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INSPECTOR GENERAL

75-2312

20 June 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Mr. Burt Wides (Senate Staff Member)

1. On the afternoon of 17 June 1975, Mr. John Leader of the IG Staff visited Mr. Kennedy and asked that the undersigned be present. Mr. Leader said that Mr. Burt WIDES of the Senate Staff had asked to see Mr. David Whipple and the undersigned. Apparently Mr. WIDES had read some old files relating to Africa and wanted to clear up some questions. According to Mr. Leader the discussion would be informal. However, it was possible that subsequent discussions would, depending on what emerged from these discussions, would be before a larger Senate Staff Group. The files which Mr. WIDES read were WIROGUE, QJWIN and one other (unknown). It was agreed that the undersigned would see Mr. WIDES to see what he wanted, as WIROGUE/1 was run by myself in the early 1960's.

2. At approximately 1615 hours the same day I met with Mr. WIDES. No other persons were present. Mr. WIDES explained that Mr. William Harvey had been asked by Mr. Bissell to look into the feasibility of establishing an "executive action" capability within Staff "D". Aside from the allegations related to Mr. Harvey's activities with relation to Fidel Castro, he, Mr. WIDES had noted that Mr. Harvey's Deputy, Justin O'Donnell had gone to the Belgian Congo and had handled an agent encrypted QJWIN. The asset had a similar background as WIROGUE/1 and had on one occasion according to the files been approached by WIROGUE/1 in Leopoldville with a proposition to establish what Mr. WIDES believes is an "execution squad." Moreover, there was a cable in the file relating to the above which stated that "WIROGUE/1 exceeded his authority" written by the undersigned and sent by Mr. Bronson Tweedy. Mr. WIDES went on to say that when he was reviewing a summary of the WIROGUE/1 case he noted a statement that WIROGUE/1 would be trained in small arms, demolition and "innoculation." Mr. WIDES admitted that since he called

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for me he had reread the summary and it was apparent that what was meant WIROGUE/1 was to get inoculations. Nonetheless, although this may be the case he was interested in WIROGUE/1 possible connection with QJWIN, WIROGUE/1's training, handling and mission.

3. Mr. WIDES said he knew, from the file that WIROGUE was originally trained for a SB mission, which was canceled, he had received training for that mission and later Messrs. Edward Wells and Lester Houck had met with him and decided to pick him up for utilization in the Congo. He also knew that I had handled him while in the U.S., met him in Frankfurt and briefed him prior to his dispatch to Leopoldville. Also that while in the U.S. WIROGUE had undergone plastic surgery. Mr. WIDES asked specifically what training did WIROGUE receive and what was his mission. I told him that I had forgotten after thirteen years about his plastic surgery (a nose job) and this was done as an accommodation to WIROGUE. His training in small arms and demolition was just that and I accompanied him at the training site during the training. I met him in Frankfurt to brief him on his new documentation, namely backstopped West German and to take him to Switzerland where a sum of money was deposited in a Swiss bank and a letter of credit was given to him whereby he could enter Leopoldville. His mission was to establish himself, namely by opening a photo shop using the letter of credit. He was to be available to the Station for paramilitary activities once he was established and the need arose. Unfortunately, WIROGUE, being of a criminal persuasion took the opportunity of the chaos in the Congo to engage in money-making propositions for personal gain, didn't follow instructions and became a handling problem. The Station recognized in a short period of time that WIROGUE needed a full-time handler and didn't have the luxury of manpower to do so. He was eventually returned to the U.S. and terminated. As for the comment of "execution squads" I simply did not recall it but if he was contacting people on his own he probably did exceed his authority. Mr. WIDES asked if WIROGUE received "special handling" as opposed to other agents. I replied that in a sense he did as WIROGUE was a stateless person who required careful supervision. On the other hand, Lester Houck was enamored with this type personality and wanted to ensure WIROGUE was kept happy.

4. Mr. WIDES then zeroed in on QJWIN, wanting to know if I knew the case, or that Justin O'Donnell was handling him and if so what was his mission. I told him that QJWIN meant nothing to me nor was I aware that O'Donnell handled him; as a matter of fact I do not recall O'Donnell being in the Congo. Upon probing I explained that I was not the Desk Officer for the Congo and was assigned to another section within the Branch. Only reason I was given the WIROGUE case was due to a decision by

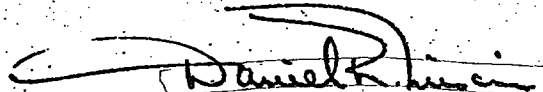
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Lester Houck who felt that a Case Officer having European experience have the case which I had. Mr. WIDES asked if Mr. Wells saw all the WIROGUE traffic. I responded that as Mr. Wells was responsible for the Congo, undoubtedly he did. He then asked if Messrs. Tweedy and Houck would see it. Again affirmative. Mr. WIDES then reviewed the Lumumba arrest and subsequent assassination and asked if I knew if either QJWIN or WIROGUE were in any way involved. I replied in the negative.

5. Mr. WIDES then harked back to the "innoculation" training. He explained that he has sworn statements that the use of biological warfare was contemplated in the Congo and wanted to know if WIROGUE was trained in these techniques. I stated categorically that to my knowledge WIROGUE was never trained in these techniques, nor was I aware they existed or ever considered. Mr. WIDES assured me they did, however his interview was simply to see if there was a connection between QJWIN and WIROGUE and to clear up this little question of "innoculation" which admittedly was resolved before the interview began.

6. A final note, Mr. WIDES asked if Mr. Glenn Fields was Mr. Tweedy's Deputy while I was in Africa Division. I said yes. Then Mr. WIDES thanked me and said that the matter was closed.


Daniel R. Niesciur

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