

C.I.A. (B)

'62 C.I.A. Castro Plot Reported Following Talks at White House

NYTimes

MAY 24 1975

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 23—The Central Intelligence Agency prepared a contingency plan for the assassination of Cuban Premier Fidel Castro as a result of White House discussions, former agency officials have told the Rockefeller Commission, which is looking into Federal intelligence operations.

According to a former senior intelligence official, the commission was told that this "contingency" planning included "feelers" being put out to two organized crime figures, Sam Giancana and John Roselli. The plans, one source said, were examined after top-level officials in the White House of President Kennedy indicated a desire to have the question of assassinating Mr. Castro examined as one possible solution to the growing Cuban problem in 1961 and 1962.

McGeorge Bundy, then assistant to the President for national security affairs, told newsmen several weeks ago that White House officials did have discussions of "how nice it would be if this or that leader" were not around any more.

The former intelligence official, who declined to be identified, said this sort of informal White House thought had resulted in "contingency planning at C.I.A."

He emphasized that what White House officials might have regarded as informal remarks would have been treated as a former request by the C.I.A.

Reports Subject Dismissed

[The Associated Press quoted its sources as saying that minutes of a meeting on Aug. 10, 1962, showed that it was attended by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, John A. McCone, Director of Central Intelligence, and Mr. Bundy. "The subject of killing Castro was raised and immediately dismissed," one source who had seen the minutes was quoted as having said.]

Mr. McCone, who was director of the C.I.A. in late 1961 and 1962, has told reporters in the past that plans were formulated for an assassination attempt, but that they were never approved by anyone in authority and did not go forward.

According to the source who discussed what the Rockefeller commission was told, the agency did not formulate these plans "on its own" but was operating as the result of White House discussions. He declined to comment on whether President Kennedy participated in such discussions.

The details of the reported contingency plan were transmitted by the C.I.A. to the 54/12 Committee, a predecessor of the 40 Committee, a supersecret group of policy mak-

ers who approve or disapprove all major covert operations, this source said, but the plan was not approved and did not go forward.

This version of the reported Castro assassination plot differs in emphasis from versions published in several articles by Jack Anderson, the syndicated columnist. In those accounts, the C.I.A. recruited Mr. Giancana and Mr. Roselli, and Mr. Roselli made two attempts on the Cuban Premier's life.

According to the former official, the White House discussions involved "the highest level" of the Administration and would not have been honored otherwise. And he said, it was "handled on the highest level" at the C.I.A.

During this period, Mr. Bundy was the senior adviser for national security at the White House. The operational command for covert operations was held by Richard Bissell until early 1962 and Richard Helms after that.

All these men, with Mr. McCone, have testified before the Rockefeller commission, a blue-ribbon panel appointed by President Ford to investigate possible illegal domestic operations of the C.I.A. Mr. Ford later expanded the role of the commission to include an inquiry into alleged plots to kill foreign leaders.

One source said that several of these men had given the commission details confirming that a plan to kill Mr. Castro had been drawn up. What appears to be uncertain to the commission is who in the Kennedy Administration authorized such a plan to be devised.

Earlier today, Senator Frank Church, Democrat of Idaho, warned that Congress might pass a law to bar future assassination plots against foreign leaders even if they were ordered by a President.

Mr. Church, chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said: "My own personal view is that it is simply intolerable that any agency of the Government of the United States may engage in murder."

Demands Ban in Law

"Therefore, if the facts were to lead the committee to conclude that there had been activity of this kind, we will not leave it to executive decision, but we will insist that the laws be so written that such activity never occurs again."

Las Tuesday, The New York Times reported that the Rockefeller commission had obtained documentary evidence from Justice Department files indicating that the C.I.A. had employed Mr. Giancana and Mr. Roselli.

David W. Belin, counsel to the commission, declined to comment on that report at the time. Neither he nor commission spokesmen were available for comment today.