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MEMORANDUM

TO: G. Robert Blakey
FROM: William K. Triplett
DATE: May 11, 1978
SUBJ: Sturgis Deposition

On March 20, 1978, Frank Sturgis was deposed in Miami, Florida.

Attached is a summary of that deposition. The full transcript may be located in JFK Document Number 006649.

STURGIS DEPOSITION - 3/20/78 - Miami, Florida

DPOB -- 12/9/24, Norfolk, Virginia (p 6, 1 12-13)

has been married three times, but cannot remember the first or last name of his first wife (p 8, 1 8-17)

his first contact with USA intelligence was in Santiago, Cuba -- the Vice-consul (p 23, 1 5 etc.) This was when he first started to spy on Castro for the USA (1958).

Tho' offered, he refused to take money from his government (p 25, 1 12).

In '56 or '57, he met Fidel Castro in the USA, and Carlos Prio (p 26)

He first went to Cuba in 1957 (p 27, 1 9).

He met Fidel Castro in Cuba and proceeded to train, go on missions, and purchase weapons (p 28, 1 7 ff)

After Castro's victory, he went to Havana, met Pedro Diaz Lanz, who was Commander-in-Chief of the Cuban Air Force, and he became the Director of Security for the Air Force (p 29, 1 13 ff).

He set up an intelligence operation in the USA for Castro (p 30, 1 9 ff), and then gave the names of the agents to the American government (p 30, 1 22 ff).

He provided names of the agents, and details of various conspiracies in Central America, to Col. Nichols, the American military attache to the Cuban Air Force. (p 31, 1 8 ff).

He suspected the Embassy and CIA were assisting and advising Castro, so early in 1959 he went to Washington D.C. and provided the same information to the FBI (pp 32,33)

His function was just providing intelligence to the CIA and suggesting possible recruits -- including William Morgan (pp 39-40).

He recruited Marita Lorenz to spy for him (p 24, 11 6-11)

He was involved in three "serious" plots to kill Castro (p 43, 1 14-20)

His trip to the FBI bypassing the embassy, to name the communists, was at the direction of Pedro and Marcos Diaz Lanz (p 46, 1 14 ff).

He did not kill Castro because Col. Nichols would not give him the "green light" (p 47, 1 23 ff).

STURGIS DEPO - P. 2

He left Cuba on 6/30/59, after Sangenis told him to leave since Raul Castro suspected he was working with American Intelligence (p 48, 1 23 ff).

He believes he and Pedro Diaz Lanz were betrayed by the CIA Chief of Station at the American embassy (p 50, 1 14 ff).

Sturgis and the Diaz Lanz brothers were using the B-25, which was taken from Cuba and registered in Sturgis' name (p 56, 1 9 ff)

CIA money was received from Howard Hunt, through Barker, to fit up the plane to broadcast propaganda (p 57, 1 11 ff).

On 10/21/59 Sturgis, the Diaz Lanz brothers, and another Cuban flew over Havana dropping leaflets from the B-25. Cuban gunfire at the plane killed or wounded over 30 people. Castro was mad. (p 59, 1 8 ff)

Sangenis (code name, "Sam Jenis") was the head of Operation 40 (p 66, 1 2 ff)

Operation 40 was the CIA-sponsored intelligence arm of the anti-Castro operations (p 67, 1 7 ff).

When Alex Rorke disappeared on a mission to Central America, Sturgis immediately contacted Naval Intelligence for assistance (p 69, 1 15 ff)
He assumed the quickest action would come from ONI (p 71, 1 2 ff)

They raised funds from various private sources, including Bacardi Rum Co. and Dr. Luis Conte Aguerro (p 72, 1 3 ff).

After WW II, Sturgis was operations officer for the CAP in Norfolk, Virginia (p 74, 1 14 ff)

Sturgis did over 100 missions into Cuba -- mostly by plane, some by boat (p 75, 1 4 ff)

The average cost of each mission was \$5,000 (p 76, 1 7 ff)

The CIA Chief of Station in Havana was William Caldwell (p 78, 1 19)

Although Sturgis "never met him personally", Bernard Barker's first control officer was "Eduardo" (p 80, 1 2 ff)

First time Sturgis met Hunt was in 1972 (p 81, 1 18 ff)

He formed the International Anticommunist Brigade in the early '60s, then Jim Buchanan took it over (p 84, 1 1 ff)

He probably knew Loran Hall as part of the Hemming group -- but not Lawrence Howard (p 85, 1 1 ff)

STURGIS DEPO - P. 3

He didn't know William Seymour (p 86, 1 22 ff)

Jim Buchanan can verify Sturgis was in Miami on 11/22/63 (p 87, 1 20)

The International Anticommunist Brigade had no funding, and was completely broke (p 88, 1 5 ff)

On one occasion, Bernard Barker, known to Sturgis to be a CIA agent, asked him to do a domestic assassination. Sturgis told Sagenis. Sturgis asked Barker for the name of the victim, and requested to talk to his control officer about it. The matter was dropped. (pp 90-93)

On one occasion, he worked on an assassination attempt with Marita Lorenz against Castro, with poison (pp 93-94)

Upon returning to the United States, he has been involved in two or three plans or attempts to kill Castro. Orlando Bosch was involved (pp 95-97)

He became a supervisor and inspector of casinos for the Castro government (pp 99-102)

On instructions from Castro, he closed down the casinos for ten days (pp 102-105) He advised Santo Trafficante and Hymie Levine of this action in advance (p 104)

On one occasion, in Santiago, Cuba, he noticed a group of Barbudos surrounding Stretch Rubin and threatening to harm him, since he was a "gangster". Sturgis "saved" him. (pp 106-108)

Later, Rubin brought Hymie Levine to introduce him to Sturgis, since it was unusual to meet an American officer in the Air Force. On that occasion, Fidel came in in his helicopter and walked up and embraced Sturgis. This impressed them. (pp 108-109)

When Castro made Sturgis casino inspector, Levine and Rubin introduced him to various operators, including Trafficante, Mike McClaney and Norman Rothman (pp 109-112)

He met Dominic Bartone when he was trying to sell a plane to the Cubans, and, possibly on one other occasion, but had no connections with him (pp 113-114)

He also met Charles Tourine while inspecting casinos (p 116)

He never met Marcello, Giancana, or Roselli (p 118)

If he feels a need to contact the CIA, he does it through Steve Czukas -- a Customs investigator (p 124)

STURGIS DEPO - P. 4

In the early 1960's he went with Marcos Diaz Lanz to speak with President Ydigoras of Guatemala regarding the setting up of anti-Castro bases there. Upon returning to Miami, he was arrested by INS, taken to court, and advised that he had lost his citizenship. He appealed to Senator Smathers and, somehow, got it back (pp 126-131)

At the time of the deposition, Sturgis claimed to be a news reporter for "El Expresso" (p 133)

He met Ruben Miro in Havana and, later, found out he was supposedly involved in the assassination of Panamanian President Ramon. (p 135-136)

From the time he went to Cuba in 1956, until he left in June 1959, he traveled on behalf of the rebels and ensuing government to Florida, Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama, Honduras, The Bahamas, New York, and Washington. The was to maintain contact with the underground organization (p 137)

After returning from Cuba, along with the Diaz Lanz brothers, he supported himself out of the exile community by organizing and planning raids. Funds came from many sources, including Bosch of Bacardi Rum (pp 139-141)

With the Diaz Lanz brothers, in September, 1961, he formed the Hampton Roads Salvage Co. They purchased boats for use on Cuban operations. Though the CIA "had use of these boats", he steadfastly maintains that all funds were obtained from the Cuban community -- not the CIA. (pp 141-144)

From 1963 through Watergate, he had a varied employment history (pp 146-149)

On 11/21/63 and 11/22/63 he was in Miami, and has "passed" a polygraph to that effect (pp 152-156)

Marita Lorenz' story is absolutely untrue (pp 157-159)

Over the years he has provided information to various news reporters (pp 159-165)

Sturgis has studied and "investigated" the assassination over the years and believes Oswald was working for Cuban Intelligence (pp 166-170)

He does not recall ever meeting Mitch Werbell, Bernardo de Torres, or Doug Gupton (pp 172-173) -- or David Phillips

There was a rumor that Oswald had been in the Miami area, but nobody could ever substantiate it (pp 178-180)

He formed a "church" to help the poor people in South America (pp 183-185) (pp 186-187)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

House of Representatives, Miami, Florida
Select Committee on March 20, 1978
Assassinations

INTERROGATORIES OF:

PAGE

Frank A. Sturgis

1

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1 INTERROGATORIES

2 - - -
3 MONDAY, MARCH 20, 1978
4 - - -

5 House of Representatives,
6 Select Committee on
7 Assassinations,
8 Miami, Florida.

9 The committee met at 10:20 a.m., pursuant to
10 notice, in the Grand Jury Room, U.S. Attorney's
11 Office, Federal Court House, 300 Northeast 1st
12 Avenue, Miami, Florida, William K. Triplett, Esq.,
13 Staff Counsel, presiding.

14 Present: Albert Gonzales and Gaeton Fonzi,
15 Investigators; and Edwin Lopez, Researcher.

16 Also present: Frank A. Sturgis, the witness;
17 and Ellis Rubin, Esq., Attorney for the witness.

18 Mr. Triplett. We will come to order.

19 Mr. Shapiro. Sir, I am Herbert S. Shapiro,
20 United States Magistrate. I'm a Federal Judge.

21 Would you please raise your right hand?

22 (Thereupon, the witness, Frank A. Sturgis was sworn.)

23 INTERROGATORIES OF THE WITNESS, FRANK A. STURGIS

24 Mr. Rubin. Before we begin, Mr. Sturgis has
25 a number of friends out there, members of the press.

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1 He has no objections. They've asked if they could
2 be in attendance at this. I thought that I would ask,
3 if it is permissible.

4 The Witness. I would like to correct my Attorney.
5 I'm sorry to do this to you. They're not my friends
6 because the press is not my friends.

7 Mr. Rubin. Personal acquaintances.

8 Mr. Triplett. We full understand that.

9 Mr. Sturgis, it has been the custom and the
10 habit of this committee to conduct closed hearings.
11 And for that reason, I would point out to you that
12 it is not within the purview of this committee to
13 conduct open hearings at this time, and the press
14 would be excluded.

15 The Witness. Well, one reason why I suggested
16 that to my Attorney is to show that -- to give me
17 some credibility that I'm openly and honestly, even
18 in the past, where it pertains to the United States
19 Government, I have nothing to hide naturally. And
20 that's one of the reasons why my Attorney and myself
21 asked that question.

22 Mr. Triplett. We understand that. However, just
23 for the orderly conduct of the hearings we prefer to
24 have the press excluded at this time.

25 Now as you are aware this proceeding is being

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transcribed and the transcript will be prepared of the proceedings and it's my duty to advise you that my name is William Triplett.

Pursuant to House Resolution 222 and Committee Rule 4, I have been designated Counsel on behalf of the committee to take statements under oath and that's what we will be doing today.

For the record, you are Frank A. Sturgis. Is that correct?

The Witness. Yes, sir. My name is Frank Anthony Sturgis legally. When I was born in Norfolk, Virginia, I was born with the name Frank Angelo Fiorini. My father's name was Angelo Anthony Fiorini. My mother's name was Mary Vona, V-o-n-a. My mother remarried at a later date which in turn, legally through the courts in Norfolk, Virginia, my name was changed to her new husband's name, to Frank Anthony Sturgis. I kept my family name as much as I possibly could.

Mr. Triplett. Very good.

And for the record, you are here to make a statement of your own volition. This is voluntary and not under any compulsion. Is that right?

The Witness. Yes, sir, as I have done before in the Senate Watergate Committee -- well, the Grand Jury -- the Rockefeller Committee and any committee

