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Subject: "Season of Inquiry" - Loch Johnson

The book was a helpful overview of the history of the Church Committee and thus very useful to me. Thanks for recommending it. It touched only very lightly on the Schweiker/Hart JFK Assassination Subcommittee, however. From a record retrieval point of view, it is worth noting that the full Committee did write a letter to the FBI on 1/23/76 requesting the agency to report to the Committee on the murder (7 months earlier) of Sam Giancana. Attorney General Levi apparently replied on or just prior to 2/18/76, indicating that "all the information which we have received through the present date indicates that this was a gangland slaying intended to settle problems within the syndicate." It appears that the FBI did not actually do a report for the Committee, contenting itself with the above letter. Presumably, this exchange will be found either in the Church Committee records or the FBI's Giancana file(s). The only other thing that occurred to me as I read the book -- from a records point of view -- is the Committee's investigation of the CIA's MKNAOMI program (biological killers/poison dart gun/the so-called "Cave of Bugs") which was kept alive in contravention of a presidential order and Helms' alleged verbal instructions carrying out the order. Given the interest in some parts of the research community in post-assassination "mysterious deaths" (or "the umbrella man", for that matter), the MKNAOMI program may be relevant to our efforts. Less centrally, as a history buff and student of Henry II (Beckett and Lion in Winter being among my favorite films), I found the following exchange -- quoted on page 60 -- interesting (re: Presidential sanction of plots against Castro's life): Senator Mathias: Let me draw an example from history. When Thomas Beckett was proving to be an annoyance, as Castro, the King said, "Who will rid me of this man?." He didn't say, go out and murder him. He said who will rid me of this man, and let it go at that. Mr. Helms: That is a warming reference to the problem. Senator Mathias: You feel that spans the generations and the centuries? Mr. Helms: I think it does, sir. I don't know if these random thoughts are what you had in mind by way of a "book report." Let me know if the feedback was at all useful.

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