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COMMISSION ON CIA ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE UNITED STATES
Washington, DC 20500

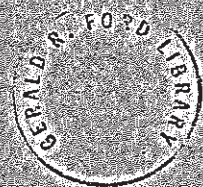
May 30, 1975

MEMORANDUM

TO : Marvin L. Gray, Jr.

FROM : David W. Belin *DWB*

SUBJECT : Investigation of Alleged Assassination Plans



I am replying to your May 28 memorandum. Because the staff did not have an opportunity to discuss in detail the investigation of alleged assassination plans and to review any written drafts which either you or I have prepared, I concur in your statement that no member of the staff who has not reviewed any such work should be placed in the position of responsibility for it. Therefore, neither I nor any other member of the staff can vouch for the accuracy of facts which you have stated in your drafts on the circumstances surrounding the death of Trujillo. By the same token, neither you nor any other member of the staff should feel any responsibility for any drafts that I prepared concerning any aspects of the investigation of alleged assassination plans directed against Castro. Furthermore, both your Trujillo and my Castro drafts are incomplete to the extent we were denied full access to National Security Council records including records of the 40 Committee and its predecessors and to the extent time did not permit going into the Eisenhower, Kennedy and Johnson presidential libraries. I so qualified my draft, including the opening portion which summarized your conclusion on the Trujillo matter. At this point I might add that I do not believe any member of the staff has seen copies of my final drafts, although some members of the staff may have seen a copy of a rough first draft and perhaps one of the intermediate drafts.

Since all lawyers on the staff reviewed all other chapters, I must therefore assume that implicit in your memorandum is the assumption that every member of the staff shares responsibility for these. I certainly agree with this, also.

In the final summary draft on assassination plots which I prepared last week, I clearly marked on the first page that

Rockefeller Commission - Parallel File, 5, 7, 11 Assassinations Material, Chron (2)
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the draft was prepared by me, and in the middle portion of the draft where the Trujillo material began, that was clearly marked as having been prepared by you. Any subsequent drafts will also be respectively marked with either your initials (Trujillo) or mine (Castro). Although no member of the staff, other than yourself, has discussed the matter with me, I will see that a copy of your memorandum goes along with the material supplied to the White House, together with a copy of this reply. I will also so advise the other members of the staff.

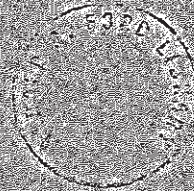
The concern which you express is similar to a general concern that I have repeatedly expressed at staff meetings that our investigation may not be absolutely complete because of the nature of the compartmentation of the CIA, the limitations of time, the limitations of staff, the problems of absence of documentation, etc. I have therefore from the very beginning of our work directed each member of the staff to be thorough, objective and accurate and take nothing for granted. I have also asked each staff member, "Are you sure we have everything?" In addition, I have urged that qualifying language for conclusions or factual statements be included, where appropriate, in staff drafts.

I also trust that you have made sure in the editing work that you took over from Ron Greene that everything has been covered and has not been removed by Hugh Morrow or you in the editing process. As you know, I gave both you and Hugh Morrow directions that I did not want any substantive matters or facts removed and that when in doubt the material should be kept in rather than removed from the drafts prepared by the staff which have been approved by the Commission. Far better to have a little bit too much than not enough.

Although we may not have gleaned every single fact concerning possible domestic violations by the CIA of its charter, we hopefully have found all of the major categories of violations and we have reached the correct conclusions. To this extent, as executive director I must rely upon the thoroughness of the investigation by you and the other members of the staff.

As every member of the staff knows, I have given the staff great freedom in the scope of the investigation, keeping in mind the presidential order establishing the Commission and my standard of leaving no stone unturned in finding out the truth. I hope that each member of the staff has performed

his job with the highest degree of competence so that neither the Commission nor I nor any other member of the staff will ever suffer any embarrassment because of inaccuracy or incompleteness in any phase of the investigation. But should some embarrassment occur, despite our best efforts, at least we should be able to put this in perspective. Surely any failure on the part of any member of the staff to discover additional facts is relatively minor compared with the actual misconduct involved--particularly when that misconduct involves such activities as assassination plans.



Rockefeller Commission : Staff memos, David W. Belin (staff dir) - Marvin L. Gray Jr
(staff lawyer)

re treatment of com's assassinations report

May 30, 1975

Source: front