

This document is made available through the declassification efforts  
and research of John Greenewald, Jr., creator of:

# The Black Vault

---



The Black Vault is the largest online Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) document clearinghouse in the world. The research efforts here are responsible for the declassification of hundreds of thousands of pages released by the U.S. Government & Military.

**Discover the Truth** at: **<http://www.theblackvault.com>**

## Agency Information

AGENCY : BUCHEN/DAN  
RECORD NUMBER : 178-10003-10377

RECORD SERIES : CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

AGENCY FILE NUMBER : CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## Document Information

ORIGINATOR : CIA  
FROM : COLBY, WILLIAM  
TO :

TITLE : ASSASSINATIONS

DATE : 06/16/1975  
PAGES : 5

SUBJECTS :  
ANTI-CASTRO ACTIVITIES  
COLBY, WILLIAM  
CLANDESTINE OPERATIONS  
CIA  
ASSASSINATIONS, FOREIGN LEADERS

DOCUMENT TYPE : REPORT  
CLASSIFICATION : Unclassified  
RESTRICTIONS : Consulted  
CURRENT STATUS : Redact  
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 09/01/1995

## OPENING CRITERIA :

COMMENTS : Includes handwritten note by Buchen.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

(22)

178-10003-10377

Colby's own summary  
of assassinations,  
furnished to WH  
Counsel on 6/16/75  
T.W.B.

Encl.  
Keep in red file  
locked up.  
T.

PHOTOCOPY FROM THE GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

SECRET/SENSITIVE

ASSASSINATIONS

We have been unable to find any evidence to suggest that the Agency has ever been directly involved in the assassination of any foreign leader. We do know, however, that the Agency did consider a number of assassination schemes against Castro and did provide weapons to Dominican dissidents who were responsible for the assassination of Trujillo. With respect to other foreign leaders whom the press has identified as assassination targets of the Agency, we have heard that some thought was given in the Agency to the possibility of assassinating Lumumba and we know that an assassination plot against Diem was mentioned in a cable from the Saigon Station. All we know about Lumumba is that one Agency officer is said to have declined an assignment to participate in an assassination plot against him and that Lumumba was killed by Congolese acting independently. In the case of Diem, the DCI cabled the field that such a course of action could not be condoned by the Agency.

There follows a summary of all information pertaining to the question of assassinations that we have been able to uncover from a review of numerous Agency files. We have tried to be as inclusive as possible, and accordingly have even listed incidents that could be characterized as preposterous, as in the case of DeGaulle.

Fidel Castro

During the period beginning about March 1960 and extending through June 1965, the Agency engaged in a series of schemes to bring about the death or incapacitation of Fidel Castro. The early schemes were aimed only at discrediting Castro personally by influencing his behavior or by altering his appearance, whereas the later schemes were developed in response to White House urgings to do something about Castro.

Schemes considered prior to August 1960 included the contamination of the air of the radio station, where Castro broadcast his speeches, with an aerosol spray of a chemical that produces reactions similar to those of LSD, and dusting Castro's shoes with thallium salts. One proposal provided for the impregnation with botulinum of a full box of Castro's favorite brand of cigars.

In August 1960, the Agency, through a cleared contact, approached US criminal elements that controlled the gambling casinos in Cuba in an attempt to assassinate Castro by putting botulinum in his food or drink. The administration of botulinum was again considered by the criminal elements in April 1962 in their dealings with a Cuban exile leader.

SECRET/SENSITIVE

2	018186
IMPDET CL BY	

PHOTOCOPY FROM THE GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

SECRET/SENSITIVE

In early 1963, at about the time of the Donovan-Castro negotiations for the release of the Bay of Pigs prisoners, a plan was devised to have Donovan present a contaminated skin diving suit to Castro as a gift. There was also a scheme for doing away with Castro by means of an explosives-rigged sea shell. None of the above-mentioned schemes advanced very far beyond the planning stage.

In March 1961 the Agency first met a leader of an anti-Batista group who had entered into an alliance with Castro and subsequently became disillusioned with him. The subject of post-Castro governments was discussed with him in meetings over the next 18 months. This eventually led to his request for assassination devices.

An Agency officer gave him a ball-point pen rigged to serve as a hypodermic syringe in Paris on 22 November 1963. Since he did not think much of the pen device, the Agency arranged to have a Cuban exile give him a silenced pistol and a silenced rifle. The Agency also put down two caches in Cuba for him, one with rifles and one without. He was arrested in 1965 and tried publicly.

#### Charles DeGaulle

On 25 May 1967, a French citizen, who had had contact with the Agency since 1955 and was recruited in Africa in 1958, signaled his case officer by means of an accommodation telephone in Germany for an emergency meeting. He was met the same night in Rome by his case officer. The French citizen had long been distressed with DeGaulle's foreign policy in Africa and offered to take advantage of his invitation to a reception for DeGaulle on 30 May 1967 in Italy to shake DeGaulle's hand, wearing a poison ring if we cared to provide one for the purpose. The case officer immediately treated the proposal not only as not meriting serious consideration but also stating that he did not engage in such activities. In a dispatch dated 8 June 1967, Headquarters replied that the case officer's "response to [the] proposal related in [the cable] and his handling of the situation was correct and fitting."

#### Ngo Dinh Diem

The successful coup against the Diem regime in South Vietnam, which resulted in the deaths of Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother, Nhu, began on 1 November 1963. Three senior Agency officers who were most intimately involved with Vietnamese affairs throughout 1963 have testified that they knew of no CIA assassination schemes against Diem -- other than the role played by CIA in maintaining contacts, by direction, with the Vietnamese generals.

SECRET/SENSITIVE

PHOTOCOPY FROM THE GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

SECRET/SENSITIVE

A review of relevant Agency files revealed only one mention of an assassination plot. On 5 October 1963, an Agency officer cabled from Saigon that he recommended to senior Embassy officers that "we do not set ourselves irrevocably against the assassination plot, since the other two alternatives mean either a bloodbath in Saigon or a protracted struggle which could rip the army and the country asunder." The Agency reaction to this recommendation appeared in a cable of 6 October 1963 that forcefully stated that "McCone directs that you withdraw recommendation to Ambassador [concerning assassination plan] under McCone instructions, as we cannot be in position actively condoning such course of action and thereby engaging our responsibility therefor."

Francois Duvalier

There is no record or reference that the Agency ever contemplated any action in Haiti that would involve the assassination of President Duvalier, although there were plans to overthrow his regime. On 23 May 1963, National Security Memorandum No. 246 instructed the CIA to develop an exile force to challenge the Duvalier regime in Haiti and suggested that the Dominican Republic offered the most feasible staging area. In response, the Agency proposed to develop a covert relationship with President Bosch of the Dominican Republic for the purpose of creating a Haitian exile military force in the Dominican Republic to overthrow Duvalier. Upon approval of this proposal on 20 June, CIA representatives discussed the matter with President Bosch, who declined for various reasons. On 18 July the CIA presented another proposal to Special Group 5412 recommending that the CIA discontinue development of a Haitian exile force in the Dominican Republic, but that it implement a program of coordinated political action, intelligence collection and paramilitary operations from other bases instead. This plan was approved by the Special Group on 15 July and by President Kennedy on 19 July 1963.

Following three abortive Agency sponsored incursions in August and September 1963, U. S. policy was changed and called for limited accommodation with the Haitian Government while still permitting the training of a small cadre of exiles in the United States. Impatient for action, around June 1963, members of the Haitian Youth Movement (MJH), without Agency knowledge, made contact with Father Jean Georges, a former Minister of Education who had a large student following. Later, the same month, Father Georges dispatched an invasion force by sea. Although it failed, the invasion galvanized the Haitian exile community, especially the young people. Between 14 and 30 July 1964, MJH members left New York singly or in pairs for Jamaica, with plans to travel on to Haiti to engage in guerrilla action against Duvalier. Of the 13 men who made up the invasion team, eight

SECRET/SENSITIVE

PHOTOCOPY FROM THE GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

SECRET/SENSITIVE

had received Agency training; the remaining five were simply MJH members. There was no Agency sponsorship of this invasion, nor was the Agency aware that it was being planned. During the summer of 1964, the major project set up to encompass policy guidance and funding authority for integrated political, intelligence, and paramilitary training activity against the Duvalier regime was terminated, although the official termination date was not until 30 June 1965. During the first half of 1965, Headquarters case officers were in touch with certain assets formerly included in this project, but gradually the efforts of these assets were redirected and those who had a continuing value to the Agency were absorbed into other projects.

On May 20, 1968 there was another unsuccessful invasion of Haiti by Haitian exiles from the Bahamas. While some members of the Haitian Coalition, a covert action activity sponsored by the Agency, took part in the invasion, the Agency did not participate in the invasion or in its planning.

Duvalier died of a massive heart attack and arteriosclerosis on 21 April 1971. He was 64.

#### Patrice Lumumba

According to statements made to the Inspector General in 1967 by a senior CIA officer, consideration had been given in 1960 to use a clandestine asset in Europe to assassinate Lumumba in the Congo. He further stated that the proposed operation was never carried out because the designated CIA case officer declined the assignment. According to available records, there is no mention of any assassination plot against Lumumba, and it seems quite clear that the clandestine asset in question was primarily involved in finding safecrackers who would steal foreign ciphers and codes.

Although the exact circumstances of Lumumba's death remain a mystery, it is clear that he expired in or around Elizabethville in early 1961 while under detention by Congo authorities. The clandestine asset had left the Congo in December 1960.

#### General Rene Schneider

General Rene Schneider, Commander-in-Chief of the Chilean Army, was killed in late October 1970 as the result of a kidnap attempt carried out by a band of anti-Marxists under the direction of retired General Roberto Viaux. General Viaux was in contact with a larger military-civilian group that was trying to prevent the accession to power of Marxist Salvador Allende. General Schneider was a major obstacle to their plans, since he firmly

SECRET/SENSITIVE

SECRET/SENSITIVE

opposed any effort to interfere with the constitutional process. The conspirators hoped to kidnap and detain Schneider long enough to permit anti-Marxist forces to take over power in Chile. The 22 October kidnap attempt, which resulted in Schneider's death, was badly executed; General Schneider drew his pistol and in turn was shot and fatally wounded by the kidnappers.

Following the 4 September 1970 presidential election, in which none of the three candidates received a majority of the popular vote, the Agency was instructed to try to determine whether sufficient organized strength could be mobilized in Chile to prevent Allende from assuming office as President on 4 November 1970. In carrying out this mandate, the Agency did make contact with the military-civilian group which was actively plotting a coup d'etat. As the first step in their coup attempt, this group had planned to abduct Schneider on the evening of 19 October. This plan aborted. The Agency was also in contact with representatives of General Viaux (the latter subsequently admitted "intellectual authorship" of the 22 October kidnap efforts), but had withdrawn from contact after determining that the Viaux group lacked the organization necessary for any effective course of action. It is not known whether any leaders of the military-civilian group authorized the 22 October attempt, although available evidence makes it appear likely that Viaux acted on his own initiative in a last-ditch effort to provoke military intervention. The Agency provided the military-civilian group with three weapons and six gas masks and cannisters which were never used; the weapons were subsequently returned. No military hardware was provided to Viaux. The death of Schneider, which was totally unplanned and unforeseen, resulted in the collapse of all efforts to prevent Allende from assuming the Presidency.

#### Rafael Trujillo

Rafael Trujillo, the Dominican dictator, was assassinated by Dominican dissidents on the night of 30 May 1961. Although the Agency was involved in supporting those planning the overthrow of Trujillo, as a part of authorized government policy, the actual assassination was a local affair. Of the weapons taken to the scene of the assassination, it is probable that at least one of the carbines had been furnished by CIA, but there is no evidence that it was actually used in the shooting. The assassins who were apprehended and interrogated spoke only of the firing of a sawed-off shotgun, revolvers, and pistols. Those who were plotting Trujillo's overthrow were divided into two groups: the "political group" which was in frequent and close contact with the American Embassy, and the "action group" with which the CIA station was in contact primarily through an American businessman in Ciudad Trujillo.

PHOTOCOPY FROM THE GERALD R. FORD LIBRARY

SECRET/SENSITIVE