

CIA Linked to Death Plot Against Castro

CLAIM: The Central Intelligence Agency attempted six times to assassinate Cuba's Premier Fidel Castro, by poison, rifle and bomb, and even hired a Mafia leader to do the job — which obviously failed.

Claim: The CIA planned the assassination of General Rafael Trujillo, for 31 years dictator of the Dominican Republic.

Claim: The CIA plotted the killing of left-leaning leader of newly independent Congo, Patrice Lumumba.

Claim: The CIA's agent in Mexico City in 1963 contacted Lee Harvey Oswald in September before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Nov. 22, 1963. Two CIA agents were on a grassy knoll in Dallas at the time of Kennedy's killing and may have fired the fatal shots.

By last week it had become increasingly difficult to separate fact from fiction in the myriad investigations of the CIA.

The President's Commission headed by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller was looking into the Kennedy assassination rumor; Senator Frank Church's Select Committee on Intelligence was trying to pin down both domestic and foreign activities of the CIA; while Representative Bella Abzug's House Subcommittee on Government Information and Individual Rights was particularly hot last week about the CIA's files on Abzug herself.

The media had not waited for CIA news to filter out of the Rockefeller Commission or the committees.

The New York Times talked to Adam Walinsky and Peter Edelman, assistants to Robert Kennedy when he was attorney general and U.S. senator, who said Kennedy "told us that he had discovered that the CIA had made a contract with the Mafia to hit Castro."

Jack Anderson, the national columnist, had written in March, 1967, that the CIA had plotted the assassination of Castro and Robert Kennedy "may have approved the operation."

Castro had gotten wind of the plot, wrote Anderson, and had retaliated by having President Kennedy assassinated. Thus Bob Kennedy might be blaming himself for his brother's death, Anderson concluded.

The Anderson column outraged Robert Kennedy.

recalled Walinsky. "I remember him saying, 'Blame myself? I stopped it!'"

Time magazine, quoting "credible sources," named Sam Giancana and John Roselli as the Mafia men enlisted by the CIA to rub out Castro. The first poison attempt was early in 1961, before the Bay of Pigs fiasco of April 17.

After the Bay of Pigs the attempts allegedly continued, but nothing worked. An ex-CIA operative, Bradley Ayers, who helped train CIA agents in tropic survival, a week ago related to reporters how he discovered a team of marksmen trained in the Miami area in 1963, whose role was "conducting an assassination effort against Castro."

Time magazine's "credible source" also contended the CIA engineered the shooting of Trujillo in May, 1961, and was behind the mysterious death of Lumumba in February, 1961. (At the time, the secessionist Katanga government that opposed Lumumba gave cash rewards to the village tribesmen whom it credited with the killing.)



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Further weight was added to claims the CIA had played a heavy role in Latin America when former Costa Rican President Jose Figueres told a Mexican television audience last Sunday he had worked for American intelligence "in 20,000 ways" for 30 years "all over Latin America" and so had most other Latin American leaders.

And, he added, he had tried to talk the CIA out of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba and had argued against the assassination of Trujillo. But he lost both arguments.

Then he defended the CIA, saying "there never can be enough payment to the United States for the



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excellent espionage and counter-espionage work of the CIA since it was founded by Allen Dulles."

On Monday Senator Church indicated his Committee on Intelligence probably would investigate allegations of assassination plots and President Ford's spokesman indicated the President would have no objection — as long as the embarrassing truths were not made public.

As for the Kennedy assassination plot, a group headed by comedian Dick Gregory contended photos taken at the time of the assassination showed E. Howard Hunt Jr., convicted in the Watergate affair, and Frank Sturgis, convicted as one of the Watergate burglars, were on a grassy knoll facing the Kennedy car; that Kennedy was shot from the front, not from the window of the School Book Depository.

But the Rockefeller Commission gathered testimony from Hunt saying he had never been in Dallas

The CIA allegedly arranged the death of Trujillo too

until 1971, did not know Sturgis until 1972, was at home the day Kennedy was assassinated and had witnesses to prove where he was that November 22.

And Commission executive director David Belin, who had been on the Warren Commission that investigated the assassination, declared last week. "Thus far I have found no hard evidence whatsoever to indicate that there was any person involved in the assassination of John F. Kennedy other than Lee Harvey Oswald."

Meanwhile, Mrs. Abzug was roasting CIA Director William Colby before her subcommittee. Colby had brought the Manhattan Democrat the file the CIA had built up on her activities over the last 20 years.

It represented "a collection of trivia and inaccurate information . . . and was a violation of privacy, my individual constitutional rights and the law," declared Mrs. Abzug.