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JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM

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BISSELL, RICHARD
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INVENTORIED:

ON 3/31/77

BY [signature]

INTERVIEW WITH: William Harvey

REGARDING: Assassinations Inquiry: Lumumba & ZRRIFLE

DATE-TIME-LOCATION: September 14, 1975

PRESENT: Frederick Baron

HAS OR SHOULD BE DIGESTED: _____

FOLLOW UP REQUIRED: _____

MATERIALS SUBMITTED BY INTERVIEWEE(S): _____

EXECUTIVE SESSION: _____ YES NO

[signature] 10 JAN 1977
(1) (A)
(1) (B)
(1) (C)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

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10 JAN 94

(1)(A)
(1)(B)
(1)(C)

FROM: Frederick D. Baron
DATE: September 24, 1975.
SUBJECT: Interview with William Harvey (conducted September 14, 1975)

LUMUMBA'S ACTUAL DEATH

1. I do not know of any connection between the CIA and Lumumba's actual death.

LUMUMBA PLOTS

2. I never heard of poison being sent from the CIA to the Congo station, nor did I ever hear of any CIA assassination mission in the Congo. I am almost sure that [redacted] never told me that he had learned that there were poisons in the Congo.

[redacted] QJWIN CONGO MISSION

3. The only mention of assassinating Lumumba that I recall is [redacted]'s conversation with me.
4. [redacted] only told me that he had agreed to go to the Congo to discredit Lumumba and that he had refused to undertake an assassination mission which Richard Bissell attempted to give him.
5. I did not debrief [redacted] when he returned from the Congo. So I did not learn from him what the nature of his mission was.
6. [redacted]'s activities in the Congo were not a Staff D operation. Despite the fact that the memo of January 11, 1960 mentions that "QJWIN was being used for FI/D purposes," QJWIN's mission in the Congo was not a Staff D operation. Rather, it was an African Division operation. I merely loaned [redacted]

to the African Division. In turn, QJWIN was loaned by my deputy, [redacted] to [redacted] for his activities in the Congo.

7. In fact, it is possible that [redacted] might not know exactly what QJWIN did in the Congo because [redacted] may simply have arranged for WIN to be placed under the supervision of [redacted] and sent to the Congo.

8. The use of the phrase "FI/D purposes" in the memo of January 11, 1960 was purely an administrative device to secure funding for QJWIN and allow for accounting out of Staff D funds. I am almost 100% sure that there was no actual FI/D assignment.

9. It is possible that [redacted] may have used QJWIN to aid in a survey of FI/D opportunities in the Congo. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] the primary purpose of [redacted]'s trip was to undertake an operation against Lumumba.

10. The specific nature of QJWIN's assignment in the Congo was probably worked out between [redacted] and [redacted].

11. QJWIN was first recruited by [redacted]

[redacted]

12. Shortly after [redacted] came back [redacted] and perhaps before he was actually assigned to [redacted] and I discussed QJWIN and his potential utility.
13. In [redacted] early use of QJWIN [redacted] [redacted] QJWIN was told to "spot" people [redacted] [redacted] He was probably also told that he should spot people who were capable of obtaining documents or packages from couriers.
14. QJWIN's instructions for asset spotting did not change at all after Project ZRRIFLE was established as far as I know. [redacted] [redacted] continued to be the intermediary between myself and QJWIN. I never met QJWIN.
15. QJWIN was not permitted to make a single recruitment as far as I know.
16. The lengthy handwritten notes which appear in the QJWIN/ZRRIFLE file (a xeroxed version of a spiral notebook) were probably written by [redacted] in the course of debriefing QJWIN on his asset spotting. This is a deduction on my part based upon the handwriting and the terminology used in these notes.
17. If there was any CIA mission to kidnap Lumumba from UN custody and turn him over to Mobutu, I did not know of it. I do not think anyone would be naive enough to think that if Lumumba were turned over to Mobutu, he would live through it.
18. As far as I know, QJWIN was entirely run by [redacted] at this point. In other words, I do not know of any independent lines of responsibility or reporting that QJWIN had to other people in the CIA station in the Congo or to anyone on Staff D.

19. As far as I knew, neither [redacted] nor QJWIN ever had an assassination mission.
20. If QJWIN were to be used on an assassination mission, it would have been cleared with me. I was never informed that he was to be used for such a mission. Nor did I ever discuss any such mission with him as far as I know.
21. I was kept informed of the arrangements for QJWIN's trip to the Congo and, subsequently, of his presence in the Congo. I do not know specifically what QJWIN did in the Congo. I do not think that I ever had such knowledge.
22. I was shown a CIA cable to Director from [redacted] IN 36814, dated November 2, 1960 regarding QJWIN's mission to the Congo which reads, in the first paragraph: "He accepted offer. Proceed Leopoldville. Precise mission not conveyed to him. He only informed that mission might involve large element of personal risk." [redacted] probably wrote this cable. This cable does not indicate any particular kind of operation, like an assassination mission, because anyone going to the Congo at this time would have assumed a great risk if they were undertaking any kind of operation against Lumumba.
23. The memorandum of November 2, 1960 [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] probably
KUTUBE/D was a memorandum I read and approved at the time it was issued. KUTUBE/D was a cryptonym for FI/Staff D. [redacted]
[redacted]
24. The memorandum indicates that [redacted] was the releasing officer. [redacted] I probably released this memorandum, although I cannot be certain.

25. This memorandum originated in ~~in Seal F.D.~~ It was probably written, for my signature, by [redacted] who would have been sufficiently familiar with the operational details to be the author.
26. I do remember the dispatch of QJWIN to the Congo, the subject to which this memorandum refers.
27. ~~Dakar Mission: I do recall that QJWIN was to go to Dakar, Senegal at some point as indicated in the QJWIN file, but I do not recall the nature of the mission. Nor do I know whether QJWIN actually went to Dakar. I am almost certain that this was not connected in any way to an assassination mission. I do not recall whether the mission to Dakar concerned the spotting of assets, but Dakar would be a logical place for asset-spotting activity because it is a cosmopolitan port.~~
28. After reviewing the Memorandum for the Finance Division from "William K. Harvey, Chief, ~~FI/Division D~~" dated January 11, 1960 which concerns QJWIN's trip to the Congo, it appears to me that this memorandum was written for my signature by [redacted]
[redacted]
29. I do not know what was to be signified by the note in my memo of January 11, 1960: "In order to avoid any misunderstanding, it should be noted that QJWIN was sent on this trip for a specific highly sensitive operational purpose which has been completed." I do not know what "completed" would have meant, but I assume it must have referred to the fact that [redacted] had returned from the Congo.

30. This memorandum of January 11, 1960 does not reflect any first-hand knowledge on my part of the nature of [] mission in the Congo.

WIROGUE

31. Mr. Baron showed me the cable of December 17, 1960 from Leopoldville to CIA headquarters concerning an approach by WIROGUE to QJWIN for the purpose of recruiting QJWIN for "an execution squad." I do have a vague recollection that QJWIN was approached in the Congo in connection with a "direct action" operation. But it is my impression that this was an incident involving free-wheeling by an agent, rather than an assassination mission.

ZRRIFLE/ROSELLI OPERATION

32. Project ZRRIFLE was used for funding the Roselli operation. Project ZRRIFLE, which began as the development of an Executive Action capability, was later used for the accounting for the Roselli operation. This was for the purpose of the convenience of vouchering whatever expenses were involved and to ensure security. This enabled me to keep the general Task Force W operations separate from the Roselli operation.

33. The question of "reactivation" of the Roselli operation in November 1961. In November of 1961, Richard Bissell asked me to take over the Roselli contact. Richard Bissell's testimony, as represented to me by Mr. Baron, that Roselli was viewed as an "inactive contact" at that time is exactly contrary to my recollection. I recall that Bissell simply asked me to take over the Sheffield Edwards operation. This was not a revival of anything that had been terminated or put on ice. The operation had never stopped. There was no indication in any of my talks with Richard Bissell that the Roselli operation was dormant. But in fairness to Bissell, I don't know that he ever said precisely that it was an ongoing operation. The impression I received from Bissell, however, was that it was indeed an ongoing operation. There was nothing said to the contrary. My subsequent talks with Edwards, O'Connell, and Roselli indicated that the operation was active. But I do not know how close Bissell was to the operation and exactly what he knew about it. It may have been his impression that the operation was inactive. Whatever language Bissell used with me, it was clear to me that the operation was ongoing and that I was to do whatever I could with it. It was also clear from my first conversation with Roselli that the operation had never been called off. Jim O'Connell also indicated to me that he was still in contact with Roselli. Shortly after my discussion with Bissell of my takeover of the Roselli contact, I discussed the Roselli operation with Edwards. The only reason for the

hiatus in activity in the Roselli operation between November of 1961 and my meeting with Roselli in New York in April of 1962 was the intensity of my other responsibilities at the CIA. During this period, I had to set up Task Force W, including recruiting its members. I also had to continue the ongoing Cuban operations and write frequent memos to Lansdale and Robert Kennedy on these subjects. When I was requested to take over the Roselli operation, I assessed it and determined that the operation should be terminated because it had little chance of success. But because of the tremendous repercussion potential, I delayed the termination. I subsequently terminated the Roselli operation as soon as feasible after the missile crisis in October of 1962. It would have been terminated earlier except that during the crisis I could not cut off any potential asset. Had I been given the original assignment of removing Castro, this is not the way I would have done it.

34. Authorization through Bissell. At no time did I or anyone else connected with the Castro assassination operation (Helms, Edwards, O'Connell and Roselli) ever have the slightest doubt that this was fully authorized. But my sense of the existence of this authorization came solely from my conversations with Richard Bissell. I had no other direct information about the source of authorization for the operation.

35. Robert Kennedy. I never discussed the Roselli operation with Robert Kennedy nor with anyone outside the CIA except for John Roselli.

ZRRIFLE/RICHARD BISSELL

36. My initial discussion with Richard Bissell about establishing an Executive Action capability was the first time assassination was ever raised with me in any context other than as a subject of general philosophical discussion.

37. The memos of January 11, 1961 and of November 2, 1960 do not make it any easier for me to date my original conversation with Richard Bissell about Executive Action. The ZRRIFLE cryptonym could have been assigned before or after my initial talk with Bissell, so the date of that assignment would not be dispositive of this question. I don't remember whether ZRRIFLE was a Staff D cryptonym or not.

ZRRIFLE/ARNOLD SILVER

38. I do not know in what connection Richard Bissell raised the subject of assassinations or assassination capability with [] prior to my initial discussion of the subject with Bissell. My best recollection is that in my discussion with Bissell, Bissell said that he had a general discussion of assassination with [] in the course of which [] volunteered that a [] asset of his might be useful in this connection. But [] had not previously used QJWIN as an assassination capability or even viewed him as such. [] would

have had to clear any such use of QJWIN with me, and he did not. When Richard Bissell spoke to [redacted] about developing an assassination capability, [redacted] must have raised QJWIN as a possible asset.

39. I reviewed the typewritten version of [redacted] notes headed "Project ZRRIFLE" which were included in the QJWIN/ZRRIFLE file. On page 2 of those notes, the following sentence appears:

The spotting activity has now advanced far enough to justify removing from the OOA category.

"OOA" refers to "Other Operational Activities," which is a general fund that a CIA officer maintains to pay for development of assets, including recruitment of assets, and general support of agent operations.

40. The QJWIN file was created first in regard to WIN's recruitment by [redacted] and then in regard to WIN's activities in the Congo. Subsequently, it was transferred to the ZRRIFLE file. ZRRIFLE was primarily set up as a project [redacted]

[redacted] I distinctly told [redacted] that QJWIN was never to be told about the development of an assassination capability. As far as I know, QJWIN never knew that the development of an assassination capability was one of the purposes of the asset spotting to which he was assigned.

41. I approved the asset spotting trip that QJWIN took through [redacted] in 1961.

SIDNEY GOTTLIEB/ZRRIFLE AND CONGO

42. I believe, as I testified earlier, that my discussion of assassination with Sidney Gottlieb was a general, philosophical conversation precipitated by Gottlieb's request shortly after he became Chief of TSD. This is substantiated by the following fragments from my notes of my conversation with Gottlieb on January 25, 1961, all of which refer to general TSD subjects:

"Framework of Sid's job";

[Redacted]

[Redacted] officer never cut in on the subject of assassination or on general Staff D operations [Redacted]

[Redacted]

"translating machine."

[Redacted]

43. I talked to Sidney Gottlieb frequently in the course of my work. However, I do not recall any other talk with Gottlieb that more specifically concerned assassination than this one.

44. I knew that TSD had a poisoning capability -- in other words, that they possessed lethal drugs. I very probably discussed with Gottlieb the poisons that were available. But I do not recall any specific conversation with Gottlieb on this subject.

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45. As far as I know, Richard Bissell had discussed assassination capability with Sidney Gottlieb. I would assume that this talk with Gottlieb would have involved the manner and means of assassinations. I have no knowledge that Sidney Gottlieb and Richard Bissell ever discussed any specific assassination missions.

46. I do not think that I ever discussed QJWIN's trip to the Congo with Sidney Gottlieb. Gottlieb never mentioned to me that he had been to the Congo.

TESTIMONY OF TED SHACKLEY CONCERNING A "THREE MAN DECISION-MAKING GROUP"

47. Mr. Baron represented to me that Ted Shackley testified that I had informed him in the early days of his tenure at JMWAVE Station in Miami that there was "a three man group" making decisions on Cuban operations. There was no such formal decision-making group. I probably mentioned the three people referred to by Shackley -- Lansdale, Helms, and Robert Kennedy -- as three key people in the Special Group at that time.

[REDACTED] BUREAU OF NARCOTICS

48. [REDACTED] was once used to go to Rome to spot assets. He was [REDACTED] at the time, so his participation with the CIA was an extremely sensitive matter.

cc: Fritz Schwarz
Curt Smothers
Rhett Dawson
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