

Dear Felch,

5/1/89

The other side is a poorly copied page from an FBI tickler that may interest you. Jim Cesar has it if it does. I think it was a damage-control tickler and some of the other pages are much hairier.

I've checked The Secret Team and as you had thought, there is no reference to any code names used in the Indonesia adventure.

Did the Navy ever have its own ways of referring to such operations?

I have a vague recollection only of Zapata being used in connection with the Bay of Pigs but don't recall the connection or how I knew. Remarkable string of coincidences in all of that that you tick off. Not easy to attribute it 100% to only coincidence.

I've heard nothing more from Navasky, presume you also have not and that we will not. I've been intending to write him and raise questions of personal and journalistic integrity in their uncritical publication of Kopkind's irrelevancies and refusal to publish what you offered.

By the way, do you recall whether the carrier Wasp was involved in the Indonesia operation?

Best wishes,

Howard

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Apr 19, 1989

Harold Weisberg
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Dear Harold,

Sorry for the delay...been busy with some work that had to get done. Now, in response to your question about Indonesia. I do not know whether you have my book "The Secret Team" or not. It's all in the book in some detail and I hate to repeat it here if you have it. But in response to your specific question, I do not recall that we had any particular code name for our work there.

In 1958 the agency got talked into supporting a potential rebel group that claimed it could overthrow Sukarno. Frank Wisner went out to Singapore and set up a headquarters there and we--the military--provided about everything he could want. We armed more than 42,000 rebels.

Our aircraft: B-26 and F-51 were based on island landing fields north of the Indonesia archipelago. South of Indonesia we used US Navy submarines for over-the-beach operations. I do not recall the use of any carriers although there may have been one or more cruising in the south.

The 1958 operation never gathered steam and it failed for lack of Indonesian support and serious miscalculations by the CIA. In fact, the then Vice President Nixon summarily fired Frank Wisner for the failure. This is what started the bad blood between Nixon and the agency hard core professionals who revered Wisner.

The rebellion in the Sixties [Suharto] was an altogether different thing and by that time I was out of the business.

Speaking of codes, did you know that the code name we used for the Bay of Pigs was ZAPATA. We bought two ships for the CIA so they could support the troops on the beach. Those ships were re-named the "Houston" and the "Barbara J."

It just happens that after graduating from Yale George Bush founded an oil company called "ZAPATA." He married a girl named "Barbara J.", and he claims "Houston" as his residence.

Coincidence???????

As always,


L. Fletcher Prouty