

Ms. Marie Brenner
Vanity Fair
350 Madison Ave.,
New York, NY 10017

Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
Frederick, MD 21702

10/24/97

Dear Ms. Brenner,

Because the Anson piece says you were involved in gathering the documents relating to the coming Dark Side Of By Hersh, I enclose a bit that you may find some use for when his book is out or in response to criticism of the current issue.

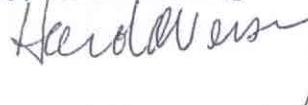
With regard to the reported Hersh line that the Kennedys were involved in or behind the CIA's plot with the mafia to assassinate Castro, as you will see from the enclosed CIA disclosure to me, that was of the Eisenhower administration, dating to the August before the election that Made Kennedy President. Robert Kennedy was informed of it after it was exposed by some ham-handedness in Vegas ~~investig~~ relating to the Dan Martin/Phyllis McGuire affair. I have several FBI files on that but the point here is that it was not a Kennedy project and as the CIA itself states, no Kennedy knew about it. The notes on that record as disclosed to me were made when I did not anticipate this kind of use for it but those notes of mine are readily identifiable.

Anson also states that far "from opposing the C.I.A. ~~Mafia~~ Mob-Castro plots, as Kennedy hagiography ^ahd it, Bobby had been their chief instigator from the spring of 1962 onward." That was some time after it was all over. Besides which the mafia did nothing, really, except pretend to do what the Eisenhower CIA asked it to do. It not only was not, it could not have been a Kennedy deal.

With reference to the alleged Catholic Church annulment of the ~~rum~~ rumored JFK marriage, in one of my many FOIA lawsuits, mostly against the FBI, it disclosed to me the results of its investigation proving there had been no such marriage. It is now physically impossible for ~~me~~ to search those records and send you a copy because I'm 84, in impaired health, and the use of stairs, with the ~~7~~ third of a million pages ~~+~~ got by those lawsuits in the basement, is too dangerous for me. However, once disclosed, as that was to me, those records are supposed to be available to everyone in the FBI's public reading room, with copies if wanted.

It is not easy for me to believe that Hersh began this indecency intending it to relate to the JFK assassination because in any serious research on it I can not be avoided. I am the only one whose books (ten) are based entirely on the official evidence and everyone working in the field knows I make all I have available to all writing in the field. Not only that third of a million pages I got by FOIA lawsuits. I am the only one of whom the FBI said, in court, that I know more about it than anyone working for it. I never heard from Hersh.

Sincerely, Harold Weisberg



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:

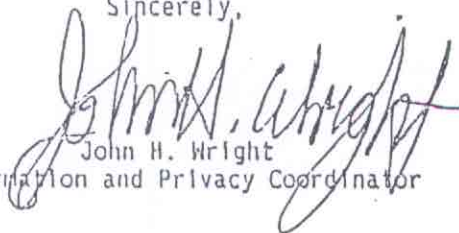
In the course of their processing your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request regarding the John F. Kennedy Assassination, the Department of Justice located two CIA documents and referred them to us for our review and direct response to you.

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,


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

82-416-5		WRENCE R. HOUSTON	
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE		RECORDED	General Counsel
22	JUN 27 1962		CIA
RECORDS BRANCH			(DATE)
ATTORNEY GENERAL		15 MAY 1962	

[REDACTED]
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

14 May 1962

FILE
H. 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

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Page 1 of 3 pages

22

JUN 27 1962
RECORDS BRANCH
ATTORNEY GENERAL

[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

Liz Smith! Excerpt

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]

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.

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 document
by [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.

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C.A. 11
2. 11
11. 11

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]
Shepherd Edwards

[redacted]

[redacted]
Copy No. 1 of 2

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
Memorandum

*Continued
to be prepared up to
PK*

h 2, k

TO : The Attorney General

DATE: May 22, 1961

2/2/61

FROM : Director, FBI

SUBJECT: ARTHUR JAMES BALLETTI, et al.
UNAUTHORIZED PUBLICATION
OR USE OF COMMUNICATIONS

WR

This case involves an allegation that Arthur James Balletti and another unidentified individual placed a wire tap on the telephone of Dan Rowan, a member of the comedy team of Rowan and Martin, in October, 1960.

The Criminal Division was previously advised that Robert Maheu, after concealing his full connection with this matter, informed that coverage of Rowan was in furtherance of activities of Maheu on behalf of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) relative to anti-Castro activities. *(u)*

Colonel Sheffield Edwards, Director of Security, CIA, furnished the information set forth in the attached memorandum regarding his utilization of Maheu in connection with anti-Castro activities. According to Colonel Edwards, Maheu contacted Sam Giancana in connection with this program. Reports of investigation of Giancana have been furnished to the Department in the case entitled "Samuel N. Giancana, Anti-Racketeering." *(u)*

Since the purpose for placing the wire tap on Rowan's telephone, which is the basis for this investigation of the violation of the Unauthorized Publication or Use of Communications Statute, has not been determined, the full investigation requested in this matter is continuing and copies of reports will be furnished to the Department upon receipt.

In view of the information regarding CIA's attempted utilization of the hoodlum element in connection with anti-Castro activities, CIA has requested that this information be handled on a "need-to-know" basis. *(u)*

Enclosures (2)

- 1 - Mr. Byron R. White
Deputy Attorney General (Enclosure)
- 1 - Assistant Attorney General
Herbert J. Miller, Jr. (Enclosure)

DECLASSIFIED BY SP4 J. J. [unclear]
ON 3/9/81 FOIA # 27, 33c
CIA info declassified per
John E. Bacon 8/27/80

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/10/84 BY PR [unclear]
3/10/84

ENCLOSURE

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES
AND FIELD OFFICES
ADVISED BY ROUTING
SLIP(S) OF THIS MEMORANDUM

Classified by
[unclear]



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

May 22, 1961

7- Only, Please Refer to

ARTHUR JAMES BALLETTI, et al.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

On May 3, 1961, Colonel Sheffield Edwards, Director of Security, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) furnished the following information. *AL*

Colonel Edwards advised that in connection with CIA's operation against Castro he personally contacted Robert Maheu during the Fall of 1960 for the purpose of using Maheu as a "cut-out" in contacts with Sam Giancana, a known hoodlum in the Chicago area. Colonel Edwards said that since the underworld controlled gambling activities in Cuba under the Batista government, it was assumed that this element would still continue to have sources and contacts in Cuba which perhaps could be utilized successfully in connection with CIA's clandestine efforts against the Castro government. As a result, Maheu's services were solicited as a "cut-out" because of his possible entree into underworld circles. Maheu obtained Sam Giancana's assistance in this regard and according to Edwards, Giancana gave every indication of cooperating through Maheu in attempting to accomplish several clandestine efforts in Cuba. Edwards added that none of Giancana's efforts have materialized to date and that several of the plans still are working and may eventually "pay off".

Colonel Edwards related that he had no direct contact with Giancana; that Giancana's activities were completely "back stopped" by Maheu and that Maheu would frequently report Giancana's action and information to Edwards. No details or methods used by Maheu or Giancana in accomplishing their missions were ever reported to Edwards. Colonel Edwards said that since this is "dirty business" he could not afford to have knowledge of the actions of Maheu and Giancana in pursuit of any mission for CIA. Colonel Edwards added that he has neither given Maheu any instruction to use technical installations of any type nor has the subject of technical installations ever come up between Edwards and Maheu in connection with Giancana's activity. *(u)*

DECLASSIFIED BY *SP4 Jm/K20*
ON *3/19/81* BY *SP4 Jm/K20*
John E. Bunce 8/2/80

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ENCLOSURE

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE *2/10/84* BY *SP4 Jm/K20*

Colonel Edwards related that Maheu did come to him concerning the arrest in Las Vegas of Balletti for "wire tapping." Maheu cautioned Edwards that the Balletti arrest could cause CIA some embarrassment since Balletti was in Las Vegas attempting to obtain coverage on some "Hollywood people" in connection with Giancana's efforts for CIA. Edwards said that he did not know the facts of the Balletti case and Maheu claims "Balletti went too far" in his efforts to obtain information. Edwards added that he was unaware of any reason for this activity of Maheu or Giancana in Las Vegas and that Giancana's activity in furtherance of the anti-Castro activity was left completely in Maheu's hands. X(u)

Colonel Edwards advised that only Mr. Bissell (Deputy Director of Plans, CIA) and two others in CIA were aware of the Giancana - Maheu activity in behalf of CIA's program and that Allen Dulles was completely unaware of Edwards' contact with Maheu in this connection. He added that Mr. Bissell, during his recent briefings of General Taylor and the Attorney General in connection with their inquiries into CIA relating to the Cuban situation, told the Attorney General that some of CIA's associated planning included the use of Giancana and the underworld against Castro. X(u)

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This report and its contents are loaned to you by the FBI and neither it nor its contents are to be distributed outside the agency to which loaned."

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~