

Report on Alleged U.S. Involvement in Assassinations

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 15—
Following is the text of a section of the report on alleged United States involvement in assassination plots against foreign leaders that was released on Nov. 21 by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Operations:

(1) Did President Kennedy Learn Anything About Assassination Plots as a Result of the FBI Investigation of Giancana and Rosselli?

As elaborated in the previous sections of this report, all living C.I.A. officials who were involved in the under-world assassination attempt or who were in a position to have known of the attempt have testified that they never discussed the assassination plot with the President. By May 1961, however, the Attorney General and Hoover were aware that the C.I.A. had earlier used Giancana in an operation against Cuba and F.B.I. files contained two memoranda which, if simultaneously reviewed, would have led one to conclude that the C.I.A. operation had involved assassination.¹ There is no evidence that any one within the F.B.I. concluded that the C.I.A. had used Giancana in an assassination attempt. The Committee has uncovered a chain of events, however, which would have given Hoover an opportunity to have assembled the entire picture and to have reported the information to the President.

¹The two memoranda, which are discussed in considerable detail supra, were the October 18, 1960, memorandum linking Giancana to an assassination plot (but not mentioning CIA) and the May 22, 1961, memorandum linking Giancana to a CIA operation against Cuba involving "dirty business" (but not mentioning assassination).

Evidence before the Committee indicates that a close friend of President Kennedy had frequent contact with the President from the end of 1960 through mid-1962. FBI reports and testimony indicate that the President's friend was also a close friend of John Rosselli and Sam Giancana and saw them often

during the same period."

²White House telephone logs show 70 instances of phone contact between the White House and the President's friend whose testimony confirms frequent phone contact with the President himself.

Both the President's friend and Rosselli testified that the friend did not know about either the assassination operation or the wiretap case. Giancana was killed before he was available for questioning.

On February 27, 1962, Hoover sent identical copies of a memorandum to the Attorney General and Kenneth O'Donnell, Special Assistant to the President. The memorandum stated that information developed in connection with a concentrated FBI investigation of John Rosselli revealed that Rosselli had been in contact with the President's friend. The memorandum also reported that the individual was maintaining an association with Sam Giancana, described as "a prominent Chicago underworld figure." Hoover's memorandum also stated that a review of the telephone toll calls from the President's friend's residence revealed calls to the White House. The President's secretary ultimately received a copy of the memorandum and said she believed she would have shown it to the President.



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The association of the President's friend with the "hoodlums" and that person's connection with the President was again brought to Hoover's attention in a memorandum preparing him for a meeting with the President planned for March 22, 1962. Courtney Evans testified that Hoover generally required a detailed summary of information in the FBI files for drafting important memoranda or preparing for significant meetings. (Evans, 8/28/75, pp. 70, 72). The FBI files on Giancana then contained information on disclosing Giancana's connection with the CIA as well as his involve-

ment in assassination plotting. (Memoranda of 10/18/60 and 5/22/61).

On March 22, Hoover had a private luncheon with President Kennedy. There is no record of what transpired at that luncheon. According to White House logs, the last telephone contact between the White House and the President's friend occurred a few hours after the luncheon.

The fact that the President and Hoover had a luncheon at which one topic was presumably that the President's friend was also a friend of Giancana and Rosselli raises several possibilities. The first is, assuming that Hoover did in fact receive a summary of FBI information relating to Giancana prior to his luncheon with the President, whether that summary reminded the Director that Giancana had been involved in a CIA operation against Cuba that included "dirty business" and further indicated that Giancana had talked about an assassination attempt against Castro. A second is whether Hoover would then have taken the luncheon as an opportunity to fulfill his duty to bring this information to the President's attention.¹ What actually transpired at that luncheon may never be known, as both participants are dead and the FBI files contain no records relating to it.

¹The President, thus notified, might then have inquired further of the CIA. The Presidential calendar indicates that the President had meetings at which most CIA officials witting of the assassination plot were present during the period from February 27 through April 2, 1962. All of those persons, however, have testified that the President never asked them about the assassination plot.

On March 23, 1962, the day immediately following his luncheon with the President, at which Rosselli and Giancana were presumably discussed, Hoover sent a memorandum to Edwards stating:

At the request of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice, this matter was discussed with the CIA Director of Security on February 7, 1962, and we were advised that your agency would object to any prosecution which would necessitate the use of CIA personnel or CIA information. We were also informed that introduction of evidence concerning the CIA operation would be embarrassing to the Government.

The Criminal Division has now requested that CIA specifically advise whether it would or would not object to the initiation of criminal prosecution against the subjects, Balletti, Maheu, and the individual known as J. W. Harrison for conspiracy to violate the "Wire Tapping Statute."

An early reply will be appreciated in order that we may promptly inform the Criminal Division of CIA's position in this matter.¹

¹This memorandum is peculiar in two respects. First, the CIA had already orally objected to prosecution on two occasions. Second, Hoover was quizzing the CIA on behalf of the Department of Justice, a task that would normally be performed by the Department's Criminal Division.

As a result of this request, the CIA did object to the prosecution of those involved in the wiretap case, thereby avoiding exposure of Giancana's and Rosselli's involvement with the Agency in an assassination plot. We now turn to events which occurred during April and May 1962 which culminated in the formal decision to forego prosecution in the wiretap case.

REMEMBER THE NEEDLE!