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The United States Senate

R561

Report of Proceedings

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DN 3/1/77
BY ES

Hearing held before

Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental
Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities

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Friday, July 18, 1975

Washington, D. C.

(Stenotype Tape and Waste turned over
to the Committee for destruction)

WARD & PAUL
410 FIRST STREET, S. E.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20003

(202) 544-6000

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nash

Phone (Area 202) 544-6000

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C O N T E N T S

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TESTIMONY OF

PAGE

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John S. D. Eisenhower

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EXHIBITS

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NUMBER

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Eisenhower No. 1

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WARD A PAUL

110 East Street S.E. Washington D.C. 20003

~~TOP SECRET~~

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shelburne
nash

PHONE (AREA 202) 544-6000

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EXECUTIVE SESSION
Friday, July 18, 1975

United States Senate,
Select Committee to Study Governmental
Operations with Respect to
Intelligence Activities,
Washington, D. C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 12:05 p.m.,
in Room S. 407, the Capitol, Senator Frank Church (Chairman)
presiding.

Present: Senators Church (presiding), Huddleston,
Tower and Schweiker.

Also present: Frederick A. O. Schwarz, Jr., Chief
Counsel; Curtis R. Smothers, Minority Counsel; Charles Kirbow,
Elliot Maxwell, Michael Madigan, Frederick Baron, John Bayly,
and Elizabeth Culbreth, Professional Staff Members.

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310 EAST CAPITOL S.E. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20540

Phone (Area 202) 544-6000

1 The Chairman. The hearing will come back to order.
2 Mr. Eisenhower, would you please stand and take the
3 oath?

4 Do you swear that all the testimony you will give in
5 this proceeding will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing
6 but the truth, so help you God?

7 Mr. Eisenhower. I do.

8 TESTIMONY OF JOHN S. D. EISENHOWER

9 Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Eisenhower, I understand from your
10 conversations that you want to make a statement, and as I told
11 you, we always go through a procedural matter in the first
12 place, which is, first would you just state your full name and
13 address for the record.

14 Mr. Eisenhower. John S. D. Eisenhower, 111 White
15 House Road, Phoenixville, Pennsylvania.

16 Mr. Schwarz. And then the second thing is, as I told
17 you, we always ask all our witnesses if they know that they
18 have a right to counsel, and so forth.

19 Mr. Eisenhower. I am aware of that, sir.

20 Mr. Chairman, my opening statement or my whole statement
21 is first of all to say how delighted I am and how complimented
22 I am that you all allowed me to come here.

23 My motivation, of course, is that I understand that a
24 lot of the testimony that is before this Committee is getting
25 into matters of a somewhat conjectural nature, and perhaps

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1 I could throw a little bit of light and make a consideration
2 to it.

3 I am most appreciative to have the opportunity to come,
4 as I know you all are busy.

5 I realize that in a situation like this the only prob-
6 lem that I am addressing, of course, is the possible Presiden-
7 tial involvement in any planning, say, the latter part of 1960,
8 planning for the assassination of any individuals, not
9 only thinking in terms of heads of states or governments, but
10 any individual at all, Presidential involvement.

11 I realize that I would be somewhat of a suspect witness
12 in a case like this, being the son of the President at that time.
13 But I would just like to give a couple of facts that might have
14 a bearing.

15 The facts are that to a very large extent throughout
16 our adult years my father -- is that the correct terminology? --
17 confided in me to a very large degree. As an example,
18 in July of 1945, the evening he returned from the Potsdam
19 Conference to Frankfurt, he told me about a new bomb they
20 had invented that might shorten the war but which might have
21 some terrible consequences, namely, the atomic bomb, which
22 was dropped sometime after that.

23 Of course, you realize that this was secret. Whether he
24 was correct in telling me things like that or not I don't
25 know. But it is factual.

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1 YOU have seen Mr. Gordon Gray, you have seen General
2 Goodpaster. And when you have me as a third of the trilogy, you
3 will have all of the witnesses who were staff officers who had
4 access to the President in the latter half of 1960 on national
5 security affairs.

6 As such, I was told by my father of the U-2 in 1956. This
7 is four years before it went down. From the time of reporting
8 to the White House in 1958, as General Goodpaster's assistant
9 I was shown the flight plans of the U-2 up until the time that
10 the U-2 went down May 1 of 1960.

11 I say all this only to establish that the relationship
12 between my father and I in confidences was very close, par-
13 ticularly during that period. And that is my first point.

14 And the second is pure and simple, that nothing -- and,
15 of course, my exposure to the White House -- can be construed
16 in my mind in the remotest way to mean any Presidential knowl-
17 edge of or concurrence in any assassination plots or plans.

18 I wouldn't say for one moment that there weren't plenty of
19 plans being dreamed up in various agencies. I was a member of
20 the Joint War Plans in the Army Staff, Army General Staff
21 we made contingency plans for all sorts of things. Like the
22 umpire said, they ain't nothing until I call them. And to
23 the very best of my knowledge absolutely nothing came to the
24 White House.

25 And I said in a letter to Senator Schweiker when I was

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1 contemplating requesting this opportunity that I would trust
2 that I haven't gotten so blase over the years that something
3 like an assassination plan would have slipped my memory.

4 That is the end of my statement, sir.

5 The Chairman. Mr. Schwarz, do you have any questions?

6 Mr. Schwarz. Your opinion is that if your father had
7 been told about any CIA activity with respect to Mr. Castro,
8 and specifically with respect to Mr. Castro and the Mafia,
9 that he would have told you, and that your testimony is that
10 he did not tell you?

11 Mr. Eisenhower. My testimony is that he did not.
12 My conjecture, based on the other things he has told me, is
13 that in all likelihood he would have. But that is only
14 conjecture.

15 Mr. Schwarz. I think when we talked on the phone you
16 said something further in support of that conclusion, unless
17 I am mixing up something that General Goodpaster said, which
18 had to do with your father's attitude toward the control of
19 the Central Intelligence Agency after the U-2 incident.

20 Mr. Eisenhower. My guess is that you got that from
21 General Goodpaster. But General Paster and I -- after all,
22 I sat as far away from him as I am from you for two and a
23 half years, or 27 months, going in -- either he or I went
24 in to see the President when we were buzzed for on those
25 things. So, quite logically I think that General Goodpaster's

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1 and my thinking might be very much the same. And, of course,
2 after the U-2, when you have something like that, I think
3 it is only natural that you keep a little bit of a jaundiced
4 eye on the organization which has done this.

5 So we made a real point, never to let anyone, even
6 the Secretary of State, get in to see the President unless
7 one of us were there.

8 We were not according this privilege with Secretary
9 John Foster Dulles.

10 Mr. Schwarz. In the earlier years?

11 Mr. Eisenhower. But those are earlier years than the
12 years we are covering here.

13 When Secretary Herter took over in the spring of
14 1959, General Goodpaster and I tried an experiment. We
15 tiptoed in behind the Secretary of State when he went into the
16 Oval office and we got away with it. And from that time on
17 we monitored everything.

18 I saw the document we talked about on the telephone,
19 I saw the document that indicated 10 minutes where the Presi-
20 dent was alone with Allen Dulles on the 25th of November
21 1960. If I had not been made aware of that, or discovered
22 it myself going through those same black books that you have,
23 if I had not been aware of that, I would have testified to the
24 best of my knowledge and belief that the President never
25 saw Allen Dulles alone.

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1 Mr. Schwarz. We also talked on the telephone about --
 2 I told you the nature of the testimony. We have heard from
 3 an officer of the Central Intelligence Agency who said that
 4 he had no knowledge of such a meeting, but that he assumed
 5 that Allen Dulles would have spoken to your father about the
 6 Mafia activity, and that the nature of that conversation
 7 would have been speaking in riddles or circumlocutious form.

8 And I believe we discussed your opinion as to whether
 9 your father would tolerate a discussion which was circumlo-
 10 cutious. It is a confusing question, because your opinion
 11 is that no such conversation occurred. But getting down to
 12 testing the way in which the person who has testified described
 13 it, and the elements he has put into it, can you cast any
 14 light on that?

15 Mr. Eisenhower. Now, we are getting into an area of
 16 conjecture in which my testimony would be suspect.
 17 It is very much conjecture. And I would like to point out
 18 that if I were in the position of anybody in this type of
 19 operation, I would certainly have assumed, rightly or wrongly,
 20 that I had some sort of authority from above before I went
 21 ahead and did such a thing. I think it is only logical
 22 that this gentleman who was testifying would assume that he
 23 had some authority. That is a pretty big burden to take on
 24 yourself. You say, look, it was my idea, and I just went ahead
 25 and did it.

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That is one part of the conjecture.

The other part of the conjecture having to do with my father's way of doing things, I think I could say with a certain amount of assurance that he was never cute, cute was one thing he was not. And being circumlocutious and saying one thing and winking at you was not his way of doing it. Something might get past him. But that is not the way you make decisions to mount assassination plots, and especially the details of it, no way.

Mr. Schwarz. Do you have an opinion from your knowledge of your father as to how he would react to any suggestion that the U.S. ought to employ the Mafia?

Mr. Eisenhower. Well, highly negative. I would say this, that his visceral reaction to the Mafia -- he didn't care for that kind of thing.

Now, if you have to do something -- I don't know whether that would stand in the way or not. I have in mind -- look at Darlan in November of 1941. There was nobody more despised in the Western World than Darlan was. But Dad had to deal with him for a short period of time in order to get the French to stop fighting in North Africa.

I don't think I could really contribute much to that question.

Mr. Schwarz. I just have one final question.

We have been wrestling with certain language in minutes.

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150 East Capitol St. Washington, D.C. 20001

