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JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM

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TESTIMONY OF SCOTT D. BRECKINRIDGE, JR., DEPUTY I.G../CIA
PARTICIPANTS: SENATORS SCHWEIKER, HUDDLESTON, HART & BAKER [R]DOCUMENT TYPE : PAPER, TEXTUAL DOCUMENT
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1 in to discuss what Harvey refers to as an executive action
2 capability, i.e., a general standby capability to carry out
3 assassinations when required. Harvey's notes quote Bissell as
4 saying 'the White House has twice urged me to create such
5 a capability'." Bissell recalls discussing the question of
6 developing a general capability with Harvey. Then there is fur-
7 there discussion of dates, but not of substance. And at the
8 bottom of the page the substance continues as follows:

9 "After some discussion of the problems involved in develop-
10 ing an executive action capability, Bissell placed Harvey in
11 charge of the effort. Harvey says that Bissell had already
12 discussed certain aspects of the problem with" -- now, we
13 hav some blank outs here in our copy.

14 Are they not names which we have already seen?

15 Mr. Breckenridge. You have seen those names -- you
16 have seen one of them, I am not sure you have seen the other.

17 Senator Schweiker. In view of the fact that we need
18 this at this point, would you furnish us with that? Otherwise,
19 we can't very well understand that statement without those two
20 names.

21 Mr. Breckenridge. Yes. Let me give you the names.

22 I have given you one of those names as someone we inter-
23 viewed. And we didn't give it in this context.

24 The names of the two people are Arnold Silver and Sidney
25 Gottlieb.

nash

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1 Mr. Schwarz. And Mr. Gottlieb was a person who worked
2 in the Technical Services Division, was he?

3 Mr. Breckenridge. Yes.

4 Mr. Schwarz. And he was the kind of person who made
5 exploding cigars and poison and syringes and that sort of thing?

6 Mr. Breckenridge. That organization could do this sort
7 of thing.

8 The next one is, since Silver was already cut in.

9 Mr. Schwarz. What was Silver's function?

10 Mr. Breckenridge. Silver -- where Silver was at this time
11 I don't recall -- Silver is a man who was primarily a case officer
12 in the European area. He had earlier recruited an asset, an
13 agent, who came to be considered for use in the Lumumba instance.

14 Mr. Schwarz. Was that the person we already have on the
15 record called Q.J. Winn?

16 Mr. Breckenridge. Q. J. Winn.

17 Mr. Schwarz. And that recruiting had taken place sometime
18 in 1960, is that right?

19 Mr. Breckenridge. The exact place I don't recall now.
20 Q. J. Winn was recruited separately from this later activity.
21 So he was someone that already existed.

22 Mr. Bader. Excuse me.

23 Was Silver in Luxembourg?

24 Mr. Breckenridge. At one time he was. He spent many
25 years in Europe. And it was because of his service there that

1 "Since Silver was already cut in, Harvey used him in
2 developing executive capability, although never with respect to
3 Castro".

4 And then after that:

5 "We did not question Silver on his knowledge".

6 Mr. Breckinridge. No, we did not question Gottlieb.

7 Mr. Schwarz. Where is Mr. Gottlieb today?

8 Mr. Breckinridge. He is retired, and I understand
9 he is living overseas.

10 Mr. Schwarz. Is he living in India today?

11 Mr. Breckinridge. I am not sure whether it is India
12 or Africa.

13 Mr. Schwarz. Going along, there is a notation by _____
14 that Harvey instructed _____ to discuss techniques with
15 _____ without associating the discussion with the Castro
16 operation.

17 Mr. Breckinridge. All right. Harvey's mention of him
18 in this connection may explain a notation by Dr. Gunn that
19 Harvey instructed Gunn to discuss techniques with Gottlieb,
20 without associating the discussion with the Castro operation.

21 Mr. Schwarz. And Gunn is the final person. And who is he,
22 or what was his function?

23 Mr. Breckinridge. Gunn was a doctor who provided
24 various kinds of operational support.

25 (Discussion off the record.)

1 took place between the White House and Mr. Bissell, do you
2 know whether Mr. Bissell disclosed to the White House that the
3 CIA was already engaged in a plan to kill at least one foreign
4 leader, to wit, Fidel Castro?

5 Mr. Breckinridge. I don't know.

6 Mr. Schwarz. Is there anything else about executive
7 action capability which you do know based upon your conversations
8 with these persons or otherwise?

9 Mr. Breckinridge. It is our understandint that as established
10 in this special project that was never used, the project had
11 two purposes, one that appears on the record, which is to steal
12 codes and the other one, which was developed by our interviews,
13 which is to have this capability for assassination. The
14 best that we have been able to get out of the files is that the
15 code aspect became the controlling character of the
16 project.

17 And eventually, and as far as Q.J. Winn was concerned, the
18 record indicates that he was paid off a couple of years
19 later. And whether or not he has ever been used I don't know.

20 Senator Schweiker. When did your investigation show
21 that the Executive Act phase of a project was in essence
22 phased out?

23 Mr. Breckinridge. As Harvey got ready for a new assign-
24 ment -- I will have to check it here -- he decided to have the
25 agent paid off, and as nearly as I can reconstruct -- and I

1 think this is correct -- the project, rather than being
2 terminated formally, simply became dormant. And the record is not
3 too conclusive as to what happened to it, because the other thing
4 that was in it was this agent. And when Mr. Colby took action in
5 August of 1973 he instructed that if it had not already been
6 terminated it would be terminated then. But there is
7 this uncertain element as to the normal administrative action
8 taken on the termination of the project itself.

9 Senator Schweiker. Which date was that?

10 Mr. Breckinridge. Well, formerly by Mr. Colby's
11 instruction years later. It just went dormant and nothing
12 happened.

13 Mr. Schwarz. Doesn't page 41 of the record show that Mr.
14 Q.J. Winn was terminated in April 1964?

15 Mr. Breckinridge. Yes. The agent who was the only asset
16 in the project, the agent was paid off. But the administra-
17 tive vehicle, which is the project, just simply became dormant
18 without normal bureaucratic conclusion.

19 Mr. Schwarz. And on the face of things the project was
20 only a project to ~~steal codes~~ so that it is only through
21 talking to people that you have an idea that it also
22 had something to do with assassinations, is that right?

23 Mr. Breckinridge. That is correct. It is only through
24 Harvey that we have this aspect of it.

25 Mr. Schwarz. Now, is it Mr. Harvey's testimony that

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1 Mr. Breckinridge. That is correct.

2 That was the judgment of the people who intended to
3 use him.

4 Senator Schweiker. Whether he knew it, in view of the
5 fact that he had a criminal record and the Agency hired him, how
6 could he not know that he was being retained on that asset basis?

7 What other assets did they have?

8 Mr. Breckinridge. The records on this man indicates that
9 every attempt was made to use him to steal codes and recruit
10 other men --

11 Senator Schweiker. Did he in fact steal codes?

12 Mr. Breckinridge. I don't know that he did.

13 Senator Schweiker. The record isn't clear on that?

14 Mr. Breckinridge. No.

15 Mr. Schwarz. But you know that the Agency frequently
16 has stolen codes?

17 Mr. Breckinridge. Yes, it has.

18 Mr. Schwarz. Has anybody ever discussed whether that was
19 a proper thing or that was not a proper thing to do?

20 Mr. Breckinridge. I have.

21 Mr. Schwarz. Has anybody said that was not proper?

22 Mr. Kirbow. Off the record.

23 (Discussion off the record.)

24 Mr. Breckinridge. I think that is an abstract question.

25 And there are both abstract answers and specific answers. And

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1 I think that the discussion is more public than it is an
2 issue that is raised within the Agency. The Agency, operating
3 overseas, violates the laws of the country on occasion in which
4 it operates. It recruits people to give information on their
5 own country, which is against the laws of that country. And on
6 those occasions when it does acquire such things as secret
7 codes, if it does not do so by bribery, it does so through
8 people who break and enter.

9 Mr. Kirbow. Or by any other means available to them to
10 obtain such secret codes?

11 Mr. Breckinridge. Well, by bribery and by taking poss-
12 session of itself -- in theory you could kidnap, and in theory
13 you could intercept a courier. I don't know of any instances
14 where that has been done.

15 Mr. Schwarz. Getting back to what we are trying to do,
16 which is authorization, knowledge or concealment with respect
17 to high officials in the Agency or persons outside of the
18 Agency, would you turn to page 41. And I will read into the record
19 the following; this is under the heading April 1962:

20 "Edwards recalls Harvey contacting him in April and
21 asking to be put in touch with Roselli. Edwards said that
22 he verified Helms' approval and then made the arrangements.
23 Harvey states that he briefed Helms before his first meeting
24 with Roselli, explaining its purpose, and he also reported to
25 Helms the result of his meeting with Roselli. Harvey states that