

Washington Merry-go-round

FPost
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By Jack Anderson & Les Whitten

WASHINGTON — The supersecret National Security Agency intercepted some fascinating communications between the South Korean government in Seoul and its embassy in Washington, outlining grandiose plans to influence Congress.

The incriminating transcripts are being reviewed by the Senate Intelligence Committee, which is conducting a secret inquiry into the government's strange failure to do anything about it.

Copies of the transcripts were distributed over the years to key Washington authorities, including officials of both the Justice Department and the White House. Yet for years, the Korean lobbying effort was ignored by officials who could be intervened.

The intercepted messages do not criminally implicate any specific congressmen and do not mention Korean payoff man Tongsun Park by name. But Park's name was mentioned in classified State Department cables, which we obtained in early 1974.

Our investigation established that Park was engaged in political lobbying and that he had developed a close, curious relationship with then-Rep. Richard Hanna, D-Calif. — a story we broke on April 1, 1974. The Justice Department has now indicated Park and named Hanna as an unindicted co-conspirator.

The 1974 cables showed that the State Department gave special treatment to Tongsun Park during his travels in the Middle East, probably because he was in the company of the congressman.

In a classified cable to U.S. embassies in the Middle East, the department requested "each post except Cairo" to ensconce Park "in a single room next to or near room reserved for" Rep. Hanna. In Cairo, telegrammed State, "Mr. Park requests a suite on the (Nile) river side of the Hilton."

Not until the following year did the Justice Department begin to investigate the South Korean effort to compromise Congress, although the evidence had been gathering dust in its files for years. Then it took a private letter from Rep. Donald Fraser, D-Minn., to then-Attorney General Edward Levi to get action. The congressman sent Levi a summary of testimony his House international organizations subcommittee had developed.

Finally, on July 17, 1975, we were able

to break the explosive story that "the Justice Department is quietly investigating charges that the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, modeled after our own embattled spy agency, has set up illegal front groups to manipulate U.S. public opinion and has even tried to 'buy off' U.S. Congressmen."

MORE BOMBINGS? Sources close to the anti-Castro movement warn that Cuban extremists plan a rash of bombings early next week to protest the Panama Canal treaty. The targets are expected to be public structures, such as bridges in New York City and Washington, D.C.

Justice Department sources believe the Cuban terrorist, Orlando Bosch, has participated in the plotting from his jail cell in Venezuela. He was clapped into jail on suspicion of bombing a Cuban airliner, causing 73 deaths.

He has also been linked to the dynamite death of Chilean exile leader Orlando Letelier in Washington last September. According to secret Senate testimony, Bosch also intended to assassinate Secretary of State Henry Kissinger during his February 1976 visit to Costa Rica.

Shortly before Kissinger's arrival,

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Bosch slipped into Costa Rica on a false passport. But the FBI and Secret Service had been alerted. They traced Bosch's movements and notified the Costa Rica authorities. The suspected assassin was arrested and jailed before Kissinger got to town.

Bosch has also been named in testimony as one of 18 anti-Castro leaders who had conspired to kill U.S. and other leaders promoting a Cuban-American detente. He was convicted in 1968 of shelling a Polish freighter with a bazooka while it was moored in Miami. He jumped federal parole and fled to Venezuela in 1974.

Months later, he was reported to be in Curacao, protected by Chilean gunmen. He bragged, according to the reports, of his "money, friends and protection." Intelligence sources report that the Chilean military junta used Bosch, thereafter, to bankroll the plot to dynamite Letelier. Bosch was chosen, our sources say, because he was fanatical and honest enough not to steal the murder money.

Now Bosch reportedly is involved in

the plot to bomb New York and Washington sites next week. He reportedly is the "bag man" for the Coordination of United Revolutionary Organizations, which allegedly is behind the planned bombings. Members of one of its affiliated groups, the Pedro Luis Boitel Commando Group, are reported to be involved in the scheme.

By revealing the bombing plot in advance, a top Justice Department official told us, we might discourage the plotters from going ahead.

They are fired up against the Panama Canal treaty because of Panamanian strongman Omar Torrijos' close ties with Cuban Premier Fidel Castro. Another reason for the bombings, our sources said, would be to commemorate the 18th anniversary of the imprisonment of the anti-Castro hero, Huber Matos.

PORK BARREL: Public works projects are supposed to help depressed areas revitalize their industries and create jobs for the unemployed. But the Economic Development Administration, which doles out the money for these pork barrel projects, has demonstrated a political preference to help the unemployed in the right congressional districts.

Minnesota, for example, has 68 counties eligible for development money. Only 10 of them are located in the congressional district that ex-Rep. John Blatnik, D-Minn., used to represent. Yet he wound up with more than half of the \$73 million distributed to the state.

The fortunate Blatnik, you see, was chairman of the House Economic Development subcommittee. Now Blatnik is retired and his chair has been taken over by Rep. Robert Roe, D-N.J. Suddenly, his district was blessed with pork barrel projects. Its share of New Jersey's development money shot up from 10 percent to 56 percent.

The Economic Development Administration, apparently, is more skilled at pleasing politicians than keeping books. Hundreds of millions of dollars are unaccounted for, including \$95 million in New Jersey, \$22 million in Louisiana and \$14 million in Minnesota.

This doesn't mean embezzlers have made off with the loot; it's more likely the books merely need to be overhauled. Blatnik, Roe and the administration, incidentally, joined in denying any political influence. Pork barrel money was funneled into the Blatnik and Roe districts, a spokesman solemnly at-

tested, because they could justify the need.

Footnote: The investigation of the Economic Development Administration was stimulated by Pat Griffin of Amherst, Mass., who complained to the National Suggestions Box. We created the National Suggestions Box to receive the ideas and complaints of everyday citizens. Letters should be addressed to Box 2009, Washington, D. C. 20013.

GAS GOOF: The rush to pipe natural gas from Alaska to the lower states could cost America billions of barrels of crude oil. A confidential report warns that the gas is needed to help force the oil out of the ground.

But Americans are running short of natural gas to heat their homes and buildings. This has stimulated a move to construct a gigantic pipeline across Canada to transport the Alaskan gas.

Premature withdrawal of the gas, experts warn, could cause huge oil deposits to become stranded below ground. They were commissioned by Alaskan authorities to conduct the study.

The trans-Canada pipeline is scheduled to take four years to construct. If it is completed on time and the gas is drained off the Prudhoe Bay oil fields, consumers could lose up to 15 percent of our known oil reserves, the confidential study contends.

The report recommends that technical methods be studied for maintaining pressure on the oil before the gas pipeline is opened. Otherwise, declares the study, "Four billion barrels of oil may be the trade-off." This is enough to supply America's total energy needs for a full year.

BANK PROBE: State auditors have quietly descended on at least 11 of New York City's major banks. They were sent by New York's Department of Taxation and Finance to check whether the big banks have been avoiding state taxes. "We're going to take a tougher approach," James Tully Jr., the state tax commissioner, told us.

BEIRUT CONNECTION: We have warned repeatedly that the United States is losing the war against drugs, which undermine morals and breed crime.

The latest injection of heroin into the U.S. bloodstreams, surprisingly, comes from war-torn Lebanon. Under cover of the civil war, the drug smugglers have developed a Beirut connection.

The ragged farmers of Lebanon's hill

country are now growing opium. It is marketed by a multimillion-dollar drug ring, which includes a West German auto heiress and a millionaire West German playboy. The smugglers have ties that reach across the Atlantic into the presidency of a Latin American country.

House Narcotics Chairman Lester Wolff, D-N.Y., has traced the heroin flow from Lebanon into Latin America, where it is transshipped to the United States.

This is a recent development. Opium production used to be sparse in Lebanon. The best grades of heroin came out of Turkey, whose hills used to be carpeted with the poppies that produce opium. But lately Turkey has brought its opium production largely under control. Most of its opium production is now channeled into legitimate morphine and codeine markets.

The drug traffickers, therefore, have turned to Lebanon whose police and military are still too disorganized to cope with the problem. U.S. authorities have secretly approached Syria, whose armies oversee the uneasy Lebanese truce, about curbing the opium production. But the Syrians have their hands full keeping the peace.

U. S. officials on the scene have recommended, therefore, that Washington help build up the Lebanese national army to combat the drug smugglers.

Footnote: In a cable intended for official eyes only, the State Department has directed its embassies to coordinate anti-narcotics activities. This may appear to be an effort to crack down on the smugglers. But our sources say it is more likely to entangle the dedicated Drug Enforcement Administration officers overseas in State Department red tape.