with Chacon?

14 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Not that I can  
15 remember.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: Either personal problems  
17 that he raised or any kind of conflicts that he had  
18 with the agents?

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Never complained -  
20 - no. Not that I can remember.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: He never made any  
22 statements to you indicating that he had a problem  
23 with the agents that were handling him and  
24 controlling?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Never. Never.

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1 INSPECTOR MROCK: Never any personality  
2 problems where they seemed like they had difficulties  
3 getting along?

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: There was never a  
5 problem that I could tell on face value.

6 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Were you aware of  
7 information that came in from the U.S. Customs Service  
8 in Mobile that indicated Chacon brought in a load of  
9 approximately 500 kilograms of coke while he was  
10 working as a DEA Brownsville?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, sir. I do not  
12 know that.

13 INSPECTOR MROCK: And if you could -- just  
14 one more time, when did you say that you left the  
15 Brownsville office as the RAC?

16 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: November 1, 1992,  
17 I showed up in Panama. I left about five days before,  
18 I guess.

19 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: By that time, I  
21 had a group supervisor. I think the group supervisor  
22 came in right after -- around November of 1991 --  
23 maybe of 1992. I am not sure.

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you recall a CI by  
25 the name of Robert McLean who had number SM9900018?

1                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, but I don't  
2 recall that he was an informant.

3                   INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. So do you know  
4 how he would have come to be a DEA informant?

5                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, but I imagine  
6 that it was brought over by Chacon. I remember him  
7 being a pilot. But I don't remember him being written  
8 up as a CI.

9                   INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you remember if he  
10 was a DPS CI?

11                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember  
12 that.

13                   INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Do you have any  
14 idea who would have handled him?

15                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I would think it  
16 would have been T.K. also.

17                   INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

18                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: But I don't  
19 remember the guy at all.

20                   INSPECTOR MROCK: You don't recall any  
21 personal contacts ever with McLean then, right?

22                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I really don't.  
23 I can't remember.

24                   INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Let's just try to  
25 go back here a second and talk about the Ramirez

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1 investigation, M9910019. What do you really recall  
2 again about how this investigation was initiated?

3 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Can you be more  
4 specific? That is kind of very general.

5 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. All right. Do  
6 you know how it evolved from the Ramirez investigation  
7 into the Pardo investigation?

8 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: There was a controlled  
10 delivery of 1,055 kilos of cocaine to El Campo, Texas  
11 during the course of this investigation. Do you  
12 recall that delivery?

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

14 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. And you stated,  
15 I believe previously, that you first became aware that  
16 the cocaine was in this country on the date that the  
17 controlled delivery was done?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is correct.

19 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you know where the  
20 1,055 kilos came from?

21 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Mexico.

22 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is what T.K.  
24 Solis told me.

25 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

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1                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Let me answer your  
2 first question now on this thing. The 1,055 kilograms  
3 -- my understanding early in that morning was that I  
4 thought it was a DEA case because T.K. Solis told me  
5 that. Since he was a joint informant by DPS and DEA,  
6 I came to realize later on that it was a DPS case and  
7 we were only assisting them in this investigation. I  
8 learned that after the delivery of the controlled  
9 delivery, not before. I suspected that we didn't have  
10 full control of this investigation by actions on the  
11 part of DPS. Of course, this was verified later that  
12 that is the case. And I don't even remember if we  
13 paid the CI. I don't think we did. I hope we didn't.

14  
15                   INSPECTOR MROCK: Then you are basically  
16 saying that prior to your knowledge of the actual  
17 cocaine being present on the delivery in this country,  
18 you don't recall any negotiations with DPS or with  
19 management there regarding what the plan was for --

20                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: None whatsoever.  
21 My negotiation was what only I was receiving from T.K.  
22 Solis and I was passing it on.

23                   INSPECTOR MROCK: You didn't have any  
24 direct contact with any supervisors there?

25                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, sir, I did

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1 not.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: In other words, to get  
3 a plan and to basically work out what --

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I developed a plan  
5 of what T.K. Solis had mentioned to me. I thought it  
6 was a DEA case and my operational plan, and we got it  
7 cleared through ASAC, Fred Ball, and Monzon to where  
8 we got the airplanes up, we put the kill switches on.

9 At this time, I am still not able to talk to any  
10 DPS people because they are all in surveillance or  
11 they are all not around. My only communication is  
12 with T.K. Solis. And I still think it is a DEA case  
13 and I still think we are going to go to Houston and do  
14 a controlled delivery.

15 INSPECTOR MROCK: But at this time, you  
16 are saying you did attempt -- when you found out that  
17 the cocaine was in this country, you did attempt to  
18 contact the DPS people to work out arrangements with  
19 them?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Oh, absolutely.  
21 We need to sit down like we do every case. Sit down  
22 and talk about it and make an operational plan of who  
23 is going to be here and who is going to be there --  
24 all of the above. Unfortunately --

25 INSPECTOR MROCK: They were not available,

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1 you are saying?

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Because it was an  
3 immediate thing. We had to go and start the  
4 controlled delivery.

5 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Now the day before,  
6 which would have been the 9th of July -- the day  
7 before this happened -- there was considerable contact  
8 between T.K. Solis and Ballesteros, who happened to be  
9 up at the DPS Academy in Austin at the time.

10 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I didn't know  
11 that.

12 INSPECTOR BRUCE: And T.K. and DPS  
13 management, Ballesteros and DPS management --

14 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: He never called me  
15 until the 10th -- until that day. And he never  
16 explained to me why he never did that.

17 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Yes. It seems to be a  
18 little unusual that he would -- that you of all people  
19 would be out of the loop on this thing.

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Sure. I wonder --

21 INSPECTOR BRUCE: That T.K. would be  
22 calling --

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I wonder if he was  
24 trying to hide something from me.

25 INSPECTOR BRUCE: -- DPS command and one

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1 thing or another and getting this thing arranged.

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Not once did I --  
3 you know. And I know that the command of DPS sits in  
4 McAllen, Texas. That is where the captain is at.  
5 They are the ones who run the operations. As far as  
6 I know, Fred Ball didn't know anything about it until  
7 I called him early that morning. So it is just -- you  
8 know, I am dumbfounded. I don't know if T.K. was  
9 trying to keep something away from me. I don't know  
10 what it was. But I -- well.

11 INSPECTOR MROCK: If basically Solis said  
12 that he advised you the day before that a load was  
13 supposed to be being brought in by Chacon, do you  
14 recall any conversation like that?

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That would be a  
16 lie on the part of T.K. Solis. He never said that to  
17 me.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I would have never  
20 let him do it.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you have any idea how  
22 long the load of cocaine was at the -- at Weslaco  
23 before the actual controlled delivery was initiated?

24 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, a couple --  
25 about a couple of hours before.

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1 INSPECTOR MROCK: What part did you play  
2 in the actual delivery? Were you out there during the  
3 delivery?

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I did jump up and  
5 go and I think I met up with him around the  
6 checkpoint, which is, I guess, about 30 miles out of -  
7 - there are two checkpoints, Falfurrias and Salita.  
8 I think we went through the Salita checkpoint which is  
9 about 60 some miles off of the King range.

10 INSPECTOR MROCK: Now the delivery was  
11 already in progress  
12 -- or the surveillance of the load was in progress.

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: The surveillance  
14 of the load vehicle controlled by the CI was headed  
15 north. My instructions, and I believe it was Monzon -  
16 - hey, don't lose -- don't lose the dope.

17 INSPECTOR MROCK: Were you buy yourself in  
18 the vehicle or you had --

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, sir, I was  
20 not.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: You were with someone?

22 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I was with  
23 someone.

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: You weren't with T.K.  
25 Solis, however?

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1 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, I was not.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you recall who you  
3 would have been with?

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't recall.

5 INSPECTOR MROCK: Whose idea was it to  
6 basically deliver it to El Campo?

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: It was not mine.  
8 I don't know who it was. I still thought that we were  
9 going to go all the way to Houston and deliver it to  
10 some residence up there. We had everybody standing by  
11 from Houston DEA to do that.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: You personally didn't  
13 want the load taken off closer to Brownsville then,  
14 right?

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: You were in agreement  
17 that it should go to Houston?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Well, you know, it  
19 just -- I mean, I don't mind taking it off close to  
20 Brownsville, but there was never any information that  
21 I had. In other words, if the bad guys from New York  
22 and Colombia are coming over and picking it up in  
23 Weslaco or wherever, let's take it off there. Sure.

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: But I was never

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1 into that loop. I thought that it was -- hey, that  
2 the instructions of the CI from the bad guys was to  
3 take it to somebody in Houston, Texas.

4 INSPECTOR MROCK: And you were told this  
5 by T.K. Solis?

6 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, sir. I never  
7 talked to -- not until after or around Corpus, I  
8 believe, that I had a talk with a lieutenant or a  
9 sergeant or somebody.

10 INSPECTOR BRUCE: That is with the DPS?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: And you don't recall who  
13 that individual was?

14 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

15 INSPECTOR MROCK: What did you basically  
16 talk to him? What discussion did you have at this  
17 point regarding where the load would be taken off?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Well, I kind of  
19 wanted a briefing of what was going on or what was  
20 happening because I had problems figuring out what on  
21 earth is happening. You know, the left hand not doing  
22 what the right -- and that is apparently it. Again,  
23 this is where I realized that this was a DPS case.  
24 And I believe I was told by the DPS people. They  
25 said, hey, you are assisting us. This is our case.

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1 This is our informant. Which was -- instead of  
2 sitting there and arguing with a loaded truck of a  
3 ton, we figured that we can sit back and start  
4 discussing.

5 INSPECTOR MROCK: The person who would  
6 have basically told you this was the lieutenant or  
7 supervisor that you talked to when you met --

8 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is correct.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: This conversation  
10 occurred at that time basically?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: While the  
12 surveillance was going on. We stopped by to get some  
13 refreshments.

14 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Who was  
15 delivering the cocaine, do you recall?

16 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I have no idea.  
17 I don't know. I thought it was the informant himself.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you remember what  
19 kind of vehicle the load was in?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Only because I  
21 read the report.

22 INSPECTOR MROCK: When did you first see  
23 the cocaine?

24 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: At the sheriff's  
25 office close to Houston, Texas. I believe it is in

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1 Richmond, Texas.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: So it was already  
3 seized?

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

5 INSPECTOR MROCK: It had already been  
6 seized before you --

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Oh, yes.

8 INSPECTOR MROCK: What did you do after  
9 the delivery? After it was -- well, after the  
10 seizure, excuse me?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I remember I  
12 believe that I wanted to talk to and debrief the CI of  
13 what happened. I believe I gave instructions to T.K.  
14 Solis to take this guy and stick him in some hotel.  
15 I believe I might have even met him outside -- out on  
16 the road and told him to go to a hotel. I believe.  
17 I am not for sure on that. I then later -- I remember  
18 that night that I was going to show up and take care  
19 of all the other problems and send the agents back to  
20 Brownsville or McAllen or the airplane. We had DEA  
21 aircraft -- get rid of all the support we had on this  
22 thing. Send them all back. And then I was going to  
23 go over and talk to the CI.

24 And I remember that he was not there. I  
25 remember even asking or talking to his family or

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1 calling his house and that he had gone to Mexico. I  
2 remember calling Mexico and telling him to show up and  
3 find him. If they could find him, grab him and talk  
4 to him. I remember three or four days later, after  
5 looking for him frantically, that he had gone to  
6 Mexico again without our permission. I mean, he just  
7 got up and left, according to what T.K. Solis told me,  
8 and to get him back into the states.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: What was Agent Solis's  
10 explanation to you as to why the CI didn't show up for  
11 the debriefing after the seizure or why he --

12 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: The informant was  
13 very scared. If he didn't show up at certain places,  
14 his life and his family's life would be -- they would  
15 be killed.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

17 INSPECTOR BRUCE: I would like to just  
18 maybe go back again kind of step by step. But I guess  
19 from what you have said, there was really no -- you  
20 had no advance notice at all of this load coming into  
21 the country even though it looks like T.K. and  
22 Ballesteros and the DPS command staff out of McAllen  
23 at least were standing by. If they didn't know it was  
24 coming, they were at least on standby for this.

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I didn't know

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1 that.

2 INSPECTOR BRUCE: But, no, your office  
3 wasn't on a standby.

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

5 INSPECTOR BRUCE: You didn't have any prior  
6 knowledge.

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No. Everybody was  
8 home asleep. I was too.

9 Q So the --

10 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Nobody called me  
11 and said, hey, we have got this or that going. I  
12 would have jumped up and gone to the command center.  
13 This is a significant case. It is something important  
14 to DEA. Mexico wanted this guy. I didn't know until  
15 --

16 INSPECTOR BRUCE: So the first you heard  
17 about it was the morning of the 10th -- the early  
18 morning of the 10th?

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Well, like you  
20 said, I heard about it all year long. But then on the  
21 morning of the 6th, T.K. calls and says the dope is  
22 here.

23 INSPECTOR BRUCE: The 10th. I'm sorry.  
24 You said the 6th.

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Whatever.

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1 INSPECTOR BRUCE: I think it was the 10th.  
2 When you got that phone call from T.K. on the morning  
3 of the 10th, what did you tell him?

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I told him to --  
5 I said, how did he get -- something to the effect of  
6 how on earth did this dope show up here? What on  
7 earth happened here? And that is when he told me  
8 exactly that he had been taken against his will to  
9 Mexico. Gotten on an airplane and gone and done this  
10 with a Colombian escort.

11 INSPECTOR BRUCE: With Chacon, yes.

12 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: With somebody,  
13 yes.

14 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Okay.

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: And that is when  
16 I immediately called Fred Ball and told him. Then I  
17 called two or three times Mexico and explained it.  
18 The key on Mexico was where. What was the GPS on it?  
19 So we can get and mobilize and do this. I was never  
20 able to find that for them.

21 INSPECTOR BRUCE: After hearing about the  
22 kidnap story and the fact that the load was in the  
23 valley, what were your instructions to Solis at the  
24 time?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Inspector, I just

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1 don't recall exactly what I told him. It must have  
2 been something about organizing some kind of  
3 operational plan of what we are going to do with this  
4 thing. What is it that you need? What are your  
5 needs? We've got to scramble an airplane. We have  
6 got to do this and that. The logistics of trying to  
7 get it done. I asked him if it was a DEA case or a  
8 DPS case. Who was in charge? Who was leading this  
9 thing? As far as I can remember, he mentioned it was  
10 DEA. And that was my knowledge of it.

11 I asked him if he had a chance to come and  
12 talk to us and he said that he had to stay on it  
13 because if the thing left or something, he couldn't  
14 leave. This type of explanation. But that he would  
15 be in constant contact with us. I came to the office  
16 and I scrambled everybody. I got everybody out. I  
17 got my task force out to go out there and help them on  
18 the surveillances. But I don't see what else -- I  
19 remember doing all those, but I don't know any other  
20 thing that was pressing. In that particular moment,  
21 the most pressure was not to lose the cocaine -- to  
22 get the controlled delivery going and to do it right.  
23 That was my -- that is what I was doing.

24 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Did T.K. advise you at  
25 the time of the amount involved? How much cocaine

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1 there was?

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: A ton -- I  
3 remember it was just a ton of cocaine.

4 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Were you appraised as to  
5 the control -- whether or not the CIs were in control  
6 of the load or what the situation was at the time?

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember  
8 that. I really don't.

9 INSPECTOR BRUCE: I mean, I am just  
10 thinking that if the CIs are in control of the load  
11 and they have it in their hanger in Weslaco where it  
12 was --

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Apparently they  
14 weren't because apparently there must have been  
15 somebody else around that they really -- the CIs  
16 couldn't leave and come talk to us and set up some  
17 kind of plan to keep doing the investigation or to  
18 keep the investigation going. I am just thinking that  
19 that is probably what happened, but I don't know. I  
20 don't remember.

21 INSPECTOR BRUCE: You can't recall how  
22 that went down?

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No. But I am sure  
24 that is the case. If not and if we have full control,  
25 I show up at the warehouse. But that was not the

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1 case. For some reason that was not the case. The bad  
2 guys were probably there. That must have been the  
3 reason that -- even if I asked him, which I don't  
4 remember, come on down and let's all sit down and talk  
5 and find out -- let's debrief the informant and let's  
6 find out what happened. Where did you go? How did  
7 you go? Who came in? All of the above. That is the  
8 way you start trying to figure this thing out. I  
9 couldn't get T.K. or the informants because of some  
10 problem. I don't know what it was. I can't remember.

11 INSPECTOR BRUCE: You can't recall what  
12 the situation was?

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Probably a bad guy  
14 was around, if anything. But I am just saying that as  
15 a -- I am supposed to -- I have been in Panama too  
16 long. I am forgetting my English. But I would think  
17 that that is probably what transpired.

18 INSPECTOR BRUCE: So your instructions to  
19 T.K. when he made that call to you were what at the  
20 time?

21 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That I wanted to  
22 know the circumstances. And he basically told me that  
23 the gentleman was taken to Mexico by the bad guys and  
24 couldn't call anybody. He brought the dope in from  
25 Mexico into Weslaco. And that a controlled delivery

1 was going to be done. How he found out about it, I  
2 didn't have a chance. I had to start reporting  
3 things. Come on down and let's talk about it. Bring  
4 the CI. Nothing like that happened. Nothing of the  
5 normal, natural process of a seizure of narcotics or  
6 of what we are going to do now. We didn't have that  
7 opportunity.

8 INSPECTOR BRUCE: When he said a  
9 controlled delivery was going to be done, did he  
10 describe at that time --

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't think he  
12 mentioned it like that, no. I don't think he  
13 mentioned it like that. I don't know how he --

14 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Did you give him any  
15 specific instructions at that time? When he ran all  
16 this down to you with the call? I mean, did you tell  
17 him, hey, this stuff isn't going anywhere until we sit  
18 down?

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I advised my boss  
20 of what was going on. But to tell you the truth, it  
21 has been so long, I don't remember the exact -- and  
22 apparently it is very important because you guys keep  
23 coming back to that situation.

24 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Sure. Sure.

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: And I can't -- I

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1 can't really sit there and tell you verbatim what was  
2 discussed or not. I just don't remember. I apologize  
3 for that because I know it is important. But, again,  
4 it has been more than 6 years.

5 INSPECTOR MROCK: I am going to ask you to  
6 read a teletype here. This is a teletype dated July  
7 12, 1991, and it is regarding seizure of approximately  
8 2,293 pounds of cocaine and arrest of one defendant in  
9 Case M9910019. Would you take a look at that, please?  
10 Let us know when you have read it and reviewed it.  
11 Have you read and reviewed the teletype, sir?

12 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

13 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Would you initial  
14 and date the bottom of this?

15 INSPECTOR MROCK: We will have the record  
16 reflect that Mr. Ramirez had initialed and dated the  
17 bottom of the teletype.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you know  
19 who prepared this particular teletype?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: T. K. Solis.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: You are sure that he was  
22 the writer of the teletype?

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. And then after he  
25 prepared it, the teletype was approved by you?

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1 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: It must have been.  
2 I also sent it to McAllen for approval.

3 INSPECTOR MROCK: It would have been  
4 forwarded to your ASAC also for approval?

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

6 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you recall --

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: It might have been  
8 written in McAllen. I don't remember.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: And do you recall  
10 discussing the material in the teletype with your  
11 ASAC?

12 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, sir. I don't  
13 recall that.

14 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you know of any other  
15 notifications that you made subsequent to the seizure?

16 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Could you be more  
17 specific?

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: Well, did you -- you  
19 called your ASAC after the seizure, correct?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That is correct.  
21 I called my SAC too and the associate SAC.

22 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did you discuss  
23 basically any of the problems or issues that we have  
24 discussed here regarding whose case was it? Was it a  
25 DPS case that we were assisting on or was it our case?

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1 Or any problems with why the load was taken off where  
2 it was.

3 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

4 INSPECTOR MROCK: What was the information  
5 that you basically gave your ASAC?

6 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I was not a happy  
7 camper of what had happened. I gave my concerns. I  
8 issued my concerns to Mr. Monzon about this. I  
9 thought it was going to be a federal case -- a DEA  
10 case -- a conspiracy case involving all these people  
11 who had everything to do with this. Those were my  
12 concerns.

13 INSPECTOR MROCK: So you were not  
14 satisfied with the results of the investigation?

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I never wanted to  
16 take off that mule in El Campo, Texas and get a zero -  
17 - a nobody -- with 2,253 pounds of cocaine.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: And what was either Mr.  
19 Monzon's or ASAC, Ball's, opinion of this when you  
20 discussed it? Were they in agreement with you?

21 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember  
22 exactly what it was, but they were --

23 INSPECTOR MROCK: Were they unhappy?

24 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: They were unhappy.  
25 I can say that.

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1 INSPECTOR MROCK: What about DPS? Did you  
2 have any meetings or discussions with them after the  
3 fact regarding the seizure? Were there any problems  
4 in the relationship?

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: There were a lot  
6 of problems with the relationship with DPS. DPS is  
7 one of the most corrupt Texas departments or state  
8 narcotic agencies next to New Orleans P.D. that I have  
9 personally worked with. I don't like DPS. I have had  
10 problems with the lieutenant in Hartington, Texas  
11 concerning another -- well this was a little bit  
12 bigger -- a five ton case. I just don't like their  
13 methods. I don't like -- I did not have -- I did not  
14 invite DPS to be part of my task force. I don't like  
15 the way they operate. I can go on and on about DPS.  
16 I think you know my feeling on the Texas Department of  
17 Public Safety.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did you personally write  
19 any reports or memos regarding this seizure?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember  
21 if I ever did or not, no.

22 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. After the load  
23 was seized, did you have any subsequent debriefings of  
24 the confidential source?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember.

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1 I would think so, but I don't remember.

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did he ever or did --

3 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: It is easy for me  
4 to say that I didn't particularly care for the way  
5 this thing went down and for us to start getting this  
6 guy apart from DEA. Not as in blackball. That would  
7 have never been my words on it. It is very easy for  
8 me --

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did you ever tell T.K.  
10 Solis that he should blackball the --

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, I never said  
12 that. No. I am just saying that I thought that we  
13 should be extremely careful with this guy from now on.  
14 To the point to where I would -- again, I better -- I  
15 remember thinking of just changing the guy. Again, it  
16 is very easy for me to tell you that I remember these  
17 things, but I wasn't too happy with that informant.  
18 And my gut feeling was to give it to a senior guy and  
19 let him work the informant and get T.K. out. A  
20 feeling that I had.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: But you never, in fact,  
22 did that?

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Never. In fact,  
24 I don't remember dealing with that gentleman too much  
25 later on.

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1 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did Solis or anybody  
2 else ever indicate to you that the informant could  
3 bring in additional loads?

4 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes. Oh,  
5 absolutely. Absolutely. I even brought Mexico City  
6 in to come talk to him before he did any of his  
7 exposes. I brought Mexico in to find out where he  
8 picked up the dope exactly. Get a good debriefing and  
9 work on the additional. Now we know that he is  
10 telling the truth that he can do a ton and that he has  
11 three tons out there and we have got to believe him.  
12 So let's bring Mexico in.

13 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you know if the CI  
14 was responsible for assisting in any other seizures  
15 after this one?

16 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, I don't  
17 remember.

18 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did -- go ahead.

19 INSPECTOR BRUCE: So when you say you  
20 brought Mexico in after the seizure -- Mexico City --  
21 our Mexico City office, was that initiated by you or  
22 was that initiated by Mexico City? The documentation  
23 would indicate that Mexico City initiated --

24 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Mexico City asked  
25 me if they can come up here.



1 INSPECTOR BRUCE: They sent some agents up  
2 to interview the CI.

3 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I said absolutely.  
4 Come on down. Sure. In fact, I think they ever  
5 verified that they understood the concerns of the  
6 informant to go to a controlled airstrip. Because, in  
7 fact, we do have a lot of bad guys that are MFJP that  
8 work both sides of the law. They were kind of  
9 impressed. They briefed me on the way out on the  
10 informant and his knowledge. Now apparently we know  
11 that he was working both sides, like most of your  
12 typical informants unfortunately.

13 INSPECTOR MROCK: Subsequent to the  
14 seizure, did Agent Solis ever talk to you regarding  
15 policies and requirements regarding extended control  
16 deliveries or possible non-seizures of loads regarding  
17 this informant?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

19 INSPECTOR MROCK: Did he ever indicate to  
20 you that the CIs life was in danger and that the CI  
21 would have to develop additional credibility with his  
22 people in Mexico?

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Subsequent?

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: Yes, subsequent to this  
25 seizure. Did he ever indicate that there were any

1 problems?

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No. No.

3 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Would he have -- again,  
4 this is T.K. -- would he have ever approached you with  
5 an idea or a plan to let the CIs run a load and not  
6 have it seized?

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I would arrest  
8 T.K. and the CI that same day -- that same day.

9 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Did you know that Agent  
10 Solis was given a cell phone by Chacon?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No. No.

12 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Did you know that Solis  
13 had a cell phone that basically had the service  
14 charges on it paid by the Cameron County District  
15 Attorney's office?

16 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Do that again.

17 INSPECTOR BRUCE: In other words, do you  
18 know that Solis had a cell phone in which the Cameron  
19 County District Attorney's office paid basically the  
20 service charges and the bills on it?

21 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I knew that T.K.  
22 Solis had a phone. I don't know who that phone  
23 belonged to.

24 INSPECTOR BRUCE: It was not a DEA phone,  
25 however. He was not -- at the time, he didn't have a

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1 DEA phone that was issued to him, is that correct?

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, correct. And  
3 I do know that Cameron County in their Fund 90 that  
4 they called -- this narcotic related fund -- that  
5 through my task force assists on equipment, et cetera,  
6 to pay -- in other words, they give us cell phones and  
7 they pay for them. But I never knew that Chacon had  
8 given --

9 INSPECTOR BRUCE: You knew Solis had a  
10 cell phone.

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

12 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Oh, you --

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I knew that he had  
14 a cell phone, but I thought that he had bought it.

15 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Okay. You didn't know  
16 what the source of this particular phone was.

17 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

18 INSPECTOR BRUCE: But you do know that  
19 basically there was an arrangement in Cameron County  
20 to pay the bills on this phone for official use?

21 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, exactly.  
22 Yes, I did know that.

23 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Did you ever borrow  
24 Agent Solis's cell phone from him?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Maybe. I don't

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1 remember. I wouldn't doubt -- it wouldn't be out of  
2 line if I said, "hey, can I borrow your phone." I  
3 thought it was his phone. If I would have known that  
4 it belonged to that informant, I would have told him,  
5 hey, you need to return it right away or check and see  
6 what he needs to do with it.

7 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Did you ever have an  
8 incident occur to you in which you took a trip to  
9 Houston in a county vehicle in which the vehicle was  
10 stolen from you while you were checking into a hotel?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes. It happened.

12 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Okay. Do you recall  
13 when or approximately that occurred?

14 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, but I am sure  
15 there is a police report on it because I reported the  
16 vehicle stolen.

17 INSPECTOR BRUCE: But it was a county  
18 vehicle that was stolen that you had used for an  
19 official trip?

20 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: It was a vehicle  
21 that they had loaned me.

22 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Was it an official trip  
23 that you made?

24 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, it was not an  
25 official trip. I asked the District Attorney that I

1 needed a pick-up truck and I would pay him the gas and  
2 stuff like that on it to go and drop my daughter off  
3 because it was a pick-up truck and all her stuff in  
4 it. He said there was no problem. I asked him if  
5 there would be a problem because it was not an  
6 official trip and he said no. This guy's name, the  
7 district attorney, is Reed Sines. And that vehicle --  
8 when I stopped by Brownsville, T.K. was there. T.K.  
9 had leukemia and he was going through some checks and  
10 a gentleman by the name of George Gavito was there,  
11 who was head of the District Attorney Investigator,  
12 and we called the DA that evening right away.

13 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. At the time, was  
14 there a cell phone in the vehicle?

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't know.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: So you don't recall if  
17 you had borrowed Agent Solis's phone and if it was in  
18 fact in this vehicle?

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I might have. I  
20 might have. But I don't remember.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: So it is possible, but -  
22 -

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay.

25 INSPECTOR BRUCE: When did this happen?

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1                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't remember.  
2                   It must have been around August or September when my  
3                   daughter starts college at Texas A&M.

4                   INSPECTOR BRUCE: And where did the theft  
5                   occur?

6                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Houston, Texas.

7                   INSPECTOR BRUCE: Houston, Texas.

8                   SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Which is Bryant,  
9                   Texas -- Houston is about 50 or 60 miles away.

10                  INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. And it occurred  
11                  while you were checking into a hotel or whatever?

12                  SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes. I had been  
13                  driving all day. I dropped her off and was going to  
14                  start going back. I either remembered that T.K. was  
15                  at the hospital doing the blood test and I stopped by  
16                  tired where they were staying. I must have known that  
17                  they were at that Galleria Hotel.

18                  INSPECTOR MROCK: In other words, you  
19                  stopped by to meet them?

20                  SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, I stopped by  
21                  to check in. I remember I was tired and I wanted to  
22                  go. In fact, I am glad I took my clothes off -- I  
23                  mean, my luggage.

24                  INSPECTOR MROCK: So you were carrying  
25                  your luggage into the hotel and that is when the

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1 vehicle was stolen?

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Exactly. When I  
3 went back 30 minutes later to get something else out  
4 of the thing, it was gone.

5 INSPECTOR MROCK: Was the vehicle ever  
6 recovered?

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Never.

8 INSPECTOR MROCK: But a police report was  
9 filed on it?

10 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes, sir.  
11 Absolutely.

12 INSPECTOR BRUCE: And this was at the --  
13 you say the Galleria?

14 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: The Galleria  
15 Wesleyan Hotel, I believe it was.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: How well do you know  
17 Investigator Adan Ballesteros of DPS?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Not well at all.  
19 I know a lot better.

20 INSPECTOR MROCK: You had contact with him  
21 during this investigation but no social contacts or  
22 anything like that?

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No. No.

24 INSPECTOR MROCK: It was strictly a  
25 professional relationship?

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1 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Exactly.  
2 Absolutely.

3 INSPECTOR MROCK: And your only contacts  
4 with him would have been involving the joint  
5 investigation?

6 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Exactly. A  
7 professional -- never a social. I wouldn't sit down  
8 with a DPS and drink beer with him.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you remember when  
10 your last contact with Ballesteros was?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, sir.

12 INSPECTOR MROCK: But it would have been  
13 in connection with whenever this case terminated or  
14 whenever -- shortly before you left Brownsville?

15 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I don't know.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: How about your last  
17 contact with T.K. Solis?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I called T.K. --  
19 I kept always in touch with him. We are godfathers to  
20 one of the other agent's daughter. I had a personal  
21 liking to T.K. I always thought of him as being an  
22 extremely sharp and nice agent, good agent. I  
23 remember seeing him in San Antonio, Texas when I went  
24 to go visit my both daughters that live there on one  
25 of my home leaves. I would stop by the DEA office and

1 I would --

2 INSPECTOR MROCK: Approximately when would  
3 this have been? Do you have any idea? It was during  
4 a home leave that you took?

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: That was it. That  
6 was the last time. I don't remember -- I couldn't  
7 tell you. It was prior to the investigation starting.  
8 Or if it was, I didn't know about it.

9 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Do you have any  
10 direct knowledge at all regarding any type of official  
11 misconduct on the part of either Investigator  
12 Ballesteros or Agent Solis?

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No. No.

14 INSPECTOR MROCK: While you were in  
15 Brownsville, to your knowledge did any other of your  
16 subordinates have any problems or associations with  
17 either Chacon or McLean that you were concerned about  
18 from an integrity point of view?

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

20 INSPECTOR MROCK: Okay. Have you ever  
21 accepted anything from Chacon or McLean in the form of  
22 gifts, money, equipment, anything?

23 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No. Not from them  
24 or any other informant.

25 INSPECTOR MROCK: Bruce?

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1 INSPECTOR BRUCE: I would only go back to  
2 -- I am still just a little foggy on the exact  
3 chronology of what happened on that morning of the  
4 controlled delivery, and I think we talked about the  
5 phone call from T.K. that you received. And then I  
6 guess after getting the information that he had, you  
7 then called Fred Ball?

8 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I believe that was  
9 -- you know, I know that this is of high interest to  
10 you and I know I want to be exactly right on it, but  
11 I can't because it has been too long. I remember  
12 calling Fred. I remember calling Mexico. And I  
13 wouldn't doubt it that I called Houston, Texas, but I  
14 don't remember.

15 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Okay. I guess what I am  
16 trying to solicit is some information on who made the  
17 decisions as to what to do that day -- you know, on  
18 the 10th. We have a ton of dope sitting in a hanger.

19 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I think it was a  
20 collective decision, both by my ASAC and myself and  
21 T.K., the case agent. If it is foggy to you, it is  
22 even foggier to me. You probably have more insight on  
23 it than I do. But I --that is all I can remember.

24 INSPECTOR BRUCE: And then I guess after  
25 notifications, then it was a matter of getting people



1 on the road to support the --

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I would imagine  
3 so.

4 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Okay, but you can't --

5 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I can't remember  
6 exactly what the chronology of events and decisions  
7 happened. I really don't. I can't.

8 INSPECTOR BRUCE: How about the decision  
9 to make this seizure? You know, on the road after the  
10 pick-up in El Campo?

11 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Not mine. I can  
12 assure you of that. I know exactly that that was not  
13 my decision. That was a surprise to me when the DPS  
14 was ordered and I heard through the radio to stop and  
15 arrest the guy. I was just -- I was just appalled.

16 INSPECTOR BRUCE: So you weren't aware of  
17 any discussion before the stop was made?

18 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

19 INSPECTOR BRUCE: So you thought that the  
20 thing was that everybody was --

21 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I was going to go  
22 to Houston. We had airplanes and people standing by  
23 in Houston, Texas, ready to take it to a subdivision,  
24 hopefully inside a garage, wait about 20 or 30 minutes  
25 and get a search warrant and go hit the thing.

1 can't lose the dope. You don't have a lot of time to  
2 sit there and talk on the phone. People are  
3 antagonist. There are other concerns. You can't just  
4 sit there --

5 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Of course, you can't  
6 lose the dope. I mean basically you guys have to --

7 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: You can't sit  
8 there and say, hey, let's find out what is it that we  
9 are doing, which I would have loved to have done.  
10 Absolutely. We do that in every case. We sit down  
11 and we get them into a meeting. Everybody knows what  
12 they are going to do. I would have loved for that to  
13 have happened. But there were forces out there that  
14 just couldn't -- this thing was just not happening  
15 that way.

16 INSPECTOR MROCK: Basically one final  
17 question here. This is kind of the catch-all  
18 question. Do you have any information that is  
19 relevant to our efforts to gather the facts in this  
20 investigation that we have not covered with you during  
21 this interview?

22 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

23 INSPECTOR MROCK: Is there anyone we  
24 should talk to who might have additional relevant  
25 information regarding the matter under investigation

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1 at this point that you can think of?

2 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No.

3 INSPECTOR MROCK: You already stated that  
4 you wanted to review a copy of the transcript,  
5 correct?

6 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

7 INSPECTOR MROCK: A copy of this  
8 transcript will be sent to you and made available for  
9 you to review with instructions and an errata sheet  
10 for any misspellings, et cetera. This will be sent to  
11 you at your office as soon as it becomes available.

12 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Thank you. I  
13 appreciate that. I would also request patience since  
14 I am in a foreign office for my attorney to review it  
15 with me. If at all possible, I would like to send him  
16 a copy. That just kind of takes time because there is  
17 no mail that is delivered in Panama. But I would like  
18 for him to sit down and review it and look at it and  
19 then advise me as I have the right to talk to an  
20 attorney.

21 INSPECTOR MROCK: Yes, you do.

22 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: And let my  
23 attorney see the thing. I am talking about if I can  
24 bring it back to you within 30 days, I would  
25 appreciate that. I know you all are pressed for time

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1 to resolve some of these issues and matters, and I am  
2 too. But I would like that. Only the fact that I am  
3 foreign and I don't have access to my attorney.

4 INSPECTOR MROCK: I am sure some type of  
5 arrangement can be made.

6 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: I appreciate that.  
7 Thank you.

8 INSPECTOR MROCK: Where we can give you  
9 sufficient time to have your attorney review this. I  
10 am sure we can work this out after it is made.

11 INSPECTOR BRUCE: Do you have a reporting  
12 date on your transfer?

13 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: January 5 to Las  
14 Vegas.

15 INSPECTOR MROCK: I am also required to  
16 end our proceedings with this directive. You are  
17 directed that should you become aware of any  
18 additional information regarding this investigation,  
19 you are to promptly contact an inspector assigned to  
20 the Office of Professional Responsibility and provide  
21 that additional information.

22 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: Yes.

23 INSPECTOR MROCK: Do you have any  
24 questions?

25 SPECIAL AGENT RAMIREZ: No, sir.

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1 INSPECTOR MROCK: In conclusion, I just  
2 want to thank you for your cooperation, sir. You will  
3 be contacted if any additional information should be  
4 required from you.

5 The time is approximately 10:50 a.m. on my  
6 watch, and that concludes our interview for today.

7 (Whereupon, at 10:51 a.m., the interview  
8 was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the foregoing proceedings in the  
matter of:                   The Deposition of  
                                  ARMANDO RAMIREZ  
held on:                      OCTOBER 4, 1996  
at the location of: 700 ARMY-NAVY DRIVE  
                                  ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

were duly recorded and accurately transcribed under my  
direction; further, that said proceedings are a true and  
accurate record of the testimony given by said witness; and  
that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by  
any of the parties to this action in which this deposition  
was taken; and further that I am not a relative nor an  
employee of any of the parties nor counsel employed by the  
parties, and I am not financially or otherwise interested in  
the outcome of the action.

*Neal R Gross*

Notary Public/Reporter in and for

THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

My commission expires

SEPTEMBER 30, 2000

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