

# CIA Plotted Poisoning Of Lumumba

10/11/75  
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A former top Central Intelligence Agency scientist has testified that the agency prepared and sent to the Congo a dose of lethal poison intended for use in an assassination attempt against former Congolese Premier Patrice Lumumba in 1961.

Knowledgeable sources said yesterday that Sidney Gottlieb, who retired in 1973 as head of the CIA's Technical Services Division, also told the Senate Intelligence Committee that he was given orders by former CIA Director Richard Helms to destroy the intelligence agency's drug testing records and that the records were destroyed at Gottlieb's verbal order in 1972.

Earlier this year, Helms testified under oath before the Rockefeller Commission on the CIA that he never ordered the destruction of the drug records or couldn't recall giving such an order. David W. Belin, the commission's executive director, said yesterday. In its report the commission said 152 files were destroyed but it was never able to learn the source of the destruction order. Gottlieb was never questioned by the commission.

Gottlieb, 57, testified twice this week before closed sessions of the committee and is scheduled to appear again to give additional testimony on the CIA's drug experimentation next week, sources said.

Two weeks ago Gottlieb refused to answer the Senate committee's questions, citing his Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination. The committee voted to give Gottlieb limited, or "use," immunity, which frees him from prosecution for anything he may say during testimony.

Sources said Gottlieb has also told the Senate Subcommittee on Health, which is investigating drug experimentation by the military and the CIA, that he would be willing to testify before that panel's next hearings in early November if the same im-

munity is granted men.

Gottlieb told the Senate intelligence committee Thursday that the poison intended for Lumumba was made up here from the intelligence agency's stockpile and sent to a CIA agent in the Congo — now known as Zaire — for use against Lumumba, the country's first premier, according to sources.

The CIA's poisoning plan

See GOTTIEB, A3, Col. 1

was never put into effect because Lumumba was killed by unknown assassins in Katanga Province just a few days before the inauguration of John F. Kennedy as President in January of 1961.

The testimony by Gottlieb, who in 1961 was head of the CIA's Chemical Division, which among other things handled requests for poisons by agents in the field, confirmed a number of critical details regarding earlier allegations that the intelligence agency was involved in trying to poison Lumumba.

During an hour-and-a-half appearance Thursday before the committee Gottlieb also told about debate among CIA officials over whether to retain its stock of biological poisons being held by the Army, in the face of a presidential order in 1970 to get rid of them, sources said.

Gottlieb was one of the officials who rejected the idea of placing the toxins in storage in a private warehouse in Baltimore in defiance of the presidential order. Most of the poisons were eventually destroyed, although about 11 grams of shellfish toxin and some cobra venom were retained by Army officials and turned back to the CIA's Chemical Division in 1970.

Last Tuesday Gottlieb made an unpublicized appearance at the committee's closed-door hearing and told of the order to destroy the agency's drug records. At that time, sources said, he also denied to the committee that he had tried to hide from investigators after leaving the agency in 1973.

Rockefeller Commission sources have said that they attempted to locate Gottlieb for testimony on the destruction of the records and other CIA drug matters but were told by the agency he was out of the country and could not be reached.

The sources have said that because of Gottlieb's absence and the destruction of the records they were never able to tell accurately the extent of the CIA's drug experimentation or the identity of persons who were given LSD and other chemicals and drugs by the agency without their knowledge.