

Mr. Les Whitten
c/o Jack Anderson
1612 K St., NW
Washington, D.C.

Dear Les,

In haste and in outrage I write to protest the wherehouse journalism in the today's column you co-bylined, particularly those words someone at the WxPost had the decency and journalistic ethics to eliminate:

"Some sources believe this is why Robert Kennedy, tormented by grief, went into semi-seclusion after his brother's assassination. After the Bay of Pigs fiasco, President Kennedy had put Robert in charge of the CIA with instructions to shake it up. It is unlikely that the final (sic) attempts upon Castro could have been without Robert's knowledge.

"Could he have been plagued by the terrible thought that the CIA plot (sic), which he must at least have condoned, put into motion forces that brought about his own brother's murder..."

There is other thoroughly unprofessional content in this column but for my immediate purposes I ignore it to focus on this and on what I've underscored, not all of which needs explanation even to an apprentice cub. It is the most reprehensible kind of abuse of a journalistic power and the most obscene and irresponsible kind of writing.

When I consider that a mutual friend has told me of your previous CIA employment, there is also, whether or not justified, the obvious suggest of conflict of interest because some of this quoted writing would profane an over-used and under-cleaned barnyard.

"Some sources?" What a reportorial gadget! Who, Fiorini, of whom the column has not seen fit to recall some of its writing I remember rather well? Or that anonymous Washington lawyer you or Jack told Jim Lesar was the original source? (This crap also is repetition of earlier columns, although not so identified.) Les Whitten telling Jack Anderson? Anderson telling Whitten?

Bobby went into semi-seclusion? With all that TV exposure?

Having his brother gunned down was not enough for genuine grief? "After the Bay of Pigs..." This refers to almost all JFK's administration. He had been President less than three months before that crisis created for him by your former associates. But he was killed more than two and a half years later! Delayed passion? Delayed vengeance by those whose hate never subsided?

Can experienced men like you and Jack really believe this?

"...put Robert in charge of the CIA..." No President could do this.

Now assassinations are not unknown in any spookery. In ours it is my understanding that there is a regular channel. It does not end with any one man, not an Attorney General or any other. Assuming there had to be formal approval. Surely you knew enough self-starters to know it did not have this requirement. If not, read Allen Dulles in my Whitewash IV (pp61), the book whose contents were, like all the earlier ones, not worth the consideration of your readers.

You give no source for "It is unlikely that the final attempts

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upon Castro could ~~and~~ have been without Robert's knowledge."
(You suggest prior knowledge but with the imprecision that typifies this idecent propoganda do not say.)

No source. For bullshit there is but one source.
Not true, either. The least likely thing is that he'd have been involved. Or taking you slant, allowed himself to be.

Assume for a moment that Bobby had some awareness of or even involvement in any or all (and you fail to report all) attempts known to have been made against Castro. What possible basis is there for telling the people that it is reaction to the Bay of Pigs - to the exclusions of all else - that caused the JFK assassination?

(To say nothing of what is known of Castro's attitude of that time toward JFK, which in itself makes even cheaper and more sickening propoganda of your column.)

But can anyone past a kindergarten believe that ifx all this fabrication were true or even possible that Castro would have used a man utterly inexperienced in shooting, a man who had to be nudged into minimum qualification in the Marines, a man official described by the Commandant of the Marine Corps as a "rather poor shot," a man of whom there is no record of the shooting of a rifle for years, as his assassin with the whole world of professionals from whom to chose?

You say, "...Kennedy was gunned down by...Oswald, a fanatic who had been active in the pre-Castro movement...."

I challenge you to perve any and every part of this statement. Other than the spelling of Oswald's name.

Hell, Les, even the Warren Commission didn't say this! Or Hoover. So, I have to ask myself, at a time when the CIA is under attack and on political assassinations, why you have to have a column of undiluted bullshit, that so departs from journalistic norms, and is so inherently incredible.

Bobby killed his own brother, did he?

This is what you say.

Now I'd like you to question my use of "obscene."

This is a shameful business.

You have done a completely wretched thing.

Who is in your debt for it? Who benefits?

Those who did kill JFK and with that turned the country around.

And those authoritarian-minded in the CIA who have raped the Constitution and any rational concept of freedom and of laws and the observance of law.

I can better understand and more easily tolerate all the corruption I have found in officialdom for the past decade than I can this depravity, this total abdication of the responsibilities and indeed duties in any society that calls itself free.

Shame, man, shame!

Harold Weisberg

Jack Anderson

with LES WHITTEN

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WASHINGTON — Press accounts have identified Cuba's Fidel Castro as the target of an unsuccessful CIA assassination plot. The headlines couldn't have come at a worse time for Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. He is in the thick of "most delicate negotiations," according to our White House sources, to restore some kind of diplomatic relationship with Cuba. Actually, we reported as far back as Jan. 18, 1971, that the CIA had arranged six assassination attempts against Castro in the early 1960s. Now that the story has been revived, it might be useful to recount the details.

The plot began as part of the discredited Bay of Pigs operation. The strategy was to eliminate the Cuban leader before the CIA invasion force landed on the island. Without the charismatic Castro, it was thought, the defenders would become demoralized and disorganized.

To carry out the assassination, the CIA selected an underworld figure who could be disowned. He was hawk-faced John Roselli, identified in confidential FBI files as "a top Mafia figure" who watched over "the concealed interests in Las Vegas casinos of the Chicago underworld."

Roselli's CIA contacts were William Harvey and James O'Connell, who accompanied him on hush-hush trips to Miami to line up the assassination teams. No one else was told, however, of the CIA's role in the murder mission.

Roselli represented himself as an oil man seeking revenge against Castro for his seizure of oil holdings. The assassination weapons were also carefully selected from foreign makes, mostly Belgian, to prevent any link to the United States.

Each attempt to kill Castro was meticulously planned, like an episode from the TV drama, "Mission: Impossible!". For the first try, the CIA furnished Roselli with special poison capsules to slip into Castro's food.

The poison was supposed to take three days to act. By the time Castro died, his system would throw off all traces of the poison, so he would appear to be the victim of a natural if mysterious ailment.

Roselli arranged with a Cuban, related to one of Castro's chefs, to plant the deadly pellets in the dictator's food. On March 13, 1961, Roselli delivered the capsules to his contact at Miami Beach's glamorous Fontainebleau Hotel.

A couple weeks later, just about the

right time for the plot to have been carried out, a report out of Havana said Castro was ill. But he recovered in time to rout the Bay of Pigs invasion on April 17, 1961.

Although both the murder plot and the invasion failed, the CIA continued trying to get rid of Castro. The Cuban who had sneaked the poison into Havana was never seen again. Therefore, the CIA, unsure whether the plotters had failed or the poison hadn't been strong enough, decided to try again with a more powerful dose.

Roselli arranged for triple-strength capsules to be slipped into Castro's food several weeks after the Bay of Pigs. But once again, the plot failed and the conspirators disappeared.

Four more attempts were made on Castro's life, thereafter using assassination teams equipped with highpowered rifles, explosives and two-way radios. Roselli personally made midnight powerboat dashes to deliver the teams at secret landing spots on the Cuban coast. Once Roselli's boat was shot out from under him, but the occupants were quickly fished out of the murky water by companions in an accompanying boat.

The assassination teams never got a shot at Castro, although the CIA learned that the last group reached a rooftop within range. This occurred around the last of February or first of March 1963.

Nine months later, President Kennedy was gunned down in Dallas by Lee Harvey Oswald, a fanatic who had been active in the pro-Castro movement and had paid a mysterious call upon the Cuban embassy in Mexico City a few weeks before the dreadful day in Dallas.

Sources familiar with the CIA conspiracy can't shake a nagging suspicion — unsupported by the Warren Commission's findings — that Castro may have become aware of the U.S. plot upon his life and, therefore, may have recruited Oswald to retaliate against President Kennedy.

Some sources believe this is why Robert Kennedy, tormented by grief, went into semi-seclusion after his brother's assassination. After the Bay of Pigs fiasco, President Kennedy had put Robert in charge of the CIA with instructions to shake it up. It is unlikely that the final attempts upon Castro could have been made without Robert's knowledge.

Could he have been plagued by the terrible thought that the CIA plot, which he must at least have condoned, put into

motion forces that brought about his own brother's murder? The last surviving brother, Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., told us his brothers had never spoken to him about any assassination attempts against Castro.

Footnote: Sources familiar with the secret review of the CIA's activities have now acknowledged that Castro, as we reported four years ago, was marked for assassination by the CIA. A CIA spokesman refused to comment.

CIA Plots Against Castro Recounted

By Jack Anderson
and Les Whitten

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