

On January 7, 1964, Mr. JOHN W. SIPES, Deputy Director, Office of Munitions Control (MC), Department of State, and Mr. JOHN F. DEPENBROCK, Chief, Arms Traffic Division, MC, furnished the following information to Special Agent (SA) KENNETH J. HASER:

"An informant of unconfirmed reliability who is an officer in a surplus small arms company, advised the Office of Munitions Control on December 18, 1963, that he was in possession of firm evidence that the ammunition used to assassinate President KENNEDY was imported into the United States in contravention of Section 414(b) of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, as amended.

"The informant stated that the ammunition had been positively identified as Winchester Western 6.5 mm. (Italian); that the ammunition was manufactured by Winchester in 1951-2; and that it was furnished to the Government of Greece under the Greek Aid Program in 1952 or 1953. Further, the informant stated that two lots of this ammunition were exported from Greece to Canada by a Greek national named FONTINELLIS who was acting as an agent for International Firearms, Montreal, Canada. He advised that Mr. SUCHER is the principal stockholder in International Firearms Company. The informant continued that one of the two lots of the subject ammunition was sent from Greece to Canada after February 1, 1962. The informant alleges that this ammunition was imported into the United States in contravention to the section of the law that restricts the return to the United States for resale any ammunition of United States manufacture furnished to foreign governments by the United States under any foreign assistance program. He further alleges that there was no other ammunition of this type available in the United States, as it was manufactured specifically for the Greek Government under the Greek Aid Program. The informant has reason to believe that the ammunition was imported from Canada under the provision of the International Traffic in Arms regulations which exempts imports from Canada where the ammunition has come from a third country and has been in Canada more than one year. (22 CFR 123.23c)

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"The informant believes that the ammunition was consigned to Century Arms in St. Albans, Vermont, based on his knowledge that Mr. SUCHER, the principal stockholder of International Firearms, is a brother-in-law of Mr. MANNEY WIGGINSBURG (phonetic), who operated Century Arms. Accordingly, the informant concludes that S. KLEIN could only have gotten the ammunition from Century Arms, who in turn obtained it from International Firearms."

Mr. SIPES noted that his informant's "angle" on this is that for years the small arms dealers have been trying to get something done about trans-shipment of ammunition via Canada to get around regulations, which adversely affects their business. SIPES explained that we have an arrangement with Canada allowing importation of various armament items, providing that the items have been in Canada at least one year. This latter condition seeks to eliminate in part shipments to Canada first which are intended for the United States.

Mr. SIPES also explained that a 1958 amendment to the Mutual Security Act of 1954 prohibits the reimportation of ammunition into the United States if this ammunition was originally sent to another country under the terms of any United States aid program, a device to protect our own industry to some extent. If the ammunition used in the assassination of President KENNEDY was part of any United States aid program shipment to Greece, it could not legally have been brought into the United States for resale except for personal use by a collector or for military use, notwithstanding the United States - Canada agreement.

Mr. SIPES stated that the Department of State is not taking any action with regard to investigating this allegation about the ammunition. He advised that State is definitely interested in doing whatever can be done to tighten up controls at the Canadian border with regard to ammunition importation and will probably have conversations with other interested government agencies in this connection. He stated that the Office of Munitions Control would be interested in receiving any information pertinent to this which the Bureau (FBI) might develop with regard to the information furnished by the informant.