

Castro Assassination Scheme

Report of CIA-Mafia Plot

Washington

Two former aides to the late Robert F. Kennedy say that he told them in 1967 that Central Intelligence Agency agents had contracted with the Mafia in an aborted plot to assassinate Premier Fidel Castro of Cuba before the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.

Adam Walinsky and Peter B. Edelman, who were assistants to Kennedy when he was attorney general and a senator, said Kennedy told them that he had played an active role in stopping the assassination attempt.

A high CIA official, informed of the Walinsky-Edelman account, said the agency would have "no comment."

Walinsky, now a lawyer in private practice in New York, said that Kennedy disclosed that he had received "assurances in writing" from the CIA that the attempted assassination had been aborted.

Those assurances came after Kennedy discussed the issue with high officials of the agency, Walinsky recalled the then-Senator saying.

"He told us that he had discovered that the CIA had made a contract with the Mafia to hit Castro," Walinsky said.

The Walinsky-Edelman account was initially provided to the New York Times in separate, off-the-record discussions in 1973 and restated Friday for direct attribution.

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On March 3, 1967, Jack Anderson, the syndicated columnist, reported that the CIA may have plotted Castro's assassination and depicted Kennedy as the official who "may have approved the operation."

Anderson also cited what he termed persistent "rumor" to the effect that Castro may have become aware of the American plot and decided to retaliate by having President Kennedy assassinated in 1963.

Because of that possibility, the columnist suggested, Senator Kennedy may have been blaming himself for the death of his brother.

The column, published at

a time of strained relations between Senator Kennedy and President Johnson, "outraged" the senator, Walinsky recalled, and led to the discussion of the alleged CIA-Mafia attempt.

"I remember him saying, 'Blame myself?' Edelman recalled. "I didn't start it (the Castro assassination attempt), I stopped it."

See Jack Anderson column, Page 35. FILED CIA