

10/4/71

JP,

Without checking, on recollection alone, and consider this can be in error, your 9/30/71 memo on CIA involvement in the JFK Assassination makes me believe your source has confused two separate things. There were stripped planes used. They were B26s, at least one of which landed at Key West the Sunday before the Bay of Pigs, hardly prepared for its cover story of having been shot up over Cuba. The transparency was reported in the papers.

The cover is, I believe, different, and has been misrepresented by those more anxious to cover a Navy Snafu. As I remember the story, and it may also be in Haynes Johnson's Bay of Pigs, perhaps Schlesinger's 1000 Bays, in the last minute JFK was blackmailed into agreeing to limited cover of the bombers to have been used to attack defense forces. It is there that there was the mixup on time, the Navy planes getting to where they were supposed to protect the CIA planes an hour ahead of time. It may be the sanfu is of CIA origin.

I find it difficult to believe that something as sophisticated as the CIA would be part of the McInnon account you have. That would be more like the working of the individual nuts they may have hired, who may or may not at that time still have had a connection. For a job like that there would be no recruiting of the unknown if it were an agency function. Not even if one of the desks had gone off on its own and decided to pull such a caper.

Nor is it likely that if they did it there would be one to leak or talk about it. Even less likely that one a job of that magnitude anyone without a real need to know would have had the faintest glimmer.

Burke is of the extreme right.

If I do not address the intentions of your source, I do doubt his story. That doesn't mean someone he may have believed or had reason to think he ~~believed~~ could believe didn't lay it on a bit, but I consider this likely and one possibility you didn't give.

The CIA planes were shot down or lost at sea. They never had any cover. They were crazy to believe they could pull such an amateur stunt. The cover was not intended for them. JFK hadn't been consulted about that because of his earlier strictures. The planes that were on the wrong clock were other planes. Those you mention seem to be part of the Doubl-Check operation.

For whatever it is worth, whether those Navy planes got there or not could not have made a difference in the outcome. I believe the agency's objective was to get a U.S. involvement, and lacking men to do it, they wanted the next best thing, planes. Meaning military. And they may have had it in mind because of all the big promises they had made the mostly-zany Cubans in the bridge-without reason or authority.

HW

MEMORANDUM - CONFIDENTIAL

TO: Harold Weisberg
FROM: Jerry Policoff
SUBJECT: CIA INVOLVEMENT IN JFK ASSASSINATION
DATE: 9/30/71

I have received the following information which may or may not be reliable from a source with ex CIA contacts...

A high-level CIA operative named Jack McKinnon was involved in recruiting agents to participate in a training operation in South America (possibly San Salvador) prior to the JFK assassination. This operation was to culminate in an assassination attempt.

Following the Bay of Pigs this same Jack McKinnon met informally with Admiral Arleigh Burke, U.S.N., (now retired) in a bar. They both denounced JFK for sending in air cover too early at the Bay of Pigs.

According to my source, air cover was provided, contrary to belief, in the form of three stripped U.S. planes piloted by CIA men. This was authorized by President Kennedy, and the order was given by Robert Kennedy. However Robert Kennedy accidentally authorized the incorrect time. The planes, as a result, arrived on the scene one hour early, and after circling several times and finding nothing they returned to their base. As a result there was no air cover when the invasion force landed.

Jack McKinnon is no longer with the CIA, and at last report was working for HUAC. Both Burke and McKinnon are described as being on the extreme right politically.

A word of caution. My source was definitely in a position to know what he is talking about. Therefore what he told me is either the truth or he is pulling my leg. I doubt the latter, however it cannot be discounted as a possibility. My source is not a student of assassination literature, and it is not likely that he was influenced by published work dealing with CIA aspects of the case.

cc: Roffman, Meagher, Schoener, Williams, Lesar