

Mahou Refuses to Testify Before Senate Panel on Alleged Plot Against Castro

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Robert A. Mahou, the reputed liaison between the Central Intelligence Agency and organized crime figures in an alleged agency-inspired plot to kill Fidel Castro, took the Fifth Amendment today in declining to answer questions about the arrangement from members of a Senate panel.

Mr. Mahou's invocation of his constitutional privilege against self-incrimination, which had been expected, left the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities with the question of whether to

grant Mr. Mahou limited immunity from prosecution, and then compel his testimony under the threat of a contempt citation.

Senator John G. Tower of Texas, the committee's Republican vice chairman, told reporters following the 50-minute closed session with Mr. Mahou this morning that the witness had invoked the Fifth Amendment on "several questions of substance."

Senator Tower did not characterize the questions, and he said that the committee had not yet decided whether to grant Mr. Mahou immunity. If the panel should vote to grant to be approved by the

United States District Court here, depending on whether the Justice Department chooses to enter an objection that would delay the court's approval for an additional 20-day period.

Former Aide to Hughes
Mr. Mahou, a tall, baldish man of dapper appearance who until 1970 had served for several years as a top aide to Howard R. Hughes, the billionaire said upon emerging from the committee's hearing room that he would have no comment on any aspect of his appearance today.

His name is understood to have been mentioned previously-

by before the Senate intelligence committee in secret testimony concerning an alleged attempt early in 1961 on the life of Premier Castro of Cuba.

Mr. Mahou reportedly served at that time as the contact between the C.I.A., which allegedly hoped to bring about Mr. Castro's death before the ill-fated Bay of Pigs invasion, and Sam Giancana and John Roselli, two alleged organized crime figures who reportedly attempted on Mr. Castro's life. Mr. Roselli is scheduled to appear before the Senate panel when it next convenes on Wednesday. A committee aide said today, however, that his testi-

mony might be delayed by extenuating circumstances.

Mr. Mahou, was the first witness to appear before the committee pursuant to a subpoena, Mr. Roselli is under a similar summons, indicating that his testimony, like Mr. Mahou's, will not be voluntary. During an afternoon session, the committee heard testimony from Richard M. Bissell, who had been heard for the purpose of the C.I.A.'s Directorate of Plans, or covert operations, during the planning for the Bay of Pigs invasion. Committee aides would not characterize Mr. Bissell's testimony today, but they did say that he was expected to return

on Wednesday to complete it. Mr. Mahou, who departed from the Capitol at the close of the Senate panel's morning session, made a brief, unscheduled appearance at the beginning of the afternoon meeting, delaying Mr. Bissell's testimony by about an hour.

Committee aides did not discourage the speculation afterward that the return appearance had been for the purpose of hearing Mr. Mahou's lawyer, Morton B. Galane, outline for the members the testimony his client would provide if immunity were granted to him.

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