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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. J. Lee Rankin

SUBJECT: Anonymous Telephone Calls to United States Embassy in Canberra, Australia, relative to planned assassination of President Kennedy

1. I refer again to paragraph two of your memorandum, dated 12 February 1964, relative to disseminations to the secret service made by CIA.

2. On 24 November 1963, CIA received from the Department of the Navy a copy of a cable from the Naval Staff in Canberra, Australia (IN 67327, Top Secret, later downgraded to Secret), reporting a telephone conversation the previous day with an anonymous individual who had described himself as a Polish chauffeur for the Soviet Embassy in that city. This individual, while discussing several matters of intelligence interest, touched on the possibility that the Soviet Government had financed the assassination of President Kennedy. Reference was made in this cable to the receipt of a similar anonymous telephone call on 15 October 1962.

3. Upon receipt of this cable from Navy CIA took the following action:

a. Cabled to Canberra asking full details of the telephone conversation of 23 November and the call made on 15 October 1962. It should be noted that CIA had not previously known of the 1962 telephone call.

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b. The CIA Station in Canberra, on 17 November, furnished all available information on the 196 telephone call. It appears that sources on that occasion indicated that Iron Curtain countries planned to pay a hundred thousand dollars for the assassination of President Kennedy.

c. On 17 November, the CIA Canberra Station also furnished complete detail on the anonymous telephone call of 17 November 1964.

d. On 19 November, CIA disseminated this information, as supplied by its Canberra Station, to the White House, Department of State, and Federal Bureau of Investigation, with a copy to the Secret Service. A copy of this dissemination in its exact text is attached to this memorandum.

e. The CIA Station in Canberra arranged for discussion of the calls [redacted] In the opinion of the Australian authorities, the caller was a agent. In any event, they were not able to identify any Polish employee of the Soviet Embassy, the automobile described by the caller as the one he drove, or the license plate number given by him. No further information on this call has been received. Available evidence would tend to show that the caller was some type of agent. This conclusion, however, cannot be confirmed.

5. Please note that the nature of the information in this memorandum and its attachment requires the use of a sensitivity indicator.

Richard Helms
Deputy Director for Plans

Attachment

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