

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505

14 FEB 1989

Harold Welsberg  
7627 Old Receiver Road  
Frederick, MD 21701

Reference: F80-1042

Dear Mr. Welsberg:

In the course of their processing your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request regarding the John F. Kennedy Assassination, the Department of Justice located two CIA documents and referred them to us for our review and direct response to you.

We have completed our review of the documents and have determined that a letter with attachment dated 23 September 1965 may be released in its entirety. A copy of the document is enclosed at Tab A.

We have further determined that a memorandum with attachment dated 14 May 1962 may be released in segregable form pursuant to FOIA exemptions (b)(3) and (b)(6). A copy of the document and an explanation of exemptions are enclosed at Tab B.

The official responsible for this determination is Lee E. Carle, Information Review Officer, Directorate of Operations. You have the right to appeal this decision by addressing your appeal to the CIA Information Review Committee, in my care. Should you decide to do this, please explain the basis of your appeal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John H. Wright".

John H. Wright  
Information and Privacy Coordinator

Enclosures

**MEMORANDUM FOR** The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy  
The Attorney General  
Washington 25, D. C.

In accordance with your request of 11 May 1962, I am forwarding herewith, in the attached sealed envelope, a Top Secret memorandum by Colonel Sheffield Edwards, Director of Security, setting forth the facts on which we briefed you on 7 May 1962.

*Encl. 1*

*W. R. Houston*

82-46-5

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	RECORD
JUN 27 1962	
RECORDS BRANCH	

WRENCE R. HOUSTON  
General Counsel  
CIA

(DATE)  
15 MAY 1962

[REDACTED]

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

14 May 1962

FILE  
N. B.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD:

SUBJECT: Arthur James Balletti et al - Unauthorized Publication  
or Use of Communications

1. This memorandum for the record is prepared at the request of the Attorney General of the United States following a complete oral briefing of him relative to a sensitive CIA operation conducted during the period approximately August 1960 to May 1961. In August 1960 the undersigned was approached by Mr. Richard Bissell then Deputy Director for Plans of CIA to explore the possibility of mounting this sensitive operation against Fidel Castro. It was thought that certain gambling interests which had formerly been active in Cuba might be willing and able to assist and further, might have both intelligence assets in Cuba and communications between Miami, Florida and Cuba. Accordingly, Mr. Robert Maheu, a private investigator of the firm of Maheu and King was approached by the undersigned and asked to establish contact with a member or members of the gambling syndicate to explore their capabilities. Mr. Maheu was known to have accounts with several prominent business men and organizations in the United States. Maheu was to make his approach to the syndicate as appearing to represent big business organizations which wished to protect their interests in Cuba. Mr. Maheu accordingly met and established contact with one John Rosselli of Los Angeles. Mr. Rosselli showed interest in the possibility and indicated he had some contacts in Miami that he might use. Maheu reported that John Rosselli said he was not interested in any remuneration but would seek to establish capabilities in Cuba to perform the desired project. Towards the end of September Mr. Maheu and Mr. Rosselli proceeded to Miami where, as reported, Maheu was introduced to Sam Giancana of Chicago. Sam Giancana arranged for Maheu and Rosselli to meet with a "courier" who was going back

No higher authority cited

H. Hugh  
FILE  
N. B.

FILE  
N. B.

1960

82-46

22 JUN 27 1962  
RECORDS BRANCH  
ATTORNEY GENERAL

FILE  
N. B.

Page 1 of 3 pages

Copy No. 1 of 1

[REDACTED]

and forth to Havana. From information received back by the courier the proposed operation appeared to be feasible and it was decided to obtain an official Agency approval in this regard. A figure of one hundred fifty thousand dollars was set by the Agency as a payment to be made on completion of the operation and to be paid only to the principal or principals who would conduct the operation in Cuba. Maheu reported that Rosselli and Giancana emphatically stated that they wished no part of any payment. The undersigned then briefed the proper senior officials of this Agency on the proposal. Knowledge of this project during its life was kept to a total of six persons and never became a part of the project current at the time for the invasion of Cuba and there were no memoranda on the project nor were there other written documents or agreements. The project was duly orally approved by the said senior officials of the Agency.

Not high

Not high

Not high

Not high

2. Rosselli and Maheu spent considerable time in Miami talking with the courier. Sam Giancana was present during parts of these meetings. Several months after this period Maheu told me that Sam Giancana had asked him to put a listening device in the room of [REDACTED]

Not high

At that time it was reported to me that Maheu passed the matter over to one Edward Du Boise, another private investigator. It appears that Arthur James Balletti was discovered in the act of installing the listening device and was arrested by the Sheriff in Las Vegas, Nevada. Maheu reported to me that he had referred the matter to Edward Du Boise on behalf of Sam Giancana. At the time of the incident neither this Agency nor the undersigned knew of the proposed technical installation. Maheu stated that Sam Giancana thought that [REDACTED] might know of the proposed operation and might pass on the information to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] At the time that Maheu reported this to the undersigned he reported he was under surveillance by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who, he thought, were exploring his association with John Rosselli and Sam Giancana incident to the project. I told Maheu that if he was formally approached by the FBI, he could refer them to me to be briefed that he was engaged in an intelligence operation directed at Cuba.

Not high

3. During the period from September on through April efforts were continued by Rosselli and Maheu to proceed with the operation. The first principal in Cuba withdrew and another principal

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Copy No. 1 of 2

Edwards' memo on  
this disclosure  
by [redacted] to [redacted]

[redacted]

was selected as has been briefed to The Attorney General. Ten thousand dollars was passed for expenses to the second principal. He was further furnished with approximately one thousand dollars worth of communications equipment to establish communications between his headquarters in Miami and assets in Cuba. No monies were ever paid to Rosselli and Giancana. Maheu was paid part of his expense money during the periods that he was in Miami. After the failure of the invasion of Cuba word was sent through Maheu to Rosselli to call off the operation and Rosselli was told to tell his principal that the proposal to pay one hundred fifty thousand dollars for completion of the operation had been definitely withdrawn.

4. In all this period it has been definitely established from other sources that the Cuban principals involved never discovered or believed that there was other than business and syndicate interest in the project. To the knowledge of the undersigned there were no "leaks" of any information concerning the project in the Cuban community in Miami or in Cuba.

1. 2  
Castro  
and  
H. W. W.

5. I have no proof but it is my conclusion that Rosselli and Giancana guessed or assumed that CIA was behind the project. I never met either of them.

6. Throughout the entire period of the project John Rosselli was the dominant figure in directing action to the Cuban principals. Reasonable monitoring of his activities indicated that he gave his best efforts to carrying out the project without requiring any commitments for himself, financial or otherwise.

7. In view of the extreme sensitivity of the information set forth above, only one additional copy of this memorandum has been made and will be retained by the Agency.

[redacted]  
Sherold Edwards

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
Copy No. 1 of 2

[redacted]