

Agents' JFK Disclosures Draw Rebuke From Colleagues

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The association of former Secret Service agents took a slap at several old colleagues at its annual meeting this month for talking to author Seymour M. Hersh about the sexual escapades of the late president John F. Kennedy.

The group passed a resolution expressing disapproval of the agents' actions. According to informed sources, one of the leading advocates of the resolution, P. Hamilton Brown, asserted from the podium that it would have been better if "a contract" had been put out on the agents who spoke with Hersh for his 1997 book, "The Dark Side of Camelot."

The president of the association of more than 1,000 ex-agents, James E. LeGette, declined to discuss the resolution or the discussions surrounding it. "It was a private business meeting, a private affair," he said. "I wouldn't say we censured anyone. There's no physical action or anything coming out of this."

But Brown, the association's executive secretary, confirmed that the group had passed the resolution of disapproval. It did not name the four agents who worked on Kennedy's presidential detail more than 35 years ago—Tony Sherman, Larry Newman, William T. McIntyre and Joseph Paoliella. Hersh said in his book that they, and others who remained anonymous, attested to "the sheer number of Kennedy's sexual partners" and his reckless use of them in the White House and on trips.

"We got a lot of heat from our members. A lot of our people thought they were talking out of school," said Brown, who also worked on JFK's detail. Brown said he couldn't remember saying that "a contract" should have been put out on the agents. "If I did, it was inexcusable," he said. "I don't think I did."

Sherman and Newman said they learned of the Louisville meeting from several sources. They have said they felt they were contributing to history and that Kennedy's conduct compromised his security.

"I think it's unfortunate if he made those remarks," Newman said of Brown yesterday. Sherman said he was "kind of tired of being held up as a horrible example. I see a lot of humor in these things, but I was told the tone toward us at the meeting was threatening."

Lutz, who also served on JFK's detail, said he decided to speak up because of his high regard for several of the agents, and because he had simply abstained from the vote instead of voicing his objections. He said

LeGette read the resolution twice and emphasized that unanimous passage was expected.

"One of my biggest objections is to the way this was ramrodded through, as though these people were traitors or whatever," Lutz said.

He said some members didn't know who the four agents were before they were identified in response to questions from the floor.

A copy of the resolution was sent to Secret Service Director Lew Meltlett, who last December called the disclosures in Hersh's book "very troubling and counterproductive" and, in a memo to agents, sternly cautioned them never to disclose "any aspect of the personal lives of our protectees."

The memo was sent out to agents at 5:40 p.m. on Dec. 5. Coincidentally, 16 minutes later, lawyers for Paula Jones in her sexual harassment suit against President Clinton faxed Clinton's lawyers a witness list with Monica S. Lewinsky's name on it.