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TO : RANKIN, J. LEE, WC
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JFK
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SUBJECTS : CRANK CALL
AUSTRALIA
ALLEGED PLOT

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DD/P 4.26.24

22 NOV 1963

DUPLICATE - OF
XAAZ - 17367

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 Attache 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 27 November, furnished all available information on the 1962 telephone call. It appears that source on that occasion stated that "Iron Curtain Countries" planned to pay a hundred thousand dollars for the assassination of President Kennedy.

c. On 27 November, the CIA Canberra Station also furnished complete detail on the anonymous telephone call of 23 November 1961.

d. On 29 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.

4. The CIA Station in Canberra arranged for discussion of the calls with the Australian security service. In the opinion of the Australian authorities, the caller was a crank. 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 crank. 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.

(S) (U) (C) (S)

Richard Helms
Deputy Director for Plans

Attachment

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CUT Teletype No. 35691, dated 29 November 1963, filed at 1117 hours, to the White House, Department of State and Federal Bureau of Investigation, with a copy to the Secret Service

1. Your attention is called to a series of anonymous telephone calls made to the office of the U.S. Naval Attache in Canberra, Australia, by a man claiming to have had knowledge about a Soviet plot to assassinate the late President Kennedy. Our first record of this matter is a Naval Attache cable from Canberra sent on 24 November 1963.

2. It appears that the caller, who professes to be the Polish chauffeur of a Soviet Embassy car in Canberra, first phoned in over a year ago, on 15 October 1962 repeat 1962. At that time he told a story about five Soviet submarines carrying 400 to 500 Soviet soldiers on their way to Cuba. One purpose of this troop movement, he said, was to support the Governor of Mississippi. He added that there was a plot to pay one hundred thousand dollars to kill President Kennedy. Behind the plot, he said, were the "Iron Curtain Countries," and "Communist men in England, Hong Kong and probably some other countries."

3. On 23 November 1963 repeat 1963, the day after the assassination of President Kennedy and over a year after the first telephone call, a man believed to be the same person phoned the Embassy again and spoke to the assistant Naval Attache. The caller referred to his call a year back and stated he had said that the USSR had put up 100,000 dollars for the assassination of President Kennedy.

4. Giving what he claimed were further details about the assassination, the caller said that about two weeks before (which would have been in early November 1963) he was present when an Australian man, 35 to 40 years old, and tall, was dispatched by the Soviets to the United States carrying a case about 35 to 40 centimeters long, 50 centimeters high, and 8.5 centimeters wide. The name Vasyi Two was used in some connection with this man. He was put on a plane in Sydney and while the caller drove the two Soviet escorts back to Canberra, their shortwave radio in the car was going constantly. A shortwave radio was going in the Embassy

also when they arrived there. Over these radios, one of these Soviets transmitted numbers and "points." They remained in the Embassy, and that morning (apparently 21 November 1953), a message came through and toasts were drunk in Russian Vodka and the Russians present said, "we have achieved what we want."

5. The caller then gave "information" about the Soviet role in sinking a U.S. Navy nuclear submarine and on Soviet subversion in Indonesia. He would not identify himself, and when he described the car he drives (as a navy blue 1952 Buick, license plate New South Wales CCC 812) he added they often change plates, have fifty sets in reserve, and can change them in five seconds.

6. The caller added some vague information about a woman employee of the American Embassy he thinks works for the Soviets. The conversation concluded with the caller promising to write a letter to the Naval Attache at the American Embassy.

7. The caller spoke good English and his accent and voice did not change throughout the conversation, so it was assumed that he was not disguising his voice.

8. Australian authorities working on this case consider the caller to be a crank. They state that Soviet offices in Australia do not use anything but Soviet chauffeurs; they have no record of their using a Polish chauffeur. They are continuing their investigation.

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