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FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
	1. <u>Marsh to Cheney, 10/29/75</u>		
1a. Memo	Jack Marsh to the President re assassination report (6 pp.) opened 3/26/93 KBH	10/29/75	A
1b. Memo	William Colby to the President (1 p.) - Note a sanitized version of this page is in the open file	10/20/75	C(A)
		opened sys	KBH 5/24/00
1c. Memo	CIA staff member to Director of Central Intelligence (9 pp.) sanitized JFK 1781000410117 KBH 5/25/00	10/20/75	A
1d. Memo	Thomas Latimer Memo for the Record (3 pp.) JFK 1781000410119 KBH 5/24/00	10/20/75	A
1e. Memo	William Hyland Memo for the Record (3 pp.) JFK 1781000410120 KBH 5/24/00	10/20/75	A

FILE LOCATION

Cheney Files
 General Subject File
 Intelligence - Report on CIA Assassination Plots (2)

RESTRICTION CODES

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WHM, 5/31/85

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CLASSIFICATION

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FROM: Jack Marsh
TO: Dick Cheney
(Los Angeles)

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PAGES 29

TTY _____

CITE _____

INFO:

1901

DTG: 2922

ZAM

RELEASED BY:

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TOR:

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Hold for arrival of
Party

Get back to Jack by Thurs. noon.

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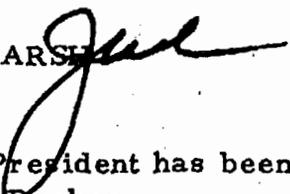
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 29, 1975

SECRET/SENSITIVE
(With Attachments)

MEMORANDUM FOR: DICK CHENEY

FROM: JACK MARSH 

The attached Memorandum to the President has been staffed to Kissinger, Schlesinger, Colby and Buchen.

These are the only Administration officials who have been advised of the contents of the Senate draft report. We understand that the Senate Committee may reach a final decision on publication today and it may go to the printer as early as Friday; therefore, a quick decision is necessary.

cc: Don Rumsfeld

SECRET/SENSITIVE
(With Attachment)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

October 29, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

JACK MARSH

SUBJECT:

Assassination Report

Background

As you know, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence has conducted a detailed investigation of charges that the Executive Branch engaged in plotting the assassination of foreign leaders. Under your instructions the various intelligence agencies provided the Committee complete access to all documents relevant to such charges. These documents were highly classified and unsanitized, and no claim of Executive Privilege has been made. You provided the documents on the express assumption that they would be used by the Committee in a responsible manner.

The final Report of the Committee on the assassination charges has been prepared in draft form and will soon be published.

Under an agreement that they would consult with us prior to publishing classified materials, the Church Committee submitted to us a lengthy list of names, phrases and quotations extracted from classified documents which they desired to include in their Report. Rather than approve such a list out of context, three senior persons from the relevant agencies went to review the Report in its entirety. No other members of the Executive Branch have seen the Report.

The three who have reviewed the report agree that its publication will be extremely damaging to the United States, that it will expose specific individuals who have been associated with these activities to serious risk of harm, and that it fails to resolve the issues raised by the inquiry. Their individual reports are at Tabs A, B and C.

Official acknowledgement of assassination plotting by successive Administrations of the United States Government would have an appalling and shattering impact in the international community. Without question, it would do grave damage to our ability to play a positive role of leadership in world affairs. It would provide profoundly harmful leverage to our adversaries and the resultant humiliation we would suffer would deal a serious blow to our foreign policy from which we could recover only with difficulty. In sum,

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4.

MR 91-27 # 21, USC 44, 3/1/93

By KSH, NARA, Date 3/24/93



the report could result in grave harm to the United States' position in the world. In addition, it would expose specific individuals who have been associated with these activities to serious risk of harm.

Issue for Decision

What actions should be taken by you or your Administration regarding this Report in view of the potential harm from its impending publication?

Three broad options are present:

Option 1 -- Take no action whatsoever to influence the Committee's decision of the Report.

Pro: This option allows the Executive to maintain complete distance from the Committee and avoid any possible charges of coverup; moreover, it avoids any implication of Executive approval of the Report.

Con: However, the Executive will have forfeited the opportunity to restrain a Report the publication of which in its present form will cause a significant harm to the United States. Also, we will not be clearly on the record in opposition to publication.

Option 2 -- Take no official position but forward to the Committee the three reviewers' comments and request the Committee consider these views in revising their Report.

Pro: This option apprises the Committee of our concerns on the draft Report while maintaining the Administration's distance from the Report itself. It largely overcomes any charges of coverup.

Con: This approach may not be strong enough, in view of the magnitude of the changes which would be required in the short time prior to publication of the Report. The Committee may simply ignore such a communication. Moreover, this option gives to the Committee advice offered within the Executive.

Option 3 -- Take an official Administration position, expressed by yourself or a spokesman in your behalf, opposing publication of the Report in its present form and stressing that the Committee must assume full responsibility for damage to the Nation because of publication.

Pro: Strong action by the Executive may persuade the Committee to revise the most harmful areas of the Report. This puts you firmly on the record in opposition to a Report whose publication will harm the Nation.



Con: This option most clearly exposes you to charges of coverup.

Should you select this option, there are the following positions available:

A. That no Report be published.

? If you take this position, it will provide the most room for compromise; however, the chances of stopping publication entirely are slight. It most strongly exposes you to charges of coverup.

B. That only the findings and recommendations portion of the Report be published.

If you select this position, you will have recognized the Committee's intent to publish some form of an official report which acknowledges past assassination activity. This is the most feasible alternative noted by the three reviewers. However, this position will only reduce, not eliminate, the damage to the United States-foreign relations.

C. That all sensitive sources and methods and any material the publication of which would subject individuals or groups to injury be deleted prior to publication.

This position would eliminate one cause of harm in the Report. However, it will pose very substantial difficulties in actual implementation since it will require page-by-page analysis by the Executive and the Committee. One reviewer noted that this type approach would be infeasible because of the intertwined mass of sensitive data. Even if the Executive is successful in removing most of the material harmful to individuals and groups, damage to foreign relations will still result from publication. Moreover, the Executive will have become so enmeshed in the Report that it will have, de facto, approved its publication in that form.

? D. (Combination of A and C) That no Report be published, but if the Committee persists, all sensitive sources and methods and any material the publication of which would subject individuals or groups to injury be deleted prior to publication.



This position would offer a fall-back to accommodate Committee demands for a full Report and would offer hope for minimum protection of individuals and groups jeopardized by the Report in its present form. However, the difficulty of piecemeal sanitization must be emphasized; and it will likely entail de facto approval of the Report by the Executive.

Decision

- 1. No action whatsoever.

Favor:

Oppose: Buchen, Colby, Schlesinger, Kissinger, Marsh

_____ Approve

WJ Disapprove

- 2. Take no official position but forward to the Committee the comments of the three reviewers and request the Committee consider these views in revising its Report.

Favor:

Oppose: Buchen, Colby, Schlesinger, Kissinger, Marsh

_____ Approve

WJ Disapprove

- 3. Take an official Administration position, expressed by yourself or a spokesman, opposing publication of the Report in its present form.

Favor: Buchen, Colby, Schlesinger, Kissinger, Marsh

Oppose:

WJ Approve

_____ Disapprove

If you take a position:

A. That no Report be published.

Favor: Kissinger (with fallback to B), Buchen (in combination with B), Schlesinger (in combination with B)

Oppose:

WR4

Approve

Disapprove

B. That only the findings and recommendations of the Report be published.

Favor: Colby (with fallback to C), Kissinger (as fallback to A), Buchen (in combination with A), Schlesinger (in combination with A).

Oppose:

Approve

Disapprove

C. That all sensitive sources and methods and any material the publication of which would subject individuals or groups to injury be deleted prior to publication.

Favor: Colby (as fallback to B)

Oppose:

Approve

Disapprove

D. (Combination of A and C) That no Report be published, but if the Committee persists, that all sensitive sources and methods and any material the publication of which would subject individuals or groups to injury be deleted prior to publication.

Favor: Marsh

Oppose:

_____ Approve

_____ Disapprove

Under Option 3 it is necessary to designate a spokesman for the Administration. This can be you or one of your officials.

_____ I will take position.

_____ Others (_____, _____, _____) will take position.

*Presidential letters to the Committee to
be made public?*

A



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20505

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20 October 1975

TAB - A

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Forwarded herewith is the report submitted to me by Mr. S. D. Breckinridge of my staff after he reviewed the report on the subject of assassinations prepared by the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities. I directed him to give this information to me alone, and I am submitting it herewith to you alone, with copies to no one else.

I know you are aware of and share my view that the subject of assassination attempts which may have been made in the past by this Government and this Agency should not be discussed in public. Your policy and position against such activity are clear. In addition, this Agency in 1972 and 1973 issued specific internal directives that CIA would not conduct, stimulate or support any such activity. This being clear, I believe that any exposure of events of the past on this subject could only do grievous damage to our country. Any countries named in the discussion would be particularly affected, but the impact would extend to others who might be concerned about such matters. Such a discussion would also be used by countries and groups hostile to the United States in an extensive campaign designed to do maximum damage to our country's reputation and foreign relations by repetition, exaggeration, and extrapolation of any such report. The fact that the subject has already been expostulated in the press and by unofficial spokesmen does not reduce the damage from an additional formal report by a committee given every possible access to official records and witnesses. The difference between informal comment on this subject and official confirmation would add immeasurably to the damage it would do to our country. I thus recommend most strongly that

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you forward these views on my behalf to the Senate Select Committee, adding them to whatever may be your own, and seek its decision to forgo this action so destructive to our country, and of course incidentally to this Agency and its important intelligence mission.

Three other features are clear from the attached report:

a. The report clearly contains the names of a number of individuals with allegations or conclusions as to their involvement in such activities. I submit that naming such individuals in such a report exposes them not only to unfair and unwarranted public attention but to the danger of physical reprisal. As is clear from the attached report, this cannot be solved by merely omitting a specific name when the identification can be ascertained by careful analysis of the surrounding facts and further investigation based on the information provided, especially by a hostile political force or intelligence service. Publication of this report thus threatens the lives and the livelihood of a number of officers of this Agency, and individuals associated with it, for having performed what was conceived as their duty in years past along lines which we now find repugnant. Ex post facto punishment is prohibited in law. I believe it should be prohibited in this situation.

b. The attached report indicates that there are still ambiguities in the record as to the authorization and authority of actions which may have taken place in the past, due to a lack of records or the death or failing memory of participants. Thus, instead of clarifying the charges and countercharges which have appeared in public on this subject, it appears that the report will only provide new ammunition for them and ensure a continuation and intensification of public debate and recriminations on this subject.

c. The high degree of publicity which would accompany any such publication, particularly any detailing of the events of the past, will have a major impact around the world in foreign belief in the will and ability of the United States to maintain secrets. Any secret collaboration considered with the United

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States for what might appear to be presently useful and proper reasons would be evaluated by foreigners and foreign governments against the prospect that the United States would unilaterally repudiate such an understanding and publish in the future what it asks to keep secret today. This is already a major problem for our intelligence operations abroad; they would be further burdened by publication of this report with its ensuing publicity. It is clear that the same conclusion would be applicable to many of our foreign political, economic and military relationships.

✓✓
For these reasons, Mr. President, I urge in the strongest terms possible that this report not be published. I believe the Senate Select Committee could perform its duty fully by pointing out the uncertain quality of the record on the subject, but the certainty of its view, which I know you share, that no such activity should take place in the future. Recommendations for legislation or regulation on this subject could make a positive contribution to ensuring against any such activity in the future. Reports and recriminations with respect to the past can only be destructive to our country.

Respectfully,

W. E. Colby
W. E. Colby
Director

Attachment

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INSPECTOR GENERAL
75-3727
Executive Registry
75-11933

DECLASSIFIED with portions redacted
JFK Assass. Rec. Collection Act of 1992

JFK 1781000410117
NARA date 5/24/00 By KBH

20 OCT 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : SSC Draft Report on Assassination

1. On 16 and 17 October I reviewed the SSC draft report on assassination. My review was for the express purpose of addressing the question of such security revelations as there were, and that required correction if the report is to be considered for publication. Because of this my review was somewhat more detailed and technical than the review by the representatives of the Department of State and Defense. I did, however, also reach more general conclusions.
2. Attached is a summary of the problems raised by the disclosures by the draft report of the identities of persons associated with the various operations. The attachment also addresses the report's disclosure of intelligence methods. I have more detailed rough notes that I am prepared to use in discussions with the SSC Staff members on these technical questions about the report; they are further reinforced by extensive pencil notations made on the face of the draft report provided for my review, but which remains with the SSC Staff. If my reservations are taken into account -- some of them were conveyed orally in summary fashion late Friday afternoon -- some sections will require extensive revision. Mr. Schwarz stated that the SSC plans to act on the report this week; the required changes are so extensive that it is doubtful that they can be made within the stated time frame.
3. The editorial treatment in the report, and the selected format, has resulted in anything but a crisp paper. We were told that the SSC experienced difficulty in reaching conclusions on some facts and simply decided "to let the facts speak for themselves." There is a great deal of on-one-hand-and-on-the-other-hand discussion that leaves something for everyone; it may reflect disagreement within the Committee, and constitutes a poor compromise, making the report repetitious and discursive. It is inconsistent in treatment of information, shifting from application of strict tests of proof in some instances (what did the White House know and approve) to generalized interpretation (what was the Agency's direct

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involvement). The resulting presentation is incongruous on occasion -- an effort seems to have been made to reinforce considerations absolving the White House of responsibility for the events leading to the deaths of Diem and Trujillo and planning against Castro, while direct evidence to the contrary is rationalized into an apparent implication of Agency involvement in the death of Schneider.

4. Were there more time to critique the report, with a copy in hand, a more thorough and balanced treatment might be provided. Regardless of critiques, the report will leave the reader with one fundamental conclusion. The degree of detailed treatment, showing high-level approval of courses of action that led to the death of foreign leaders, can only be injurious to the international status of the United States. The fuzzy picture of executive responsibility, as presented by the draft report, will be clarified by our foes and reported stridently to an obvious end.

5. Beyond the grave damage that publication of the report will do to the international position of the United States, consideration must be given lesser aspects of the problem. If CIA were to survive the atmosphere created by the report, it would experience new difficulties in operating abroad, as would any successor organization. Foreign agents, who must trust the Agency to protect their lives, would -- as they reportedly are doing already -- demonstrate a new reluctance to associate themselves with the American intelligence services. Foreign services, which now play a key role in the American foreign intelligence effort, would have to review the extent of their relationship with the intelligence services of a nation that cannot -- or will not -- protect its own secrets and, by extension, theirs.

6. The sections of the draft report entitled Findings and Conclusions and Recommendations contain the conclusions that the United States government, and its instruments, have been engaged in planning assassinations, stating the Committee's opposition to such activity, and recommending legislation against such activity. Those sections, while providing the stark conclusions as noted, do not include the extensive detail of the preceding several hundred pages, with its many disclosures. Its publication would be harmful in general, but would tend to reduce the basis for succeeding criticism, thereby reducing the extent of the damage. Damage there will be, but limiting publication to the sections on Findings and Conclusions and Recommendations may provide a basis for discussion with the Select Committee.

S. D. Breckinridge
S. D. Breckinridge

Attachment:
As Stated

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Security Revelations in SSC Draft Report on Assassination

1. In its present form the draft report makes extensive revelations of the names of individuals involved in the various operations. These must be reviewed for deletion prior to consideration of further treatment of the report. From this point of view, alone, it remains a highly classified document.

2. The report specifically names a number of individuals: Agency employees, employees of other government departments or agencies, cooperating individuals--both foreign and American--and agents. It so describes others, whose names are concealed, that their identification is readily ascertainable. It is inevitable, in such detailed review of the various events, that a good deal is reviewed about operational staff planning, and operational patterns and techniques. These are treated below.

Identification of Individuals

Recording of Names

The draft makes extensive use of the true names of employees, agents, and cooperating individuals who were involved.

Those Now Deceased

The deaths of such persons as senior government officials and of Allen Dulles, C. P. Cabell, Desmond Fitzgerald, Sheffield Edwards, Tracy Barnes, and Salvatore Giancana may obviate the need to protect their names in association with the events treated in the draft report, either from personal retaliation or from harassment by unstable persons to whose attention they are brought by the publicity. The purpose of publication in any event is unclear.

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Those Still Living

The list of names in the report of those still living, who had some role in the various activities, is long. The names picked out in the review of the draft are below:

- (1) James O'Connell
- (2) Robert Maheu
- (3) John Roselli
- (4) Santos Trafficante
- (5) (FNU) Maceo
- (6) Tony Varona
- (7) Juan Orta
- (8) J. C. King
- (9) William Harvey
- (10) Samuel Halpern
- (11) Bronson Tweedy
- (12) Sidney Gottlieb
- (13) [REDACTED]
- (14) Edward Gunn
- (15) (FNU) Gomez (otherwise unidentified in text)
- (16) Henry Dearborn
- (17) John Barfield
- (18) [REDACTED]
- (19) Alonzo Berry
- (20) Colonel Wimert
- (21) David Phillips
- (22) Justin O'Donnell
- (23) Glenn Fields
- (24) Lou Conein
- (25) John Richardson
- (26) David R. Smith

This list omits persons not directly involved other than in the line of command, from the level of Deputy Director up. Two division chiefs are listed--J. C. King and Bronson Tweedy--and might, by reason of their seniority, be omitted from the list of those whose names should be deleted. The list, otherwise, is a mix of Agency employees, cooperating individuals, and agents. The comments below first treat the question of Agency employees.

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Agency Employees

The day-to-day record of events is subject to relatively direct reconstruction, and the draft opts for detailed recitation. In some instances, the format calls for treatment of the same subject matter from more than one point of view. Relying on this approach, there has been extensive recording of the true names of individuals. This is so extensive in some sections of the report that major editorial revision will be required to protect those entitled to it.

Those employees still living--either still active or retired--require protection from whatever repercussions that might flow from official connection with the reported events. They are entitled to this both in traditional terms of protection of employees and agents in their work, and in terms of separating them from such unpredictable incidents as may flow from publication.

Other U. S. Employees

Publication of the names of Henry Dearborn, John Barfield (Department of State) in connection with the Trujillo affair should be omitted (Section E). Mention of Colonel Wimert (Section F) in connection with the Schneider affair also should be accorded the same treatment.

Cooperating Individuals

Robert Maheu, whatever publicity he has been given, is entitled to protection from official confirmation of the press stories. Not only is he entitled to protection from direct association in the Castro operation, he is entitled to protection from incidental revelation of his involvement in other unrelated activities (The report cites his involvement in an Onassis-Niarchos contest, on which he reported to the government, and in making a motion picture to discredit a foreign leader).

The Syndicate members through whom Maheu worked pose a somewhat different problem, but the same central issue remains. We cannot divine how publicity would impact on their future. Giancana is dead, presumably as a result of unrelated events, but how publicity would affect Trafficante

and Maceo is debatable. Both are entitled to this protection. Roselli, now engaged in deportation proceedings, may wish the publicity to strengthen a claim to special consideration, but he nevertheless is entitled to the same protection that the others are.

Great care is taken to conceal the identity of an action asset inside Cuba (Section D.I., pp 18-19), but his true name appears at page 21. He is believed to still be alive, and is entitled to protection.

The full name of Tony Varona appears often. (Section D.I. p 19, ff). He is entitled to protection.

One man named in the draft, but unknown to this reviewer, (FNU) Gomez (Section E, p 5), should be checked for identification. He would seem entitled to protection, in the context that he is mentioned.

The name of Alonzo Berry is included (Section E, pp 16-22, p. 31). Although he has received publicity in the past, he is entitled to protection from official confirmation of his role in the Trujillo affair.

Section F. pp 30-42. The listing by name of a number of Chilean officers, some of whom have been tried in Chile for their role in plotting, would reveal additionally contacts with a foreign power. This might open them to new charges at some time in the future.

Reference Inaccurately Conveying
Impression of Operational Involvement of American Citizen

D.I. pp 28-29. In reporting the various schemes conceived at working levels in CIA to infect a diving suit, the impression is conveyed that Attorney James Donovan might be aware of what was being discussed, while there is no evidence that he was. His being mentioned in true name, in this context, is subject to correction.

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Uninvolved Bystanders

Recitation of the Las Vegas bugging incident is such as to expose both Dan Rowan and the person associated with him in the incident. Official publication would give the press a free run at this unnecessary detail in a private life. (Section D. I. pp 13-17).

Identification by Description

In some instances, where the actual name is not recorded, the description is such that the identification can be made readily by knowledgeable persons.

Section D.I. p. 4. The summary of an offer by a Cuban pilot in July 1960, to cause an accident that would kill senior Cuban officials, makes his identification a relatively simple thing for the Cuban DGI.

Section D.I. pp 29-34. The description of AMLASH/1 is such that his identity is fairly simple. Were there any doubt, the citing of specific dates on which he was met outside Cuba (pp 31, 33, 34 and 35) would make it very clear who he is. He is now in prison in Cuba and is entitled to this protection.

Section E. Even if the name of COS Ciudad Trujillo is omitted, the title is still revealing to knowledgeable persons. More general reference to cables to and from the "Station" would generalize the identity, assuming that any reference is necessary.

Section F. p 27. The COS is cited but not named. It is preferable that reference be to the "Station" and not to him as an individual.

Section F. pp 30-42. In conjunction with a listing of Chilean officers by name (supra), the additional identification of a "Lieutenant Colonel," a "Navy Captain," and an "Air Force General," presumably not previously identified, could lead to further inquiry in Chile. General reference to "Chilean military figures" should suffice, if any treatment is necessary.

Section G. The use of the pseudonym "Hedgman" for the [redacted] in Leopoldville/Kinshasa would be illusory if it is intended to conceal his identity. Those knowledgeable would soon penetrate the device. Some more general reference to the CIA Station is a minimum requirement.

Section G. p 13. The direct citation of Station use of a Congolese security man who was in liaison with the CIA Station would permit his ready identification.

Cryptonyms

The draft report employs cryptonyms of agents and operations that probably should not be contested. New digraphs may be necessary in the Latin American Division (c.g., AMLASH, JMWAVE), but these probably cannot be avoided. Preferably they should not be used, but the Rockefeller Report set a precedent that might as well be followed.

Section F. p 21. Reference to the initials "CAS" is no more than a designation employed by other government agencies in referring to CIA in certain communications. It should be replaced by the "CIA" initials, if used at all.

Sources and Methods

It is impossible to treat the entire subject of these various operations, recording day-to-day activities in such detail, without revealing a great deal about patterns of thought and activity that will reveal a great deal to foreign intelligence analysts about CIA techniques, attitudes and modus operandi. The draft report is highly revealing, in its extensive detail. While it would be misleading in some respects, it nevertheless reveals a great deal about staff planning at lower levels (prior to elevating the results, if ever, for senior review), methods for approaching potential agents (and considerations in how to try to bring them under control and direct them), use of cut-outs, etc. Some specific revelations are noted below:

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Section D.I. pp 22-28. In describing Harvey's past and other roles, interesting bits of information and revealed to the knowledgeable analyst. Harvey's role with the Berlin tunnel is cited. Description of his later division-- [REDACTED] --could present an interesting organizational concept for the analyst. The recruitment of a foreign agent for his criminal talents, by a named Agency employee working for Harvey (according to the draft report), would be read by foreign analysts for what it was, a man to [REDACTED]. The speculation in the draft report doesn't seem to support a rationale for including these bits of information.

Section D.I. pp 29-34. It is noted above that AMLASH could be identified by the pattern of his foreign meetings. It also highlights the ability of the Agency to follow the coming-and-going of foreign intelligence targets, an item that would attract the attention of foreign CI analysts.

Section D.I. p 38. Reference to a meeting in Madrid between AMLASH and another Agency operational contact, arranged by the Agency without the knowledge of either participants, is a technique that should not be publicized.

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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301

22 October 1975

TAB
B

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Draft Assassination Report of the Senate Select Committee
on Intelligence

Attached for your information is a memorandum for the record prepared by my Special Assistant, Mr. Thomas Latimer, who read the Senate Select Committee's draft report on assassinations on October 16 and 17, 1975. Mr. Latimer was one of a team of three administration officials to read the report under arrangements worked out between Mr. Buchen and Senators Church and Tower.

Briefly, it is Mr. Latimer's view after having read the entire draft report, that it should not be declassified and made public on the grounds that to do so would cause serious damage to the foreign relations of the United States and would jeopardize the lives of several individuals.



UPON DEMAND
DOCUMENT MARKED UNCLASSIFIED

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SEC DEF CONT NO. A-1



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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

20 October 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Draft Assassination Report of the Senate Select Committee
on Intelligence

Pursuant to arrangements worked out between Mr. Phil Buchen, Counsel to the President, and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Mr. William Hyland, (State Department), Mr. Scott Breckinridge, (CIA), and I read the entire draft report on assassinations prepared by the staff of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. I spent the better part of two days, October 16 and 17, 1975, reading the more than 500-page draft report. The purpose of the exercise, as defined in Mr. Buchen's letter to Senators Church and Tower on 9 October 1975, was for the three of us to give the Committee our views regarding "particular quotations and in regard to specific security problems", which the report might raise. The following are my reactions to the draft report on assassinations:

-- Public release of the report, as it stands now, would do serious damage to the foreign relations of the United States. Moreover, public release of the document would place in jeopardy a number of individuals, both U. S. citizens and cooperative foreigners who have been involved in coup plots in recent years. In addition, it is my view that the report presents a grossly exaggerated picture of the role assassination plotting has played in the foreign relations of the United States.

-- Serious damage to the foreign relations of the United States by the public release of the assassination report would occur in the following fashion. The report would be a windfall to the propaganda machinery of the Soviet Union, Communist parties throughout the world, and all elements which actively oppose America's role in the world. In addition, the report identifies the current Secretary of State and the present SACEUR as having been involved in coup plotting against the Allende government in Chile in 1970 and tends to implicate both officials in events leading to the death of Chilean General Schneider. There is no doubt that elements hostile to the United States would make great use of this information to attack both the Secretary of State and the SACEUR and to enormously complicate our relations with other nations, particularly in Western Europe.

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JFK Assass. Rec. Collection Act of 1992

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NARA date 5/29/00 By KBH

Classified by The Special Assistant
EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE OF
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-- The lengthy draft report on assassinations identifies by name a great many individuals, particularly American citizens, as having been involved in coup plotting or assassination plotting. Many of these individuals are still alive. Some might become the targets for hostile action by friends and associates of the people against whom coups and assassinations were allegedly attempted. Moreover, certain foreign individuals are so clearly identified in connection with assassination plots or coup plots as to make their identification a very easy matter for foreign security agencies. At the very minimum, the reputations of American citizens named in the report would be damaged even though they may have done nothing illegal or unsavory.

-- In fact, the report mentions so many individuals and operations as to make any attempt at piecemeal sanitization meaningless. The report, as written, would either have to be declassified intact or remain classified.

-- Damage done to the United States by the release of this report would be enhanced by the fact that it would be an official document of the United States Senate. Even though much of the information contained in the report has previously been in the news media, the very fact that it would now appear in an official document of the United States Government would greatly increase its usefulness to foreign propaganda machinery hostile to the United States of America.

-- Although the report notes that the Senate Select Committee's investigation did not disclose even one case in which a foreign leader has actually been assassinated as a direct result of action taken by an agency of the United States Government, this conclusion is blurred in the overall report. It is my belief, after having read the entire draft report, that this should be the main conclusion. Of the five case studies which the Committee investigated at great length and in great detail, not one individual was found to have been assassinated, either as the result of an order by a President of the United States or as a result of any direct action taken for that purpose by an agency of the United States Government. It is true, as the report notes, that several individuals have been killed as a result of coups which our government either aided or had knowledge of. In no case, however, did our Government encourage those killings. It is also apparently true that the Central Intelligence Agency planned to attempt to assassinate two foreign leaders, Lumumba of the Congo and Castro of Cuba, but it is not clear from any of the evidence that in either case an attempt was actually made.

-- I believe the purposes of the Committee could just as well be served if it published its findings, conclusions, and recommendations without the mass of detail which names individuals, associates them with unsavory plots, endangers some foreign individuals, and in certain cases even American citizens and provides damaging information to enemies of the United States to be used against our own government.

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I have presented my views orally on the assassination report to Mr. Frederick A. O. Schwarz, Jr., the Chief Counsel to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

Thomas K. Latimer
Thomas K. Latimer
The Special Assistant

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH
WASHINGTON

SECRET/SENSITIVE

October 20, 1975

TAB C

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

As a result of an agreement between Mr. Buchen and the Senate Select Committee counsel, Mr. Schwarz, I read the draft report of the Committee on US involvement in assassinations of foreign leaders.

In my view the Report should not be published in full.

It will do irreparable damage to the reputation of the United States, not because of the findings on assassination, but because of the infinite detail that is presented about the inner workings of the Executive branch on a subject matter that was never at the forefront of high level concern. By taking a broad approach to the problem and rehearsing in great detail the flow of documentation and discussions, the impression is created that the US was preoccupied with plotting the removal of foreign leaders, whereas the report itself finds that in two cases out of five this plotting was actually carried on, but at a middle level, with no Presidential approval.

-- The report repeatedly strains to find some evidence that there might in fact have been approval at the Presidential level; in doing so, the report handles much of the evidence in a highly dubious manner: for example, giving equal weight to one single witness 15 years after the fact, to draw an ambiguous conclusion about Presidential approval casts doubt on the report's purpose.

In fact, the report concludes that in three cases examined there is no direct evidence that the US at any level engaged in plotting of assassination. Thus, the question is raised why any detail should be presented in these instances. By presenting considerable material in these three cases, nothing constructive is accomplished; in two cases, there are revelations about covert programs, even though their relevance is tangential.

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Thus, the presentation of the full report rather than, say, the findings and conclusions, will only offer material for anti-American elements abroad who will find a vast reservoir of both trivia and more significant documentation to indict the US. Since very little of the evidence cited is needed to prove the overall conclusions, the release of this minutia serves no legislative or foreign policy purpose, nor would restricting it to a classified report prevent the American people from learning the Committee's findings.

Moreover, the report makes only a feeble effort to protect the privacy or personal reputation of the personnel interviewed, or those that appear in the documentation. There is a danger of retaliation for many of the officials. Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to disentangle testimony from documentation. It would be a monumental effort to purge the report of documents supplied from the Executive branch and, of course, the testimony was taken by the Committee on the basis of this documentation.

Another issue is not whether such information should remain classified, but whether its release creates a precedent that is tolerable in Congressional-Executive relations. Thus, if some future committee claims that it can release NSC minutes, memoranda of conversation with the President, Presidential directives, minutes of the 40 Committee -- the potential for damage to our foreign relations is without bounds.

At a very minimum, if the report is released, it ought to be established that no precedent is created. After the publication of this report no government or political group will have any confidence that they can enter into a confidential relationship with the US on matters of great sensitivity. The decision to reveal, not the narrow basis for assassination, but a broad range of our actions in other countries, including operations of only five years ago, will have to be read by any current or future group desiring any US assistance as a clear liability.

Finally, there is the impact on current foreign relations: (1) damage to the US in Latin America, where three of the investigations are concerned, but only one involves an actual assassination plot; (2) damage in Africa (Zaire) where some of the people discussed are still alive and in power, and cooperating with the US.

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In sum, it is impossible to see how a positive purpose is served by releasing the report in its full detail. The findings could easily stand alone, and their release would meet the Committee's charge to investigate assassination plots. To release all of the report as an unclassified document would needlessly and recklessly damage the United States. To quote from the Committee's Chairman, in one of his interrogations of Ambassador Helms: "...since these secrets are bound to come out, when they do, they do very grave political damage to the United States in the world at large... revelations will then do serious injury to the good name and reputation of the United States." The argument for non-release could not be better summarized than in this statement of Senator Church.

WGH
William G. Hyland

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