

15 September 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Jack Anderson Column of 9 September 1976

1. In commenting on newspaper stories about operations planned against Fidel Castro, and the possibility of a cause-and-effect relationship between those operations and the assassination of President Kennedy, it must be remembered that the Senate Select Intelligence Committee now has more information than does CIA. The SSC investigators had access to all Agency files, as well as to witnesses and the files of other government agencies to which the Agency has not had access. In any event, requests for us to evaluate whether or not information contained in news stories is new present some difficulty simply because columnists present their interpretation of facts as though they are facts, which may make old information look different.

2. The 9 September 1976 column by Jack Anderson is a case in point. It contains a number of statements that are discussed below in the sequence in which they occur in the news column:

a. "... sources privy to the secret discussions at the highest levels of the CIA during those hectic days now tell us that the CIA deliberately withheld the evidence from the Warren Commission investigating Kennedy's death."

Comment: We do not know the identity of the sources cited in the article. However, in the absence of direct evidence on this point there has been speculation in the Agency that there probably was no serious consideration at higher levels at the time that there was a connection between the tightly compartmented operations attempted

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against Castro and the assassination of President Kennedy. If there was such a conscious decision, as asserted in the news column, it is not a part of the information known within CIA.

b. ". . . Robert Kennedy was briefed on May 7, 1962, about the attempt to use underworld killers to knock off Castro. "

"Two days later, Robert Kennedy cautioned the CIA not to go ahead with the assassination without consulting him. "

Comment: The CIA Director of Security and General Counsel did meet with Robert Kennedy on 7 May 1962 and briefed him about the Castro operation. The records do not indicate that Kennedy cautioned CIA not to go ahead with the assassination, without consulting him. " Rather, the 1967 IG report records him as placing the emphasis on not doing business with organized crime for any purpose without his knowledge, as distinguished from the specific Castro plan. At the time Kennedy had reason to believe that he was being told of a past operation and not one underway.

c. "Records now available show that Robert Kennedy informed FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover of the plot on May 10, 1962. "

Comment: The SSC report on alleged assassination plots, at page 132, reports Director Hoover writing a memorandum on May 10, 1962 concerning information given him on May 9, 1962 by Robert Kennedy on this subject.

d. " . . . various CIA officials also knew about the assassination scheme. Not the least of them was the late CIA chief Allen W. Dulles, who approved the original plan. He later served on the Warren Commission, yet he sat silently throughout the investigation without mentioning the Cuban angle."

Comment: Mr. Dulles was briefed on the original plan and, although the circumstances are subject to interpretation, apparently approved it. We have no evidence as to what he did or did not say during his services on the Warren Commission, including the extent to which the Warren Commission considered the possibility of a retaliatory plot by Castro.

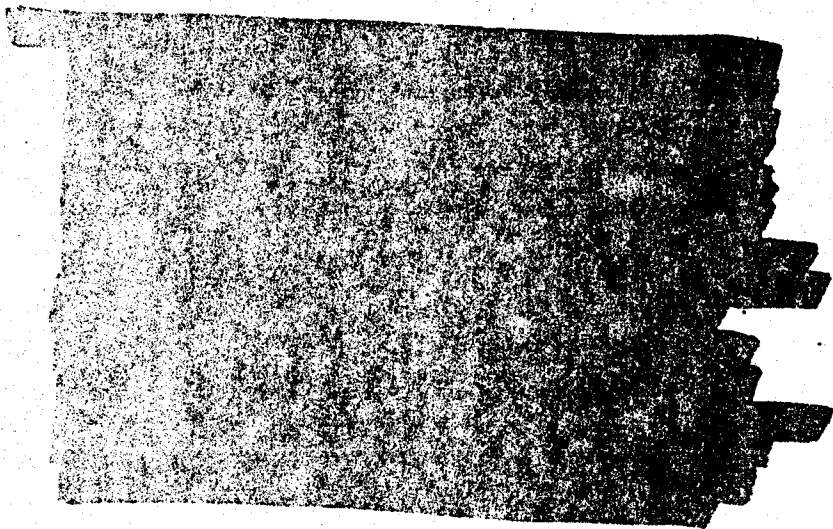
e. "Within hours of President Kennedy's death, the U. S. embassy cabled information from Mexico City suggesting that the Cubans may have been behind the assassination. Our sources say that the CIA developed similar information in Washington."

Comment: On the date of President Kennedy's assassination, the legal attache, as reported at page 102 of the SSC investigation of the Kennedy assassination, reported to the FBI that the Ambassador was concerned that Cubans were behind Oswald's assassination of President Kennedy. The CIA station in Mexico City reported Oswald's earlier visit there. Further, CIA records indicate early consideration of the possibility that either the USSR or Cuba could be involved. However, whatever the sources of the columnists, if this general initial consideration is what is meant in the column it does not equate with "information," but is more accurately characterized as speculation concerning possibilities.

f. "The first person to reach Robert Kennedy's side after the shooting was CIA Director John A. McCone, who remained alone with the Attorney General at his McLean, Va., home for nearly three hours."

Comment: As shown in the attached memorandum Mr. McCone did visit with Robert Kennedy at his home and remained there for some time. The conversation is described as "intermittent and personal." Mr. McCone states that he never mentioned Castro and there is nothing in his records to indicate otherwise.

g. "McCone swore to us that Castro's name was never mentioned during the three hours. But CIA records show that the next day McCone not only mentioned Castro to the new President, Lyndon B. Johnson, but briefed him on the information from Mexico City."



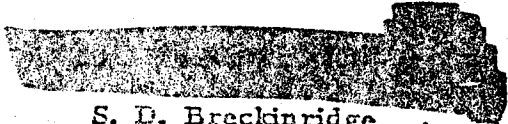
h. "We are now free to reveal our role in the drama. Two of our confidential sources, CIA agent William Harvey and mobster John Rosselli, are dead. A third source, attorney Edward P. Morgan, has waived the confidentiality we had promised him."




Comment: We were aware of the role of Edward P. Morgan as the probable source of Drew Pearson's story in March 1967. The 1967 IG report speculated that Roselli told Robert Mahou who told Morgan, who then told Drew Pearson. Harvey was not considered a likely source of the story simply because of his reputation for operational security; it cannot be recalled at this time if he was asked if he had told the story to anyone. It is known that Harvey was interested in Roselli's attempt to resist deportation and conceivably he could have joined Roselli in telling the story to Morgan for his use in representing Roselli's interests. We have no basis now in challenging the statement that these people were Morgan's sources.

i. "The next day, according to records now available, Kennedy's secretary called for a copy of the May 7, 1962, memo, which summarized the briefing he had received on the assassination plot."

Comment: The 1967 IG report states that Senator (former Attorney General) Kennedy's secretary phoned the DCI's office on 4 March 1967 and asked for a copy of that earlier memorandum. Mr. Helms showed a copy of the memorandum to Senator Kennedy.


S. D. Breckinridge

Attachment: r/s


Seymour Bolton
Walter Elder
