Here is a partial text of the summary chapter of the Senate Intelligence Committee's report on CIA involvement in plots to kill foreign leaders:

A. Findings Concerning the Plots Themselves:

1. Officials of the United States government initiated plots to assassinate Fidel Castro and Patrice Lumumba.

The committee finds that officials of the United States government initiated and participated in plots to assassinate Patrice Lumumba and Fidel Castro. The plot to kill Lumumba was conceived in the later half of 1960 by officials of the United States government, and likely advanced to the point of sending poisons to the Congo to be used for the assassination.

The effort to assassinate Castro began in 1959 and continued until 1965. The plots to assassinate Castro using poison cigars, explosives, seashells, and a contaminated drinking straw did not advance beyond the laboratory phase.

The plot involving underworld figures received the stage of producing poison pills, establishing their availability to send them to Cuba, procuring potential assassins within Cuba, and apparently delivering the pills to the island itself. One 1960 episode involved a Cuban who initially had no intention of engaging in assassination, but who finally agreed, at the suggestion of the CIA, to attempt to assassinate Raúl Castro if the opportunity arose in the chaotic AM-LASH operation, which extended from 1963 through 1965.

The CIA gave active support and encouragement to a Cuban whose intent assassinate Castro was unknown, and provided him with the means of carrying out an assassination.

2. No foreign leaders were killed as a result of assassination plots initiated by officials of the United States.

The poisons intended for use against Patrice Lumumba were never administered to him, and there is no evidence that the United States was, in any way, involved in Lumumba's death at the hands of his Cambodian enemies. The efforts to assassinate Castro failed.

3. American officials encouraged or were privy to plots to kill foreign leaders.

American officials either approved plots to kill foreign leaders in the Congo and elsewhere, or approved and supported efforts leading to coup attempts in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and elsewhere in Latin America.

4. The plots occurred in a cold war atmosphere perceived to be of crisis proportions.

The committee fully appreciates the importance of assessing the assassination plots in the historical context within which they occurred. In the preface to this report, we described the perception, generally shared within the United States during the depths of the Cold War, that our country faced a monolithic enemy in communism. That attitude helps explain the assassination plots which we have reviewed, although it does not justify them. Those involved nevertheless appeared to believe they were advancing the best interests of their country.

5. American officials had exaggerated notions about how their ability to control the actions of coup leaders would result in the death of Fidel Castro, Diem, and Schenider.

American officials clearly desired the overthrow of Trujillo, Diem, and Schenider. American officials clearly desired the overthrow of these men, and support for dissidents seeking to overthrow local governments:

Two of the five principal cases investigated by the committee involved plots to kill foreign leaders (Lumumba and Castro) that were instigated by American officials. Three of the cases (Trujillo, Diem, and Schenider) involved killings in the course of coup attempts by local dissidents. These latter cases differed in the degree to which assassination was contemplated by leaders of the coups and in the degree the coups were motivated by United States officials.

The committee concluded that targeted assassination instigated by the United States does not exist.

Coup attempts and assassinations were not a regular feature of United States foreign policy during the Cold War, but there were isolated instances in which American officials sought to influence the outcome of coups or to encourage their success. In such cases, American officials sought to influence the outcome of coups or to encourage their success.

In conclusion, the committee believes that the use of covert actions in support of dissidents must await the committee's final report, which will be issued after a full review of covert action in general.

B. Conclusions Concerning the Plots Themselves:

1. The United States should not engage in assassination.

We condemn the use of assassination as a tool of foreign policy. Aside from pragmatic arguments against the use of assassination supplied to the committee by witnesses with extensive experience in covert operations, we find that assassination violates moral precepts fundamental to our way of life.

In addition to moral considerations, there were several practical reasons advanced for not assassinating foreign leaders.

These reasons are discussed in the section of this report recommending a statute making assassination by officials of the United States a crime.

(a) Distinction between targeted assassinations instigated by the United States and support for dissidents seeking to overthrow local governments:

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(b) The setting in which the assassination plots occurred explains, but does not justify them.

The Cold War setting in which the assassination plots took place cannot change our view that assassination is unacceptable in our society.
assassination plots:

First, the assassination plots were not necessitated by imminent danger to the United States. Among the cases studied, Castro alone posed a physical threat to the United States, but then only during the period of the Cuban missile crisis. Attempts to assassinate Castro had begun long before that crisis, and assassination was not advanced by policymakers as a possible course of action during the crisis.

Second, we reject absolutely any notion that the United States must use underworld figures for their criminal talents. Our standards must be higher, and this difference is what the struggle is all about. Of course, we must defend our democracy. But in defending it, we must resist undermining the very virtues we are defending.

Third, such activities almost inevitably become known. The damage to American foreign policy, to the good name and reputation of the United States abroad, to the American people's faith and support of our government and its foreign policy is incalculable. This last point — the undermining of the American public's confidence in its government — is the most damaging consequence of all.

2. The United States should not make use of underworld figures for their criminal talents. We conclude that agencies of the United States must not use underworld figures for their criminal talents (footnote 2) in carrying out agency operations. In addition to the corrosive effect upon our government (footnote 3) the use of underworld figures involves the following dangers:

(a) The use of underworld figures for 'dirty business' gives them the power to blackmail the government and to avoid prosecution, for past or future crimes. For example, the figures involved in the Castro assassination operation used their involvement with the CIA to avoid prosecution. The CIA also contemplated attempting to quash criminal charges brought in a foreign tribunal against the figures (footnote 4).

(b) The use of persons experienced in criminal techniques and prone to criminal behavior increases the likelihood that criminal acts will occur. Sometimes agents in the field are necessarily given broad discretion. But this is not so, and the risk of improper activities is increased when the agents of governmental background are used, particularly when they are selected precisely to take advantage of their criminal skills or contacts.

(c) There is the danger that the United States Government will become an unwitting accomplice to criminal acts and that criminal figures will take advantage of their association with the government to advance their own projects and interests.

(d) There is a fundamental impropriety in selecting persons because they are skilled at performing deeds which the laws of our society forbid.

The use of underworld figures by the United States Government for their criminal talents raises moral problems comparable to those recognized by Justice Brandeis in a different context five decades ago:

"Our government is the potent, the omnipresent teacher. For good or for ill, it teaches the whole people by its example. Crime is contagious. If the government becomes a lawbreaker, it breeds contempt for law; it invites every man to become a law unto himself. Government's whole duty consists in oppressing certain persons in order to secure the conviction of the private criminal — would bring terrible retribution. Against that pernicious doctrine this court should resolutely set its face. (Olmstead v. U.S. 439, 485 (1927))

(e) The spectacle of the government conspiring with criminal elements destroys respect for government and law and undermines the viability of democratic institutions.

C. Findings and Conclusions Relating to Authorization and Control

In the introduction to this report, we set forth in summary form our major conclusions concerning whether the assassination plots were authorized. The ensuing discussion elaborates and explains those conclusions.

The committee analyzed the question of authorization for the assassination activities from two perspectives. First, the committees examined whether officials in policymaking positions authorized or were aware of the assassination activities. Second, the committees determined whether the officials responsible for the operational details of the plots perceived that assassination had the approval of their superiors, or at least was the type of activity that their superiors would not disapprove.

No doubt, the CIA's general efforts against the regimes discussed in this report were authorized at the highest levels of the government. However, the record is unclear and serious doubt remains concerning whether assassination was authorized by the respective presidents. Even if the plots were not expressly authorized, it does not follow that the agency personnel believed they were acting improperly.

1. The apparent lack of accountability in the command and control system was such that the assassination plot could have been undertaken without express authorization.

As emphasized throughout this report, we are unable to draw firm conclusions concerning who authorized the assassination plots. Even after our long investigation it is unclear whether the conflicting and inconclusive state of the evidence is due to the system of plausible deniability or whether there were, in fact, serious shortcomings in the system of authorization which made it possible for assassination efforts to have been undertaken by agencies of the United States Government without express authority from officials above those agencies (footnote 5).

Based on the record of our investigation, the committee finds that the system of executive command and control was so inherently ambiguous that it is difficult to be certain at what level assassination activity was known and authorized. This creates the disturbing prospect that assassination activity might have been undertaken by officials of the United States Government without its having been incontrovertibly clear that there was explicit authorization from the President of the United States. At the same time, this ambiguity and imprecision leaves open the possibility that there was a successful plausible denial and that a presidential authorization was issued but is now obscured.

Whether or not assassination was authorized by a president of the United States, the president as the chief executive officer of the United States Government must take ultimate responsibility for major activities during his administration. Just as these presidents must bear responsibility for and control over their subordinates throughout the administration, the government had a consistent duty to fully disclose their plans and activities.