Mr. Victor Navasky
The Nation
72 Fifth Ave.,
New York, N.Y. 10011

2/18/89

Dear Mr. Navasky,

In my comments on a recent article by Andrew Kopkind that The Nation published in the issue I received last week I referred to those who could and did lie about Kennedy knowledge of and repsonsibility for the CIA's assassination schemes. I do not suggest that any president is not responsible for what happens in his administration, of course. I believe that earlier The Nation carried aricles saying similar things and that the Progressive did also. I send a copy of this and the enclosures to Erwin Knoll.

I have added notations to a copy I made of the Sheffield Edwards memo. The redactions were by the CIA.

First I ask you to note that the mafia plot by the CIA was not JFK's or Bobby's. It was of the Eisenhower administration. According to E. Howard Hunt's autobiography Nixon was the action officer under Eisnehower on the Cuba plots and Hunt was the or a CIA contact. This memo makes it clear that the effort was aborted by the Kennedy administration. The misdid earlier memo to which I refer in my letter to the CIA stated that Bobby knew nothing of the matter, as I now recall, either until Edwards briefed him or until he got the knowledge that led to the briefing. The FBI knew almost as soon as the bugger, Balletti, was aprehended. He then made it clear that if he went down he would not go along and he got off.

All such CIA memos have to be read with care and imagination. They do try to leave records that others will not fully comprehend and sometimes they dissemble, even to themselves.

If you read this memo carefully and with a CIA dictionary at hand it tells you that of all the people in the world only six had knowledge of this project and that all six of them were senior CIA officials. It makes no claim to any authority for the project and it sure as hell could not lie about that to Bobby.

There were no leaks and Castro did not know, so there could not have been any basis for any kickback theory of the JFK assassination.

I have never seen any record of the CIA, FBI, Secret Service or DJ that reflected any JFK or Bobby knowledge of any attempt to assassinate Castro except after disclosure and none indicating that either ordered, authorized or sanctioned any such attempt. As I recall the other Edwards memo, to files, not to Bobby, Bobby was shocked or considerably upset and ordered that no such effort be made again. My recollection is not precise but I think it is accurate on the thrust. And remember, it is Edwards' version for the CIA's files and I believe it was probably angled to be more acceptable for that purpose and was neither full and complete nor without self-interest in mind.

I have no reason to presume that you will be interested in it but if you are I do have the file as the FBI released it, it has never been used and you are welcome to a copy, as is anyone else who might want to have some fun with Keystone Kops spooks, for example.

Also for your knowledge, particularly if you saw the Jack Anderson revision of history in his JFK assassination TV special, it was not Johnny Roselli who approached him but the former FBI agent who was ~~xxxxxx~~ Roselli's lawyer, Ed Morgan. The approach was not to Anderson but to Drew Pearson. I also have some FBI records on this. My suspicion is that the CIA prompted it to launch the kickback theory of the assassination and that is what it did do, whether or not the CIA or others so intended.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg