

Senate Intelligence Committee Says It's Possible

Did Arms Shipments to Fidel's

Newhouse News Service

WASHINGTON — In the early summer of 1963, two shipments of explosives were secretly hauled from Collinsville, Ill., to anti-Castro Cuban exiles in Miami and New Orleans.

Those arms may have been linked to the assassination of President Kennedy by Lee Harvey Oswald in November of that year, Senate investigators have now concluded.

It is possible, the recent Senate intelligence committee report suggests, that knowledge of plans for guerrilla attacks on Cuba involving these and other weapons may have contributed to a decision by Oswald or even by Castro government officials to kill President Kennedy in retaliation.

It is certain, the committee declared, that a key FBI document on the weapons-running from Collinsville was withheld by the FBI from the Warren Commission, which investigated the Kennedy assassination.

FBI suppression of its information about the source, destination and purpose of the dynamite and other devices from Collinsville was cited by the Senate committee as an important example of FBI efforts to protect its public image by hiding facts about the FBI's alleged laxity in checking Oswald before the assassination.

The Senate investigators also established a link between the Collinsville dynamite, American underworld plots against Fidel Castro, and CIA attempts to achieve Castro's assassination.

The dynamite shipment to Miami in June, 1963, was intended for a bombing raid on a Shell oil refinery in Cuba, the FBI document said. It was financed by a "former gambling operator" in Havana and was carried out in part by a Cuban exile identified in the Senate report merely as "A."

"A" was also the purchaser of 2,400 pounds of dynamite and 20 bomb casings in Collinsville that were also to be dropped on Cuban targets, the FBI document said.

The shadowy "A" turned up again in Washington government files — in 1965, long after completion of the Warren Commission investigation of the Kennedy

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Foes Trigger

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assassination — as having knowledge of the CIA's 1963 contacts with "Amlash," the code name for a high Castro official, about killing Castro with a poison ballpoint pen or a telescopic rifle.

"A" claimed in 1965 that he and "Amlash" were lifelong friends, the Senate report said.

Some people doubt that "Amlash" was truly anti-Castro and suspect that he was a Castro plant who kept Castro fully informed about the CIA assassination plots.

On Nov. 22, 1963, the day Oswald killed President Kennedy, "Amlash" was meeting in Europe with a top CIA official and as told he would be furnished with a rifle and explosives to kill Castro.

The Senate committee stressed in its recent report that it had found no evidence to "justify a conclusion that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy."

but the committee also charged that the FBI and CIA withheld vital information about "possibilities of conspiracy" from the Warren Commission, and that the two agencies were "deficient" in their own investigations of the Kennedy murder.

Like many of its findings, the Senate report left unanswered many questions about the arms-running from Collinsville. But it did quote at length from an Oct. 3, 1963, memo from the FBI's Miami field office to headquarters on the episodes.

This memo was not furnished to the Warren Commission, the committee said, and "raises additional questions" about the purpose of Oswald's contacts with Carlos Bringuier, an anti-Castro Cuban

exile in New Orleans who was training paramilitary forces for raids on Cuba.

The committee implied that the FBI wanted to divert the Warren Commission from digging too deeply into Oswald's highly suspicious activities before he killed Kennedy.

On Aug. 5, Oswald, who was living in New Orleans, offered his help to Bringuier, and on Aug. 7 he presented his Marine Corps training manual to Bringuier's group. But two days later Bringuier saw Oswald passing out pro-Castro literature and a fight broke out between the two.

The Senate report said Bringuier "believed Oswald was attempting to infiltrate the anti-Castro movement in order to report its activities to pro-Castro forces."

The anti-Castro activities included the plans for bombing raids with the Collinsville explosives, the Senate report said.

According to the withheld FBI document, an informant told the agency on June 14, 1963, that "B" of Collinsville, Ill., had "recently arrived in Miami in a Ford station wagon with a load of arms for sale. American adventurers and mercenaries (names deleted) took 'B' around to meet the different Cuban exile leaders in Miami."

The intended raid was thwarted when customs agents seized two Beechcraft aircraft near Miami and "a quantity of explosives" at an airfield near Miami on June 15, 1963.

"A" and an American were detained but not arrested.

On July 31, 1963, FBI agents raided a home near New Orleans and seized the 2,400 pounds of dynamite and 20 bomb casings.

According to the FBI document, the arms were located on property owned by the brother of the former operator of a Havana gam-

bling casino. The dynamite was purchased at Collinsville by "B" for "A," who transported the dynamite to New Orleans in a rented trailer, the FBI said.

While the two planned attacks were halted by the arms seizures, many other guerilla assaults in Cuba proceeded, the report said.

In that period, Oswald was in

contact with pro-Castro organizations in New Orleans as well as the anti-Castro groups, who were operating a guerrilla training camp outside New Orleans.

On Sept. 7, 1963, Castro granted an unexpected and impromptu interview with an Associated Press reporter in Havana and warned that any U.S. leaders aid-

ing in terrorist plans to eliminate Cuban leaders would themselves not be safe.

Later that month, Oswald went to Mexico City and, according to the Senate report, "visited both the Cuban and Soviet diplomatic establishments and contacted a vice consul at the latter who was

in fact a KGB (secret intelligence) agent."

Yet the FBI "failed to intensify" its investigation of Oswald before the Kennedy assassination and "failed to interview him before the assassination despite receiving a note from him warning the FBI to leave his wife alone," the committee said.