

MEMORANDUM

TO: Craig Gillen  
FROM: SA Michael Foster  
DATE: April 11, 1991  
RE: Grasheim/Rodriquez Tape

Attached is a transcript of a tape that Wally Grasheim gave the OIC on 1/2/91 (see Bulky #2301). Grasheim claims the tape is one he made while he surreptitiously recorded his conversation with Felix Rodriquez on 11/11/85 in El Salvador. The transcript depicts a discussion about a Contra military attack on the Managua Airport in Nicaragua, launched from Tamarindo, El Salvador.

This tape has gone through several technical enhancements and this is the most we can get out of it.

cc: Continuing Investigation Team

The following is a verbatim transcript of a tape that has been purported to depict a conversation between Felix Rodriguez aka Max Gomez and Wally Grasheim. The conversation allegedly took place in El Salvador on 11/11/85. The positive identification of the participants has not been confirmed.

FR/MG: If we can get them to do it you think and they get the results, they'll continue to do it.

WG: I think once they start working with my TAC(?) [inaudible] team they'll ---.

FR/MG: I think so.

WG: They do it.

FR/MG: But we have to work very closely on them.

WG: Let's hope so.

FR/MG: Because to be able to identify your people with good heading no mistakes warranties so we could go right ahead of you and start shooting maybe 50 meter ahead of you. You know --.

WG: Well at practice, they've ah -- they've done good in practice so far work with the helicopters in calling in the air strikes but. They are accurate enough that the pilots didn't have any trouble finding them or hitting the targets.

FR/MG: Antonio (?) will work in your team with the 500 ahead of you, so we can precisely mark it from them. Fly over, mark it, or shoot with the mini-gun and mark it, one of them rather than. . . .

WG He's bringing you a coke, let me borrow Max for a couple of minutes. He's also making some hors d'oeuvre.

FR/MG: I talked to Lucas (?) here and he told me that you have some kind of a plan with the MI-24 we come to work whatever and he consulted some people in the Washington and the guy told me to talk to you and try to coordinate but haven't working very. . . .

Voice 3: Testing-123! Testing-123! Testing-123, 123!  
(Unknown)

WG: I asked him for a few things --

FR/MG: but they didn't --. The only thing he told me is to talk to you and evaluate if it is feasible.

WG: But I already convinced the guy of calling.

WG: First of all, I just want, I didn't talk to Lucas because I don't have much --.

FR/MG: But Lucas was the one to talk to . . .

WG: Okay.

FR/MG: Lucas talked to people up there and told me that they referred you.

WG: Okay.

FR/MG: So I really have not talked to the people and that -- [inaudible] [inaudible].

WG: Well, basically it would mean launching from Tamarindo.

FR/MG: Um Hum.

WG: And there are two basic possibilities. Possibility number one is a pure -- (speaking Spanish: "No, The coke is for the man there"). Okay.

FR/MG: Si.

WG: Gracias. There were two possibilities. Possibility number one was I wanted to take, you know the DC-3 they got with the rollers?

FR/MG: Um hum.

WG: I want to put some 55 gallon drums in there. Okay.

FR/MG: Um hum.

WG: And half gasoline, half --.

FR/MG: They will some other planes come Christmas.

WG: Well, I'm hoping to getting the two 123's.

FR/MG: Yes.

WG: Okay.

FR/MG: What would damage is the [inaudible] that would to delay us.

WG: Okay, alright. Let me tell you what -- there's about three different ways they can go but I needed to know from Lucas if they would give me some support like I want some aerial photographs and a few other things.

FR/MG: Yeah, that's no problem.

WG: Well I haven't gotten it yet.

FR/MG: Well, that they do have already.

WG: Okay.

FR/MG: You might have seen it.

WG: Okay. There's three plans, plan number 1 is purely a DC-3 go over, we can go -- but we got to leave from Tamarindo cause I need - I can't -- otherwise I don't have the distance. You go 50 feet over the water, cut across use the via lock from Managua, home in on it. Okay. Come right up the fucking runway and drop a 55 gallon drum, half gasoline,

half oil, a grenade in each as it goes out the door. Okay? Have you landed in Managua?

FR/MG: Yeah, many times.

WG: You know where the MIs were sitting right off the runway?

FR/MG: They are the sitting of the runway in a small either concrete shipments. Nothing --.

WG: There's no concrete.

FR/MG: No, the base is black concrete.

WG: Yeah, the base. But, I mean it's no revetment they're wide open.

FR/MG: No, No, No. Maybe some -- myestron (phonetic) trees on the side. . .

WG: Yeah, you should be able --. Yeah, you can come in there and just clean that clock.

FR/MG: Now, they do have an anti-aircraft on both sides.

WG: No, one side.

FR/MG: No, both sides now.

WG: There's not on -- as of four weeks ago. There was not on the civilian side. There were only SUs.

FR/MG: They have several on --.

WG: Okay, Yeah, they do.

FR/MG: On the sides.

WG: For the 3:00 o'clock in the morning Max, 50 feet over the ground. Chances are you were gone before they even know they were there. That's number one. Number two is a coordinated attack which I prefer. And that was based, on their intra-structure there, to come in, hit them on the ground. Okay, and if they would take a chance and I don't know if they will.

FR/MG: Do they take that possibility, do they have that capability?



WG: They have a special group which is a commando group of 50 men. They say they can do it. They can get them in. And then, you let me finish now. Their job would be to suppress the anti-aircraft, special charges in the aircraft on the helicopters and land the two 123s, pick them up and go. And that's doable because nobody can chase them. There's nothing to chase them. You see.

FR/MG: I don't think they would be rising to race the 123.  
. .

WG: That,

FR/MG: [inaudible] 123 would be U.S. crews.

WG: Well, if they're U.S. crews, then that's a different ball game.

FR/MG: In the beginning, it would be U.S. crews.

WG: Now, are they going to fly those into Nicaragua? With U.S. crews. . .

WG: Okay, they may not want to do that. It is a very

difficult place to get out of once you go in by ground. If you go in by ground, you cannot get out by ground, it's too far.

FR/MG: I think you better have to work at the option of the air, on the air.

WG: Okay. The other option is helicopter. Now, let me tell you there are two helicopter options. One is . . . Again, it means using and launching from Tamarindo, very low to go under the radar. Why Tamarindo? Okay, first of all it's a close point, refuel from there, hit them, and continue out the other side. Don't come back this way, continue out the other side.

FR/MG: To go where?

WG: You have two choices, you can go directly across because it's very low. You can fly very low straight across and we have Loranseca. Go to the ocean, make a left turn, into Honduras and then a left turn back to Aguacate.

FR/MG: And have you range for that?

WG: Oh sure. DC-3?

FR/MG: From DC-3 [inaudible][inaudible].

WG: Sure. Helicopters, no. Helicopters I have are much more interesting concept but they don't have any range.

FR/MG: Boat.

WG: Launch it from the boat.

FR/MG: Well they have boat.

WG: Okay. We can launch it from the boat. But they don't have helicopters. Now the other thing is, I would if they would take the chance, I would do with the 0-2 coordinate it. First, run the O2s right up the side and hit rockets, right up the side. See the aircraft the -- anti-aircraft's all lined up. Okay. Now, I need not only the aerial photograph but then I need - I would get permission from these people to ride with the crew of a TACA flight to make a video tape of the approach because that's what you want.

FR/MG: Um hum.

WG: The approach -- see the Managua VOR is very strong because I used it -- I use it all the time. It's on all the time. It's a -- and then I would like to bring one last aircraft and scatter sub-munitions. We can buy the sub-munitions in Brazil or Argentina and take reloaded sub-minitions and close the runway. [inaudible] [inaudible]. You know the [inaudible] close the runway. Close it for a week.

FR/MG: [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible]

WG: Close it.

FR/MG: [inaudible] it would be [inaudible] see you in 25 years.

WG: Yeah. Or cratering charges. But we can make them homemade if we have to. And close the runway. They need a big national hit without killing innocent people and this will do it without killing innocent people. Okay. So you have about three possibilities based on -- I asked a couple of questions and the questions were as follows:

R/MG: You have form the MI 24 right there now?

WG: Not all of them but they got a bunch, they got about 15 of them.

FR/MG: Not 24.

WG: No, MI-6s, 8s and some 24s.

FR/MG: Okay.

WG: They got some in the other part of the country.  
Okay.

FR/MG: There's a possibility to do it combining operations same time as. . . .

WG: I think you are asking too much. I think you are being unrealistic. What they need is publicity.

FR/MG: And Managua would be a hit.

WG: Exactly. Now plan number three would be to steal two helicopters and leave with the helicopters, but in checking. . .

FR/MG: It takes ten minutes to start a helicopter.

WG: Exactly. That's the problem.

FR/MG: He's gonna fight with you know this [inaudible].

WG: Who this old guy here.

FR/MG: No. The old guy, who is a Peruvian, a major who flies for sale.

WG: Okay.

FR/MG: He's a [inaudible].

WG: No, I didn't know we had a Peruvian.

FR/MG: He send me money to inform [inaudible].

WG: Okay, you know that I have flown the MI-6 and MI-8. Now, I would like to talk with him. My concept was to kidnap two pilots and put a gun to their head and say it's either you or your family, you fly the fucking airplane. Then -- and then leave. . .

FR/MG: This guy is no problem.

WG: And then leave on -- leave on an aircraft.

FR/MG: Would it take that long to start fucking --.

WG: Well, I don't know. I -- okay. Based on what's there, a combined land and air operation, good commando raid you can suppress there's not many soldiers. There are tanks, but they are sitting north of the runway by a mile. They'll never start them in ten minutes.

FR/MG: They're not worth a shit. [inaudible] [inaudible]

WG: Okay, right. They'll never start them. Once you depart, if you can get off the ground in something that flies, there is nothing to catch you because they have no night capability even to find you and as long as you go low and if you look at the map as I've looked it at a lot. You have four ways to go, you can go right across the lake into Costa Rica, you can go, continue across the country to the other ocean and up which is a long ride or you can go half way across and go over the mountains in a helicopter.

FR/MG: Or come here.

WG: Okay, I requested in the meetings that I had with several people here with Mario, the use of Tamarindo and the people here agree but the FDN was told no by the agency.

FR/MG: People in Washington don't want anything to do with Mario. [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible].

WG: But the request didn't come from them.

FR/MG: I know, [inaudible].

WG: Now, the question number one is, let's go back again to use Tamarindo -- because if you look at the map and it's beautiful it's 4,500 feet perfectly. Do you see the piece of equipment I have here.

FR/MG: Sure.

WG: Let me show it to you. What do you think? You'll get to use it, if nobody is around [inaudible].



It's easy to secure. And they could come in there refuel.

FR/MG: An go.

WG: And then from there you already right on the water. You don't take -- you don't have to come over the mountain and go down, you are right on the water, you go out of there 50 feet and they ain't gonna see you at 50 feet, 100 feet. Okay, let me tell you what I asked for I did the briefing. Number one, have we tried out their radar? Have we sent any of our people in the low just to see if they react? That was number one, okay. Number two, would it be possible for us to happen to have a ship cruising by in international waters that we could use to turn in -- we could use it as a homing plant?

FR/MG: [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible] [inaudible].

WG: That we could use. Yeah. There are plenty of U.S. ships cruising.

FR/MG: Um Hum.

WG: Back and forth, right. Okay? And the third was, I need some photography the rest of it was [inaudible]. They need this kind of a PR shot. And it's doable because if I'm telling I will go, it's doable. The key is the infrastructure if I like to steal a helicopter. My primary feeling is I would like to steal a helicopter.

FR/MG: They take too fucking long to start.

WG: I don't know. They're not gonna -- I need a -- what you can't -- this isn't -- we are not talking suicide missions because that's crazy. You got to put people on the ground to really do the damage. You can't do the damage from the air, really do it. If you gonna put people on the ground, you got to give them a way out. There's only two ways out of there and that's land the C-123 and pick them up and that runway is easy, it's wide open it's flat, there's no mountains around it. It's either run the C-123 to pick them up which you can do or they got to steal a helicopter for that. There's no way out by land, it's flat land for 20 miles in every direction. Now, I thought that maybe we could get from there to the lake, but I think it's too much bull shit, you'll never do it. You'll get killed

and you'll lose everything. You got to get them in and get them out.

FR/MG: [inaudible].

WG: Now, let me tell you what the other possibility is, the other possibility is basically the same except that you do an Entebbe situation and that is you put the 202s underneath the 123, you make them fly on a flight plan, okay. And you make them declare an emergency. Okay? You lost an engine. He turns for civilian -- you know give it civilian registration, they can't see what kind of an airplane it is. You make it that it's an emergency, he goes in they'll see one blip if they fly close together. When they go down the 02s make the run and hit everything along the side. The barracks are all in the opposite side, and the anti-aircraft. Okay. You put people on the ground to back it up. The 123 lands. They come out of the 123, do what they have to do. The 123 turns around the 02s are already gone and then the 123 goes. But it's still -- you got to have an aircraft.

FR/MG: Um Hum.

WG: And you ain't doing it with that Howard 500, I'll  
tell you that. You need an aircraft like a 123.  
You need a stol aircraft. . .

Tape ends mid-sentence.