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ORIGINAL  
Vol. 1 OF 3

NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION  
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject  
to Criminal Sanctions

R 1097

**The United States Senate**

**Report of Proceedings**

INVENTORIED  
DN 2/14/77  
BY BC

**Hearing held before**

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

The Department of State has no objection to the  
release or declassification of this document in full  
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Wednesday, September 10, 1975

Washington, D. C.

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

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TESTIMONY OF

PAGE

Richard N. Bissell

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EXHIBITS

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(Exhibits were retained by counsel.)

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1 Senator Hart of Colorado. Mr. Bissell, will you  
2 stand and be sworn.

3 Do you swear that the testimony you are about to give  
4 is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so  
5 help you God?

6 Mr Bissell. I do.

7 Senator Hart of Colorado. The same circumstances  
8 apply as applied under your previous experiences before the  
9 Committee. You have the right under our rules to have a  
10 member of the Committee present at all times if you choose.  
11 And you have also your Constitutional right to counsel if you  
12 so choose. You do understand?

13 Mr. Bissell. I understand.

14 Senator Hart of Colorado. We will be under way now.

15 Mr. Baron. You are appearing here voluntarily today  
16 without counsel?

17 Mr. Bissell. I am.

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TESTIMONY OF RICHARD N. BISSELL

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Mr. Baron. Mr. Bissell, since we have talked with you last about the subject of the Congo we have taken testimony from a number of witnesses. The first that we would like to turn to is Bronson Tweedy, who in 1960 and 1961, as I am sure you will recall, was the Chief of the African Division. He indicated to us in his testimony that he had a number of talks with you, probably in the summer or fall of 1960, where the prospect of assassinating Lumumba was raised.

What can you tell us about those discussions?

Mr. Bissell. I am afraid I can't tell you anything. I don't remember the specific discussions with him. It seems to me, however, entirely to be expected that such conversations took place. I think I testified previously, but in any case, I remember assigning Justin O'Donnell to study the possibilities and to make plans for the assassination or elimination of Lumumba. And since that was in the Africa area, I think it most unlikely that I would have done that without saying something to the Division Chief about it.

Mr. Baron. Mr. Tweedy's testimony was to the effect that he was in fact not being informed of some on-going operation or some instruction that was contemplated, but rather that you and he were discussing the feasibility of assassinating Lumumba.

Did such discussions take place?

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1 Mr. Bissell. I don't happen to remember them, but  
2 it seems to me entirely probable that they did. And if he  
3 said so I would certainly accept that.

4 Mr. Baron. And would you assume that if such dis-  
5 cussions took place they would have taken place in the summer  
6 or fall of 1960?

7 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

8 Mr. Baron. Would such discussions have involved planning  
9 for an actual assassination mission?

10 Mr. Bissell. Yes, planning for, but not necessarily  
11 any authorization to take specific steps to implement such  
12 a plan.

13 Mr. Baron. Would planning discussions in the sense  
14 that you are using the term included sending instruments of  
15 assassination to the Congo?

16 Mr. Bissell. They might have, although again I  
17 don't happen to remember that. I am aware, I think, that  
18 there is a record that something was said, but I had no  
19 recollection that things went that far. But that still could  
20 have been included in what I mean by the term "planning and  
21 preparing".

22 Mr. Baron. Did you give Mr. Tweedy any specific  
23 instruction as to steps he was to take to further a plan  
24 to assassinate Lumumba?

25 Mr. Bissell. I may have. I don't remember them. The

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have been the latter, although given the fact of conversations with the Division Chief, presumably he would have been on the distribution for these cables. But probably it would have been restricted to the Director or the Deputy Director or the Division Chief, and probably Mr. Helms' Deputy.

Mr. Baron. It was Mr. Tweedy's testimony that although he composed such cables, they went out, as far as he could recall, under your signature or from your office.

Mr. Bissell. That would be a very normal procedure.

Mr. Baron. Do you recall discussing with Mr. Tweedy the fact that he should write such cables, whether or not you recall the specific cables?

Mr. Bissell. I really don't.

Mr. Baron. Mr. Tweedy also testified that the cable traffic that he was sending to the Congo was part of a back and forth communication in which he was receiving information from the Chief of Station in Leopoldville about the kind of access that he could gain to Lumumba.

Did you read such cables from the Chief of Station in Leopoldville?

Mr. Bissell. I am sure I did. I don't remember it specifically.

Mr. Wides. Do you recall the question of access being one part of the exploration that you were doing?

Mr. Bissell. Yes, that indeed would have been a key

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1 part of it.

2 Mr. Wides. Do you recall that being so?

3 Mr. Bissell. I don't specifically recall it. But  
4 since I am clear that at least in the case of O'Donnell, and  
5 I now presume in the case of Mr. Tweedy, I authorized and  
6 indeed directed this planning and preparatory activity. A  
7 major part of this would have been a search for ways in  
8 which access could be gained.

9 Mr. Baron. And what kind of access were you looking  
10 for at that time?

11 Mr. Bissell. Obviously I would say the access of an  
12 individual who for one reason or another could get close to  
13 Lumumba.

14 Mr. Baron. In the summer and very early fall of 1960  
15 this would have been access to Lumumba for the purpose of  
16 assassinating him rather than snatching him from U.N. custody?

17 Mr. Bissell. Well, it could have been for the pur-  
18 pose really of eliminating him from his then political acti-  
19 vities. And that could have been assassination, or it  
20 could have involved some form of incapacitation, or it could  
21 possibly have been, in your words, snatching him so  
22 that he could be put into the custody of what we regarded  
23 as friendly authorities.

24 Mr. Baron. Would you have sought information from  
25 the Chief of Station on whether he could gain access to

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1 Lumumba for the purpose of poisoning Lumumba.

2 Mr. Bissell. It could very well have. That was one  
3 method of elimination, and that was obviously thought about  
4 at the time as part of the planning, and almost certainly  
5 we would have been in touch with the Chief of Station to see  
6 if he could gain access for that purpose.

7 Mr. Baron. Were you also in touch with the Chief of  
8 Station to seek access for the shooting Lumumba?

9 Mr. Bissell. I would guess that really the questions  
10 to the Chief of Station would have had to do with gaining access  
11 for whatever method -- an access that could be used for  
12 whatever method of eliminating Lumumba might be simple,  
13 practical and workable. And I doubt if the question would  
14 have been a different one, depending on the device or weapon  
15 to be used.

16 Mr. Baron. To retrace something you said a moment  
17 ago, if Mr. Tweedy had authored cables seeking information  
18 from the Chief of Station in Leopoldville about gaining  
19 access to Lumumba, you would have approved such cables?

20 Mr. Bissell. Yes, I would most certainly have.  
21 Excuse me. Let me elaborate on that.

22 Given the procedures and relationships in effect, I  
23 think Mr. Tweedy, on the basis of an oral authorization from  
24 me, would have had the authority to send such a cable without  
25 my signing off on it. But in a matter of this sensitivity

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1 I think it highly likely that he would have drafted the  
2 cable, initialed it and sent it to my office for dispatch.

3 Mr. Baron. And you wouldn't dispute his testimony that  
4 he did so?

5 Mr. Bissell. Oh, no. His testimony seemed to me to be  
6 absolutely consistent with my recollections, which, alas,  
7 are somewhat inform. *infirm?*

8 Mr. Baron. Would your discussions with Mr. Tweedy have  
9 involved discussing the possibility of poisoning Lumumba?

10 Mr. Bissell. I suppose so.

11 Mr. Baron. We have also taken testimony from the man  
12 who was Chief of Station in Leopoldville during this period of  
13 time, from mid-summer of 1960 throughout 1961, and he testified--

14 Mr. Bissell. Would you remind me who it was?

15 Mr. Baron. Off the record for a moment.

16 (Discussion off the record.)

17 Senator Hart of Colorado. Back on the record.

18 Mr. Baron. While we were off the record we explained  
19 the arrangement under which the Chief of Station would  
20 testify before the Committee under alias. And we will refer  
21 to him here today as the Chief of Station, or by his alias,  
22 which is that of Victor Hedgman.

23 Mr. Bissell, when the Chief of Station testified before  
24 us he indicated that at some point in the late summer or  
25 early fall of 1960 probably toward the latter part of August

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1 or the very first days in September, he received a cable from  
2 CIA headquarters to the effect that a messenger will come  
3 to the Congo who you will recognize, and who will bring in-  
4 structions which you are to carry out.

5 Did you send such a cable to the Chief of Station?  
6 Mr. Bissell. I could have.

7 But I have perhaps a peculiar reason for questioning  
8 whether in this particular case I did. And my reason is  
9 the following.

10 You will notice that the cable you have just shown me  
11 that was sent out by the Director of Central Intelligence in  
12 late August, the cable was released by his initials. And  
13 it bears the notification that the only other distribution  
14 was to be to Mr. Helms, who was then, you will remember,  
15 Deputy -- my deputy.

16 Now, it is virtually inconceivable to me, given my  
17 knowledge of and involvement in this operation, that the  
18 Director would have sent a cable, denied circulation to me  
19 and had it circulated to Mr. Helms, if I had been in  
20 Washington. And I suspect that we could establish on the  
21 record that I was on vacation when the message you have shown  
22 me was sent.

23 Mr. Wides. That was in early August?

24 Mr. Baron. Let's introduce as Exhibit No. 1 for  
25 this session the document that you are referring to, which

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1 is a cable dated August 26, 1960, from Allen W. Dulles to  
2 Leopoldville. And this cable includes the paragraph:

3 "In high quarters here it is the clear-cut conclusion  
4 that if LLL continues to hold high office inevitable result  
5 will at best be chaos and at worst pave the way for Communist  
6 takeover of the Congo with disastrous consequences for the  
7 prestige of the U.N. and for the interest of the free world  
8 generally. Consequently, we conclude that his removal must  
9 be an urgent and prime objective, and that under existing  
10 conditions this should be a high priority of our covert action."

(The document referred to was  
marked Bissell Exhibit No. 1  
for identification.)

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1 Mr. Baron. Mr. Bissell, would LLL refer to Lumumba  
2 in this cable?

3 Mr. Bissell. I believe so.

4 Mr. Baron. And isn't it unusual that this cable  
5 bears the designation Allen W. Dulles as opposed to Director?

6 Mr. Bissell. That is unusual.

7 Mr. Baron. What does that signify?

8 Mr. Bissell. I believe this cable was drafted by the  
9 Director himself. That would be my inference from the format.

10 Mr. Baron. And does this appear to be Mr. Dulles' initials  
11 which are blurred in the copy we have?

12 Mr. Bissell. They may be there, but in any event, the  
13 releasing signature is definitely his.

14 If I may complete the answer to your question, for the  
15 reason I have given you, my surmise is that I was not  
16 in Washington, and probably on vacation, when this was  
17 sent. I suspect that I might be able to dig out calendars  
18 and establish that if it became very germane.

19 If that is the case, it is quite possible that the  
20 cable you asked me about stating that a messenger would  
21 soon arrive in Leopoldville was sent also in my absence.

22 Mr. Baron. If such a cable was sent in your absence  
23 would you be apprised of it upon your return to headquarters?

24 Mr. Bissell. I suspect so, yes. In this case I would  
25 be almost certain that I would.

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1 Mr. Baron. And what would such a cable have referred  
2 to?

3 Mr. Bissell. Well, I suppose just what that said.  
4 Explicitly it refers, as you quoted, or characterized it, to  
5 a messenger with instructions to be followed.

6 Mr. Baron. And who was that messenger to be?

7 Mr. Bissell. I have no idea without digging back into the  
8 traffic.

9 Mr. Baron. And were those instructions related to  
10 the assassination of Lumumba?

11 Mr. Bissell. It certainly sounds as if they were  
12 related to his elimination in one way or another.

13 Mr. Wides. Why is that, Mr. Bissell?

14 Mr. Bissell. Just because the method of transmission  
15 is peculiar, and suggests high sensitivity. But it seems  
16 to me, on the basis of what you have told me of the message,  
17 it can be only inference.

18 Mr. Baron. And one means of eliminating Lumumba con-  
19 templated at CIA headquarters at this time would have been  
20 an assassination?

21 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

22 Mr. Baron. In the testimony of the Chief of Station  
23 who was in Leopoldville at that time, he made the representa-  
24 tion -- let me back track for a moment.

25 Did you ever discuss with <sup>Joseph G. ...</sup> Sidney Gottlieb the assassination

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1 had such discussions with him I would have been asking him to  
2 give thought to ways and means.

3 Mr. Baron. And you were asking Mr. Gottlieb, then,  
4 to think about the technical means by which an assassination  
5 could be carried out?

6 Mr. Bissell. Correct.

7 Mr. Wides. That is an assumption that you were, or  
8 can you recall now?

9 Mr. Bissell. No, it is an assumption -- it is an in-  
10 ference, if you like, from the circumstances. I think it is  
11 quite likely that I would have had such discussions with him  
12 assuming, as I believe to be true, that he was the science  
13 advisor at that time.

14 Mr. Wides. But you have no recollection?

15 Mr. Bissell. No.

16 Senator Hart of Colorado. Excuse me, Mr. Baron.

17 I am going to have to go to vote, and I would just  
18 like the record to reflect your acquiescence that there is  
19 no committee member here if in fact that is the case.

20 Mr. Bissell. I do so acquiesce, and I am happy to  
21 continue.

22 Senator Hart of Colorado. With that understanding  
23 you are willing to continue?

24 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

25 Senator Hart of Colorado. Thank you very much.

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Mr. Baron. Did you have any other kinds of discussions with Sidney Gottlieb about the assassination of Lumumba?

Mr. Bissell. None that I remember.

Mr. Baron. Did you discuss with Mr. Gottlieb your conversations with Justin O'Donnell?

Mr. Bissell. I just have no recollection of that.

Mr. Baron. Did Mr. Gottlieb come to you and report to you on his conversations with Justin O'Donnell about the assassination of Lumumba?

Mr. Bissell. Again, I am sorry, I just have no recollection one way or the other.

Mr. Baron. Did Mr. Gottlieb make you aware that he had in his shop, or he knew how to obtain the means to assassinate Lumumba?

Mr. Bissell. Well, I certainly was aware in a general way that various means were available in the Technical Services Division. I don't know whether I obtained that information specifically from Mr. Gottlieb, but probably I did obtain some of it through him.

Mr. Baron. But however you obtained this information, you were aware that the means were available to assassinate Lumumba?

Mr. Bissell. I think you put it too specifically. I was aware that as part of it is on-going activity. The Technical Services Division did a lot of work in the develop-

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1 opposed it, I think it is likely that I would have remembered  
2 that position on his part, because I do remember very clearly  
3 Justin O'Donnell's reaction. And since I don't remember  
4 any such negative reaction from Mr. Gottlieb, my inference is  
5 that there probably was none.

6 Mr. Baron. The Chief of Station in Leopoldville at  
7 that time further testified to us that in very early  
8 September he received a visit from Sidney Gottlieb in the  
9 Congo.

10 Did you sent Mr. Gottlieb to the Congo at that time?

11 Mr. Bissell. Probably, if he went there, I certainly  
12 would have been fully knowledgeable of it.

13 Mr. Baron. And you would have approved his visit?

14 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

15 Mr. Wides. Particularly if this occurred when he was  
16 your science advisor.

17 Mr. Bissell. Right.

18 Mr. Wides. Is it correct that he would only have  
19 gone there pursuant to your direction?

20 Mr. Bissell. Correct.

21 Mr. Baron. What were Mr. Gottlieb's instructions, or  
22 what was his mission at that time?

23 Mr. Bissell. I do not know. I can draw inferences from  
24 the circumstances that have already been mentioned.

25 Mr. Wides. In the course of his duties as your science

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1 advisor, did he take frequent trips abroad?

2 Mr. Bissell. I would say infrequent. It seemed to me  
3 there were one or two others.

4 Mr. Wides. Would these trips be involved with  
5 highly sensitive operations as distinct from scientific  
6 evaluation?

7 Mr. Bissell. I believe that for the most part they  
8 would not have been involved with highly sensitive specific  
9 operations, but rather would have involved consultation with  
10 people in the field on the effectiveness of devices, tech-  
11 niques, procedures, underdevelopment in the Technical  
12 Services Division.

13 Mr. Wides. And given the unusual of his going to the  
14 Congo if he did in connection with clandestine operations  
15 there, you would have no recollection of that today?

16 Mr. Bissell. I don't have any recollection of that  
17 today, no. This is the first time I realized, since many  
18 years ago, that he had made such a trip.

19 Mr. Baron. Would he also have been aware that he  
20 had made such a trip?

21 Mr. Bissell. Well, the Chief of Station obviously,  
22 Bronson Tweedy, obviously. Quite probably the Director,  
23 but not certainly. And several others. I assume that Mr.  
24 Helms would have known about it at the time, because there  
25 would have been some kind of cable traffic, and I strongly

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1 suspect that Cornelius Roosevelt would have known  
2 about it.

3 Mr. Baron. Did Mr. Gottlieb's trip have anything to do  
4 with the assassination of Lumumba?

5 Mr. Bissell. I don't know, since I don't remember the  
6 circumstances, I really can't say.

7 Mr. Baron. Would you assume that Mr. Gottlieb's trip  
8 have had something to do with the assassination of Lumumba?

9 Mr. Bissell. I think it might very well.

10 Mr. Baron. And again we are talking about the plot  
11 to assassinate Lumumba rather than Lumumba's ultimate demise?

12 Mr. Bissell. Correct.

13 Mr. Baron. If Mr. Gottlieb's visit related to the plot  
14 to assassinate Lumumba, would such a sensitive operation  
15 have been made known to Bronson Tweedy?

16 Mr. Bissell. I believe so, specially in the light  
17 of the fact that apparently this possibility had been dis-  
18 cussed with Bronson Tweedy more than once.

19 Mr. Baron. Is it possible that Bronson Tweedy would  
20 have been cut out of the actual mounting of an assassination  
21 operation despite the fact that the feasibility of an  
22 assassination had been discussed with him?

23 Mr. Bissell. Yes, it is possible.

24 Mr. Baron. Was that the case?

25 Mr. Bissell. I don't remember. But if you ask me to

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that you had been looking into for weeks because one officer says he wouldn't do it?

Mr. Bissell. To turn it off, or at least if it be continued, to change not only the people connected with it, but probably the whole modus operandi. And the reason for that decision, insofar as I can recollect it, is, my grave concern that, given O'Donnell's reaction, there was a risk that the planning of such an operation would be blown.

Mr. Schwarz. You mean if it was done he would expose the conversation?

Mr. Bissell. Something of that kind could happen, yes.

Mr. Dawson. Who were you worried about O'Donnell in that case exposing it to? Certainly not the press.

Mr. Bissell. I can't recall answer that, except by surmise, but I do remember that this had been in my mind a very sensitive assignment to him, limited -- with the knowledge of it to be limited very narrowly even within the Agency. And it is difficult to separate recollection from inference on occasion. But I seem to recollect that after this conversation with him I wanted this put very much on the back burner and inactivated for quite some time.

Now, that doesn't rule out the possibility that some action through completely different channels might have gone forward. But the best of my recollection is, I viewed this





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1 "In high quarters here it is the clearcut conclusion  
2 that if LLL continues to hold high office inevitable result  
3 will be chaos".

4 And then it goes on and says:

5 "Consequently we conclude that his removal must be an  
6 urgent prime objective and that under existing conditions  
7 this could be a high priority covert action".

8 That is dated August 26, 1960, signed, according to your  
9 identification of his signature, by Mr. Dulles personally.  
10 And it follows by one day a meeting in the White House of the  
11 Special Group attended by the President of the U.S., where  
12 Dulles said he would proceed --

13 Mr. Baron. I don't think this meeting was attended by  
14 the President.

15 Mr. diGenova. Excuse me, attended by Mr. Dulles --  
16 where he said he would proceed as vigorously as the situation  
17 permitted. And it was agreed that the planning for the  
18 Congo would not necessarily rule out consideration of any  
19 particular kind of activity which might contribute to getting  
20 rid of Lumumba.

21 Does that in any way refresh your recollection about  
22 what was happening at that time?

23 Do you remember anything independently of what Mr.  
24 Dulles was talking to you about? We had trouble areas in the  
25 world, including Cuba, and the African Continent in particular.

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1 Does that refresh your recollection in any way  
2 independently?

3 Mr. Bissell. Well, my recollection, I think, is  
4 pretty clear about the atmosphere at the time. And I think  
5 it is quite eloquently described in the cable which you  
6 have just quoted. And I have already said that I think  
7 probably, from the evidence of the format of that document,  
8 I was absent from Washington at the time when it was sent.  
9 But I certainly would have seen that when I returned, and  
10 it certainly would have been the subject of conversation  
11 between Dulles and myself. It is for that reason that I  
12 draw the inference that Justin O'Donnell's assignment would  
13 have been reported by me to Allen Dulles.

14 Mr. diGenova. But you personally don't remember  
15 discussing this with Mr. Dulles?

16 Mr. Bissell. No.

17 Mr. diGenova. You conclude now that you must have be-  
18 cause of the physical evidence?

19 Mr. Bissell. Could I just interrupt for a moment to  
20 say, I used to see Mr. Dulles almost daily during these years.  
21 It was rare that we would meet without touching on perhaps  
22 several on-going operations or plans or prospects. And this,  
23 over a period of several years. It is not, I think surpris-  
24 ing that rarely have I been able in the course of my testi-  
25 mony to say, I specifically remember a particular meeting, and

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1 even roughly what was said of it.

2 Mr. diGenova. Mr. Bissell, that is somewhat important,  
3 obviously, because the idea is to try, if possible, to estab-  
4 lish what the precise facts were.

5 Now, I am sure you don't mean to say that the assassina-  
6 tion of a foreign leader blurs into the everyday activity of  
7 the Agency because it was so commonplace -- or is that what  
8 you mean to say?

9 Mr. Bissell. No, I don't. But I do mean to say  
10 that, the Agency had put a top priority, probably, on a range  
11 of different methods of getting rid of Lumumba in the sense  
12 of either destroying him physically, incapacitating him, or  
13 eliminating his political influence. And a conversation  
14 about this particular facet of what was a many-sided attack on  
15 the problem doesn't stand out in my mind.

16 Mr. diGenova. What you are saying, then, is the de-  
17 tails of any specific day or meeting or cable you don't  
18 recollect, but you don't have any trouble recollecting the  
19 fact that the assassination of Lumumba, among others,  
20 was part of a strategy at that time, if needed?

21 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

22 Mr. Baron. And that was part of a strategy at the  
23 level of the National Security Council as well as within the  
24 Agency?

25 Mr. Bissell. I believe that the language quoted would

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so indicate, yes.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you attend any meeting of the National Security Council?

Mr. Bissell. I don't remember any on this subject, and I don't think I did. I very rarely attended the NSC as such, or its so-called planning committee. Robert Amory was the agency representative on that, and I have already said -- well, I did not by any means always, I would say not more than half the time, attended Special Group meetings.

And since I also think I was out of town when that was sent, it seems to me highly unlikely that I was at the Special Group meeting the day before that cable was sent.

Mr. Baron. I think we should introduce for the record as Exhibit 2 the memorandum for the record of that Special Group meeting of August 25, 1960, which records Mr. Dulles being present, and does not list yourself as one of the participants. And it contains a paragraph substantially as Mr. diGenova related it where Gordon Gray, who was at that time Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, commented that his associates -- and we have testimony by Thomas Parrott, the Secretary who took these minutes, that Mr. Gray's associate was a euphemism to refer to the President.

(The document referred to was marked Bissell Exhibit No. 2 for identification.)





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basis of the documents.

Mr. Baron. Do you assume that assassination was one of the means of removing Lumumba from the scene that is contemplated within the language of Mr. Dulles' cable?

Mr. Bissell. Correct -- and also the language reported in the minutes of the Special Group.

Mr. Baron. And that would be in essence language--

Mr. Bissell. Could I just interrupt to say in elaboration of that point, you may remember that I perhaps unfortunately used the word "circumlocutious" in earlier testimony to describe the way this kind of topic was discussed. This is a prime example of it. When you use the language that no particular means were ruled out, that is obviously what it meant, and it meant that to everybody in the room.

Mr. Wides. Meant what?

Mr. Bissell. Meant that if it had to be assassination, that that was a permissible means.

Mr. Baron. And that this was permissible in the eyes of the President, whose sentiments -- who was being represented at the meeting by Gordon Gray?

Mr. Bissell. At least permissible by his representatives sitting in the room. You don't use language of that kind except to mean in effect, the Director is being told, get rid of the guy, and if you have to use extreme means up to and including assassination, go ahead.

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1 Mr. Baron. And in effect the Director is being told  
2 that by the President?

3 Mr. Bissell. Right.

4 Mr. Baron. Through his representative?

5 Mr. Bissell. Right.

6 Mr. Schwarz. Did Mr. Dulles tell you that President  
7 Eisenhower wanted Lumumba killed?

8 Mr. Bissell. I am sure he didn't.

9 Mr. Smothers. Did he ever tell you even circum-  
10 locutiously through this kind of cable?

11 Mr. Bissell. Yes, I think his cable says it in effect.

12 Mr. Smothers. Was this a thing that was clearly under-  
13 stood here by everyone? What was that in your experience with  
14 the Agency that had prepared you to understand this kind of  
15 coded dialogue, if you will? Was assassination something  
16 that was discussed fairly often?

17 Mr. Bissell. No, I would say really very infrequently,  
18 very infrequently even discussed, let alone attempted.  
19 But I submit that the language just quoted from the minutes  
20 of the Special Group was not language internal to the Agency,  
21 it was language from a Cabinet level committee.

22 You may remember another document that was offered earlier  
23 in my testimony which was again minutes of a Special Group  
24 meeting, and it quoted Livingston Merchant, the State Depart-  
25 ment representative, again asking if there was no way to get

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1 rid of the Castro leadership in that case. I am sure you  
2 remember that document.

3 Now, when senior political officers meet in a Cabinet  
4 Committee, especially when some kind of a record is being  
5 kept, they do talk around a subject of that kind. But it  
6 doesn't mean that it is obscure or not understood by anyone  
7 there. I believe in both of these cases it is perfectly  
8 clear -- in the first Livingston Merchant case it is clear that  
9 he was raising a question as to whether physically getting  
10 rid of these people was possible, and in the second case, the  
11 one just quoted here, it seems to me that -- if you like to  
12 call it that -- the consensus of the Special Group was that  
13 "no means should be excluded in the effort to get rid of  
14 Lumumba".

15 And that, I repeat, is not CIA language. If it is  
16 gobbledegook it is on a good high level.

17 Mr. Dawson. Is Mr. Gray in this cable or memorandum  
18 for the Special Group on August 25, 1960, conveying the feeling  
19 of his associate, which we have identified clearly as  
20 President Eisenhower?

21 Mr. Baron. Moving back now to the testimony of the  
22 Chief of Station who was in Leopoldville in 1960, he said  
23 that shortly after he received this cable that a messenger  
24 would come whom he would recognize and who would give him  
25 instructions to carry out. He received a visit from Mr.

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1 at that point for the Agency to have proceeded to the point  
2 of sending poison to the Congo?

3 Mr. Bissell. No, it would not.

4 Mr. Wides. You draw a distinction before between what  
5 you called the planning stage and the implementing stage. I  
6 take it it was not common to send lethal means by the use of  
7 such a highly unusual messenger to a foreign country and  
8 turn them over to a Station Chief as distinct from experi-  
9 menting in the laboratory in Washington?

10 Mr. Bissell. The phrase I used, or tried to use,  
11 most of the time was the phrase of planning and preparation  
12 versus the phrase of implementation.

13 Mr. Wides. By implementation do you mean simply the  
14 actual commencement of --

15 Mr. Bissell. Of an active assassination, yes.

16 To answer your first question as directly as I can,  
17 it was the practice, if I remember correctly, that devices  
18 or agents, biological agents, or other things of this sort,  
19 that some stocks of these were kept in certain major stations  
20 overseas. I would be very surprised if that were not the  
21 case, and had not earlier been the case in the <sup>11</sup>German station  
22 at <sup>15-20</sup>Frankfurt and in the <sup>13</sup>Tokyo stations, because these were  
23 big organizations.

24 Mr. Wides. These were lethal biological agents?

25 Mr. Bissell. I suspect, yes.

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1 encouraged, as we have developed -- as you have developed --  
2 in this testimony to seek out individuals who might have  
3 close access to Lumumba for the purpose of hostile action  
4 against him. Clearly the Station Chief was then sent, or  
5 a kit was then brought out to him and put in his possession,  
6 presumably so that if and when an individual with suitable  
7 access and other appropriate circumstances materialized and  
8 authorization was given, if it was still required, the  
9 operation could proceed.

10 Mr. Baron. Let me see if I can refresh your recollec-  
11 tion on that one point, whether authorization had been given.  
12 The Chief of Station testified that when Sidney Gottlieb  
13 gave him poison or instructions in the use of poison, he  
14 also made it very clear that these were for the purpose of  
15 assassinating Lumumba, and that he should proceed to carry  
16 out the assassination of Lumumba if it were possible, that the  
17 use of poison was not a sine qua non to the assassination,  
18 if he could find another way to do it, that would be fine,  
19 but that it was clear that he was to proceed with an assassin-  
20 ation operation if he could find a way to do it successfully.

21 Mr. Bissell. Accepting that testimony, then, the  
22 authorization was given.

23 Mr. Schwarz. -But we are dealing with your testimony,  
24 Mr. Bissell. WE have his testimony, and your comments on his  
25 testimony doesn't add much to the record.

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Mr. Bissell. No.

Mr. Schwarz. Did you or anybody else, as far as you know, authorize him to do the act?

Do you recall any fact which bears upon that? Or is your mind ablank on that subject?

Mr. Bissell. I am afraid, as far as recollection is concerned, that my mind is a blank on that subject. I know the Committee doesn't find inference particularly helpful, but I would strongly infer in this case that such an authorization did pass through me, as it were, if Sid Gottlieb gave that firm instruction to the Station Chief.

Mr. Baron. You say passed through you. From what source would it have passed?

Mr. Bissell. From the Director. As I would reconstruct the sequence of events, the Director, after the meeting and the cable in late August, made it clear that this was to go forward -- to me that this was to go forward if and when feasible circumstances permitted it, and it was on that basis that I would have authorized Gottlieb to deliver by word of mouth such instructions from the Station Chief. That is a highly unusual procedure, even in a sensitive matter of this sort.

Mr. Schwarz. What is unusual about it?

Mr. Bissell. That the authorization should have been by word of mouth rather than by cable. I don't mean a cable

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1 setting it forth in as many words, with you this would have  
2 been identified with a project name by this time, and it is  
3 most unusual that even with a highly sensitive project that  
4 the nature is known to very few, probably only to the Station  
5 Chief itself.

6 What I would have expected is an authorizing cable saying,  
7 implement project such and such.

8 Mr. Schwarz. But in the normal course of CIA  
9 assassination activity, if I may use that term --

10 Mr. Bissell. In the abnormal course.

11 Mr. Schwarz. -- you would have been instructed by  
12 Mr. Dulles to do something?

13 Mr. Bissell. Instructed or authorized.

14 Mr. Schwarz. And then you would have spoken to or  
15 cabled some other officer?

16 Mr. Bissell. Correct. And knowing Mr. Gottlieb,  
17 it is literally inconceivable to me that he would have acted  
18 beyond his instructions.

19 Mr. Baron. The Chief of Station, to be fair to his  
20 testimony, indicated that he was greatly surprised when he  
21 received such instructions, and he was doubtful about the  
22 practicality of pulling off such an operation, at the  
23 least he was convinced it would be difficult. But he did  
24 say -- he added that as a fairly junior Chief of Station he  
25 might have checked back before he could have mounted such an

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1 operation. But he added that he believed the assassination  
2 was expected of him, and he left Mr. Gottlieb with the im-  
3 pression that he would proceed to try to perform such a mission.

4 Mr. Wides. He also cabled.

5 Mr. Baron. Now, the next step that the Chief of  
6 Station took after Mr. Gottlieb departed from the Congo,  
7 according to his testimony, was to cable to headquarters  
8 for confirmation of such an extraordinary mission.

9 Did you receive such a cable from Leopoldville?

10 Mr. Bissell. The record would have to show that. I  
11 don't remember it.

12 Mr. Baron. The Chief of Station also testified that  
13 he shortly thereafter received confirmation back in cryptic  
14 fashion to the effect that he was to proceed with the in-  
15 structions to carry out the instructions he had been given.

16 Did you sent such confirmation to him?

17 Mr. Bissell. I assume so, if the cable went out.

18 Mr. Baron. And that confirmation would have come  
19 from yourself directly as opposed to Bronson Tweedy or anyone  
20 else in the African Division?

21 Mr. Bissell. Probably.

22 But again, if you have that cable, the initials would  
23 show who signed off on it, and so on.

24 Mr. Schwarz. These cables have not been found.

25 Mr. diGenova. The Committee is making an effort to find



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1 them, and the AGENCY has not been able to produce them yet.

2 Mr. Bissell. If it is any help for me to say, this  
3 sounds highly likely as an account if it is established, as  
4 evidence seems to have established, that Dr. Gottlieb brought  
5 such instructions, I would expect the Station to seek con-  
6 firmation. And I would expect, given the background, that  
7 that confirmation would have been forthcoming. And I would  
8 also be almost certain that I would have signed off on such  
9 a cable, or signed such a cable, initialled it, even if it  
10 had been going to Mr. Dulles for final approval.

11 Mr. Baron. These events occurred in early September,  
12 which was prior to your conversations with Justin O'Donnell  
13 about the assassination of Lumumba?

14 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

15 Mr. Baron. So at that point an assassination mission  
16 had in effect been mounted in the Congo?

17 Mr. Bissell. Right.

18 Mr. Baron. After you spoke with Justin O'Donnell,  
19 did you send a cable to Leopoldville to stand down the  
20 assassination mission?

21 Mr. Bissell. Again, I would have to go back to the  
22 record.

23 Mr. Wides. Was it your testimony earlier that you  
24 have no recollection of discussing with Mr. Gottlieb the  
25 possible assassination of Lumumba?

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1 Mr. Bissell. I thought I testified earlier this  
2 afternoon that I might well have discussed it with him, but  
3 I don't have a specific recollection.

4 Mr. Wides. Let me read you an excerpt from your testi-  
5 mony on June 11, where Mr. Schwarz was asking you about your  
6 conversation with Mr. O'Donnell, and your request that he  
7 investigate, in your words, the possibility of assassinating  
8 Lumumba. And then on page 54 -- we should mark this --

9 Mr. Schwarz. Just read it in.

10 Mr. Wides. "Did you tell him this in connection with  
11 making plans to go see the passer of the poison, Mr. Gottlieb?"

12 "Mr. Bissell. I think I probably did."

13 Was that a recollection at that time that you had  
14 sent O'Donnell to see Dr. Gottlieb?

15 Mr. Bissell. No, I think that comes in the category  
16 of inference rather than recollection, because I don't re-  
17 member specifically telling Dr. Gottlieb.

18 Mr. Wides. Or speaking to Dr. Gottlieb, explaining  
19 the possible means to O'Donnell?

20 Mr. Bissell. I don't recollect it.

21 Mr. Baron. In the testimony of the Chief of Station  
22 in Leopoldville he said that during his visit with Dr.  
23 Gottlieb, as I have related, he was extremely surprised when  
24 he received these instructions. And the instructions were  
25 so specific that he wanted to be very sure that the authoriza-

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he identified him by name".

Then the testimony proceeds to the bottom of page 31:

"Mr. Wides. Can you recall whether he said 'the President' or 'President Eisenhower'?"

"Mr. Hedgman. I cannot recall whether he just said -- whether he said the President or whether he said President Eisenhower.

"Mr. Wides. But it was one of those two, is your best recollection?"

"Mr. Hedgman. I would say almost certainly".

Further down the page Mr. Hedgman continues:

"I have tried to go back in my mind on that, and I think, I believe -- but again now this one is pretty loose in my mind -- it was something to the effect that the President had instructed the Director".

And then on page 33 Mr. Dawson says:

"You are not the least unclear whether or not you came away with a very clear impression that the President's name had been invoked in some fashion?"

"Mr. Hedgman. Yes, I came -- certainly that is my recollection".

Did Mr. Gottlieb make you aware at this point that he had made such a representation to the Chief of Station?

Mr. Bissell. I have no such recollection.

Mr. Baron. Was Mr. Gottlieb authorized to make such

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1 a representation that the President of the U.S. had authorized  
2 the assassination of Lumumba?

3 Mr. Bissell. I can't answer that question. But what  
4 probably occurred was --

5 Mr. Dawson. Wait a minute. Let's not do it that way.

6 Is there any doubt that you would have undertaken --  
7 assuming that you did so instruct Mr. Gottlieb to carry this  
8 poison into the Congo -- that you would have done this with-  
9 out Mr. Dulles' authority?

10 Mr. Bissell. There was no possibility.

11 Mr. Dawson. Is there any doubt in your mind that you  
12 would have then assumed that Dulles had received the  
13 President's okay to do so?

14 Mr. Bissell. Well, I might well have believed that the  
15 Director was proceeding under the mandate of the Special  
16 Group as reported in the minutes of the meeting.

17 Mr. Schwarz. Did you tell Gottlieb anything about  
18 President Eisenhower?

19 Mr. Bissell. I probably did, but I don't remember.

20 Mr. Schwarz. Did Dulles tell you anything about  
21 President Eisenhower?

22 Mr. Bissell. He almost certainly would have told  
23 me a good deal about that meeting.

24 Mr. Schwarz. By that meeting --

25 Mr. Bissell. The Special Group meeting.

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I think it is probably unlikely that Allen Dulles would have said either the President or President Eisenhower even to me. I think he would have said, this is authorized in the highest quarters, and I would have known what he meant.

Mr. Baron. And you have communicated that to Mr. Gottlieb?

Mr. Bissell. I could very easily.

Mr. Schwarz. Is all of that line that we have just went through could and would and might, and inference, or is any of that recollection?

Mr. Bissell. I am afraid it has to be described as inference.

Mr. diGenova. But you didn't make up the minutes of the Special Group meeting on August 25 and you didn't make up the cable which Mr. Dulles signed either, did you?

Mr. Bissell. No.

Mr. diGenova. So that was actually sent out, wasn't it?

Mr. Bissell. Yes.

Mr. diGenova. And Mr. Dulles wasn't one who used highest quarters, was he?

Mr. Bissell. Yes -- and also the minutes of the Special Group referred to Mr. Gray's associate.

Mr. Wides. And your testimony a moment ago in response to Mr. Dawson's question was, even though this fell within

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what you regarded as the planning stage, this meaning if it occurred, Dr. Gottlieb taking the poison to the Congo, that you would not have taken that step without the approval of the Director, was that your testimony?

Mr. Bissell. What I will now say at any rate is that the mere act of taking the kit to the Congo I would classify as still in the planning stage. But if it be taken as established that Mr. Gottlieb took specific instructions "to implement", I would say that we had then passed into an implementation phase.

Mr. Wides. Let me read to you from your testimony on June 11, and then ask you a question based on that.

On page 54 Mr. Schwarz said:

"Who authorized you to tell Mr. O'Donnell to take steps to move toward assassinating Mr. Lumumba?"

And you said: "No one".

And then Mr. Schwarz:

"Did you inform the White House of that?"

"No."

"To the best of your knowledge did anybody inform the White House of that?"

"Mr. Bissell. To the best of my knowledge, no.

"Mr. Schwarz. Why did you seek to assassinate Mr. Lumumba?

"Mr. Bissell. I didn't seek to assassinate him. I

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1 door, as I say, and discussed it with Mr. Helms.

2 This is Mr. O'Donnell's testimony.

3 Mr. O'Donnell further testified that he told you he  
4 would be willing to go to the Congo to explore the possibility  
5 of neutralizing him in other ways, and that shortly thereafter  
6 in the space of a few days went to the Congo. And I believe  
7 the record suggests that he was there from October through  
8 December, and that while he was looking into the possibility  
9 of trying to get Lumumba out of the property away from effective  
10 custody of the U.N. with the thought that if the  
11 Central Congolese Government obtain control of him, they might  
12 try him for capital crimes, and this might result in his  
13 physical removal. And this was mooted by Lumumba's escape and  
14 recapture and death, and he then came back.

15 Is it still your recollection that there was a period  
16 of several weeks between the time you broached the subject  
17 of an assassination and the time that Mr. O'Donnell  
18 expressed his opposition to it?

19 Mr. Bissell. I shouldn't be firm on the several weeks.  
20 But my recollection of the course of events differs in, I  
21 think, only one -- or is inconsistent with his recollection  
22 as you reported it in only the one respect, that the impres-  
23 sion I carried away was that at a minimum some days -- and  
24 I had thought a period of at least a week elapsed between  
25 my giving him the assignment and his coming back to decline

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I would have done.

Mr. Wides. But you don't recall suggesting -- or if he brought it up, approving -- his discussing it with them, in part from a security angle, because Mr. Gottlieb had already been cut in, so to speak, with regard to prior considerations of assassination possibilities?

Mr. Bissell. Well, I am sorry to have to retreat the inference. I think I would have encouraged him to talk to them myself. And I don't think I would have particularly worried at that point about the security implications.

Mr. Wides. Do you recall why you would have encouraged him or suggested that he speak to Arnold Silver? OS

Mr. Bissell. No, unless Arnold Silver had had some connection with this operation. And I don't remember what the circumstances were.

Mr. Baron. Do you recall an agent who went by the cryptonym of QJWINN that I believe we discussed in your earlier testimony?

Mr. Bissell. I dimly remember that there was such, yes.

Mr. Baron. Do you recall that he worked for O'Donnell in the Congo and was sent there by Arnold Silver who had recruited him in Europe? OS

Mr. Bissell. I didn't recollect that.

Mr. Wides. Does it ring a bell of any sort?



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1 Mr. Bissell. Well, there was an agent recruited in  
2 Europe who was used against the Lumumba faction in the  
3 Congo.

4 Now, the agent I have in mind, he was extremely success-  
5 ful. He made a deep penetration of not only the Lumumba  
6 sympathizers, but also of those individuals physically lo-  
7 cated in Europe who were supplying Lumumba with money, and in  
8 some cases giving him logistic support. This agent was ob-  
9 viously engaged in an extremely hazardous business, because  
10 if his cover had been blown he certainly would have been,  
11 I think, killed.

12 Now, this may be the agent in question. I do not  
13 remember that agent ever being put under O'Donnell's control.  
14 But if O'Donnell was given the assignment to find ways of  
15 neutralizing Lumumba, given that assignment to O'Donnell  
16 when he went out there, it is very possible that this  
17 agent would have been put in touch with him.

18 Mr. Schwarz. Why did you pick O'Donnell, incidentally,  
19 for the initial assignment, the part that was killing him,  
20 as opposed to other methods of neutralizing him?

21 Mr. Bissell. My recollection is that I regarded him  
22 as highly competent in the craft, I think correctly. I  
23 regarded him, I think incorrectly as the events turned out,  
24 as a very tough guy in the sense this guy Harvey had, that  
25 such reputation, and I think with hindsight deserved it.

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1 And I suspect -- I have some recollection that about that  
2 time, in the fall of 1960, O'Donnell became available from  
3 some previous assignment.

4 Mr. Wides. And you had had contact with him in regard  
5 to his being Station Chief in ~~Turkey~~ during the U-2 program?

6 Mr. Bissell. Yes, I guess so. And other contacts. I  
7 had known him in the agency.

8 Mr. Baron. Let's see if this refreshes your recollection  
9 on the use of QJWINN. He subsequently became the  
10 principal asset in the ZRRIFLE program under Harvey's  
11 direction?

12 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

13 Mr. Baron. And Harry apparently arranged with ~~Arnold~~  
14 ~~Silver~~, who was supervising QJWINN in Europe, to have QJWINN  
15 spot potential assets for the ZRRIFLE program in Europe.

16 Does that refresh your recollection as to QJWINN's  
17 mission in the Congo?

18 Mr. Bissell. It suggests to me that the man I had  
19 in mind was not QJWINN, but a different agent. And I don't  
20 remember, I don't remember a thing about it.

21 Mr. Baron. What was QJWINN's mission in the Congo?

22 Mr. Bissell. I can only surmise that he had some  
23 connection -- that either he had the means of "getting close  
24 to Lumumba", or that he had connections that might provide --

25 Mr. Baron. I will represent to you that there is a

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1 memo on November 2, 1960, sent by William Harvey in his  
2 capacity as Chief of Staff D to <sup>OS</sup> [Arnold Silver] with a copy  
3 going to Bronson Tweedy that describes QJWINN, and talks at  
4 great length about his mission in the Congo, without pin-  
5 pointing it. The memo talks about the fact that it is an  
6 extremely sensitive operation, and that QJWINN himself wouldn't  
7 be told the purpose of it before he is sent down there.

8 Does that refresh your recollection about his mission?

9 Mr. Bissell. I am afraid not.

10 Mr. Baron. If there were a mission in the Congo at  
11 that point for Staff D purposes, what would that mission have  
12 been?

13 Mr. Bissell. The Staff D was concerned with communications  
14 intelligence, as you know. And I would surmise that a Staff  
15 D connected mission in the Congo would have involved  
16 planting means of listening to conversation or traffic or in  
17 some other way intercepting communications. That is the  
18 competence of Staff D and its responsibility.

19 Mr. Baron. Planting by means of surreptitious entry  
20 or by other means?

21 Mr. Bissell. Yes, although Staff D wasn't concerned  
22 with bugging people's rooms or this kind of thing. It is  
23 concerned with true communications intelligence, or it was  
24 at that time.

25 Mr. Baron. If you had informed William Harvey at the

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1 had great respect for his judgment. And especially given  
2 this Congo involvement, I certainly would have discussed with  
3 him, probably on a number of occasions, the availability of  
4 means of incapacitation, including assassination.

5 Mr. Schwarz. And those discussions are prior to your  
6 Harvey assignment?

7 Mr. Bissell. Yes, I believe so -- yes, they would  
8 have.

9 Mr. Schwarz. Would have been or were?

10 Mr. Bissell. Well, Harvey's assignment wasn't until  
11 January of 1961, so they obviously were.

12 Mr. Wides. Mr. Bissell, with regard to the earlier  
13 discussion with your sense of authorization, you said that  
14 you do recall the discussions with O'Donnell, and that although  
15 you can't remember specific discussions with Tweedy, in  
16 general you recall that you were looking into the possibility  
17 of exploring and planning the possible assassination of  
18 Lumumba?

19 Mr. Bissell. Right.

20 Mr. Wides. In the light of the documents from the  
21 group and Mr. Dulles' cable that have been read, do you have  
22 any recollection now wheher you thought at your level you  
23 had sufficient authority that even though you had not done  
24 so you could direct people below you to carry from the  
25 planning stage into the implementation stage an assassination

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Mr. Bissell. Right.

Mr. Schwarz. Move from contemplation to action or consideration of action?

Mr. Bissell. Right.

Mr. Schwarz. On the other hand you say, well, yes, although I probably believed that, on the other hand I probably spoke to Mr. Dulles about it, or would have spoken to Mr. Dulles about it.

Mr. Bissell. You will recognize that here again I am talking about the pattern of my relationship with him and the way the Agency worked.

Now, here was a matter in which the authorization, such as it was, had come down clearly from the Special Group to Mr. Dulles personally.

Mr. Schwarz. Now, we are talking about the exhibits which show an authorization -- assuming you read the words as meaning killing --

Mr. Bissell. Not excluding, yes.

Mr. Schwarz. -- an authorization to consider that.

Mr. Bissell. Right.

Mr. Schwarz. And that had come down?

Mr. Bissell. It had come down to me via Allen Dulles, and in terms that Allen was in effect being strongly encouraged to pursue the course of action outlined in the exhibit. I think under these circumstances that I would have

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1 gone back to him with, for instance, any cable of authoriza-  
2 tion or other instruction before sending it out even if I  
3 did believe him.

4 But let us say in his absence from Washington I had the  
5 authority to send.

6 Mr. Dawson. You say unlike the case of the White House  
7 where you would not take details back, in the case of Mr.  
8 Dulles you would discuss the details of a specific operation?

9 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

10 Mr. Schwarz. But it is not really a matter of details,  
11 Mr. Bissell. That is an important distinction. We have  
12 been talking about a chain that starts with two memos, or three  
13 memos. We have talked about contemplation or consideration,  
14 don't rule out killing, it doesn't use the word killing, but  
15 it could be read to mean killing, don't rule out killing from  
16 the items to be considered.

17 Now, moving from doing it is not a detail, is it?

18 Mr. Bissell. No, I wouldn't call it a detail by any  
19 manner of means, but I would read that language as authorizing  
20 any decision by the Director or the Director's authority.

21 Mr. Schwarz. You would read the language of the two  
22 exhibits, one of which comes from the Administration  
23 and one of which is the Director cable --

24 Mr. Bissell. Right.

25 Mr. Schwarz. You would read the language of the Special

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1 Group minutes --

2 Mr. Baron. Of August 25, 1960.

3 Mr. Bissell. Right.

4 Mr. Schwarz. May I see that?

5 After talking about extremely strong feelings, straight-  
6 forward action, and Dulles commenting on taking this ser-  
7 iously, proceeding vigorously, the agreement is:

8 "It was finally agreed that planning for the Congo  
9 would not necessarily rule out 'consideration' of any  
10 particular kind of activity which might contribute to  
11 getting rid of Lumumba".

12 Now, the first point, you read that to mean not  
13 ruling out killing?

14 Mr. Bissell. Correct.

15 Mr. Schwarz. Now, was it just your testimony that  
16 you believe that the agreement that planning for the Congo  
17 would not necessarily rule out possible consideration of --  
18 and now I will substitute the word killing -- is authority  
19 to actually order the killing -- sufficient authority?

20 Mr. Bissell. May I look again at the other exhibit,  
21 Mr. Dulles' cable of the next day.

22 (Discussion off the record.)

23 Mr. Schwarz. Back on the record.

24 There is a pending question.

25 Mr. Bissell. It is my belief on the basis of the cable

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1 drafted by Allen Dulles that he regarded the action of the  
2 Special Group as authorizing implementation if favorable  
3 circumstances presented themselves, if it could be done  
4 covertly. He speaks of targets of opportunity. He authorized,  
5 as I remember the words of the cable "even more aggressive  
6 action".

7 And the tone of the cable clearly gives the Station  
8 Chief a lot of latitude and conveys a sense of very great  
9 urgency.

10 Mr. Schwarz. And whether or not that is a proper con-  
11 struction of the Special Group is not really something we need  
12 to discuss.

13 Finish the Congo, then.

14 Mr. Baron. I have one more question on Mr. Gottlieb's  
15 visist. And that is, in the light of the entire atmosphere  
16 at the Agency and the policy at the Agency at that time,  
17 Mr. Gottlieb's representation to the Chief of Station that  
18 the President had instructed the DCI to carry out this  
19 mission would not have been beyond the pale of Mr. Gottlieb's  
20 authority at that point?

21 Mr. Bissell. No, it would not.

22 Mr. Baron. For the sake of the record, let's intro-  
23 duce as an exhibit the memo that I referred to earlier as  
24 November 1960. And I will ask you one question about it.  
25 This is a memo going from the Chief of KUTUBE/D. And that

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1 is the Foreign Intelligence Division, which would have been  
2 William Harvey at that time.

3 Mr. Bissell. I believe so.

4 (The document referred to was  
5 marked Bissell Exhibit No. 3  
6 for identification.)  
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Mr. Baron. Did you receive a copy of this cable?

Mr. Bissell. I think it is doubtful. And I don't believe I would have. It is rather narrowly an operational matter.

Mr. Baron. Thank you.

Next, let's turn to a cable that was sent on September 16, 1960, to Leopoldville from CIA Headquarters which we will mark Exhibit 4.

(The document referred to was marked Bissell Exhibit No. 4 for identification.)

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1 Mr. Baron. This is a cable that we reviewed, Mr.  
2 Bissell, before we began your testimony today. And I will  
3 turn your attention to the paragraph that says:

4 "It is still difficult to determine whether Mobutu  
5 had sufficient control army to enforce decisions announced  
6 night 14 September. Station advised" --

7 And then there is a sanitized paragraph --

8 "Station advised two moderate Congolese politicians  
9 'try work with key Congolese contact' in effort eliminate  
10 Lumumba. Fear UN protection will give Lumumba opportunity  
11 organization counterattack. Only solution is remove him  
12 from scene soonest".

13 Now, the night of September 14 was the night of a coup  
14 in the Congo where Mobutu took power, is that correct?

15 Mr. Bissell. Correct.

16 Mr. Baron. And does this cable refresh your recollec-  
17 tion as to the attitude at the Agency toward Lumumba even  
18 after he was in U.N. custody?

19 Mr. Bissell. Yes. It seems to say rather clearly  
20 that it was still desirable to eliminate him.

21 Mr. Baron. WAS it still your recollection, then, that  
22 there was a continued sense of urgency about eliminating  
23 Lumumba after he was in U.N. custody?

24 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

25 Mr. Baron. And this would account in part for the fact

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1 that there was no clear order to stand down the assassination  
2 mission after Lumumba was in U.N. custody?

3 Mr. Bissell. That is correct.

4 Mr. Baron. There is a set of NSC minutes from September  
5 21, 1960, that I would like to introduce as Exhibit 5.

6 (The document referred to was  
7 marked Bissell Exhibit No. 5  
8 for identification.)  
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1 Mr. diGenova. Mr. Bissell, I want to switch, unfortunately,  
2 from the Continent of Africa and go to Cuba. This is the same  
3 time period, however, it is July of 1960.

4 I had a conversation with you on August 6 over the  
5 telephone. You may recall the conversation. I have in front  
6 of me a cable which we will mark as Exhibit No. 7.

7 (The document referred to was  
8 marked Bissell Exhibit No. 7  
9 for identification.)

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1 Mr. Baron. And this is a cable sent from headquarters  
2 to the Havana Station dated July 21, 1960. The first  
3 sentence of the cable reads:

4 "Possible removal top three leaders is receiving  
5 serious consideration at headquarters".

6 The cable is signed by E. H. Hinkle by direction Tracy  
7 Barnes for DDP, and about E.H. Hinkle by direction J.C. King,  
8 Chief, Western Hemisphere Division as authenticating officer.  
9 Relseasing officer was Tracy Barnes.

10 Do you have any independent recollection of that cable  
11 and what surrounded its issuance at headquarters?

12 Mr. Bissell. I don't remember it until you mentioned it  
13 to me in the telephone conversation to which you have alluded.

14 Mr. diGenova. Having had some time to think about it  
15 since we spoke on August 6, does it ring any bell at this  
16 juncture?

17 Mr. Bissell. It does not, I am afraid.

18 Mr. diGenova. It is apparent that this cable was  
19 sent out at a time when you were having conversations in the  
20 summer or the fall of 1960 with Mr. Tweedy and Mr. O'Donnell  
21 concerning Mr. Lumumba, is that correct?

22 Mr. Bissell. Correct.

23 Mr. diGenova. Did Mr. Dulles at any time during this  
24 period or prior to it or subsequent to it ever issue a directive  
25 assigning assassination as an agency action?

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1 Mr. Bissell. Not to my knowledge.

2 Mr. diGenova. Do you have any knowledge as to whether  
3 or not Mr. Dulles knew about the issuance of this cable which  
4 stated that the possible removal of the top three leaders in  
5 Cuba was receiving serious consideration at headquarters?

6 Mr. Bissell. I don't have knowledge of that, no.

7 You yourself quoted internal evidence from the cable and  
8 the one that was sent, a followup the following day, suggesting  
9 that he may have ordered it countermanded.

10 Mr. diGenova. The duty officer at that particular time,  
11 that evening, indicated that he had sent this cable, and that  
12 he had been instructed, as he recalled it by Mr. Barnes, to  
13 send this cable, and that the wording came from Mr. Barnes.

14 Now, the duty officer also said that the next day when  
15 he came in there was a cable, which we have, and we  
16 will mark that as Exhibit No. 8, which in toto said:

17 "Do not pursue reference, would like to drop matter."

18 And that was signed singly by Tracy Barnes.

19 (The document referred to was  
20 marked Bissell Exhibit No. 8  
21 for identification.)  
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1 point as one of the reasons that he would have countermanded  
2 that cable?

3 Mr. Bissell. I would.

4 Mr. Schwarz. Could I follow up on the Congo, Exhibit  
5 2, the Dulles cable to Leopoldville.

6 Now, we apparently read to you when I was out of the  
7 room the first paragraph at least, which talks about the clear-  
8 cut conclusion:

9 "If he continues to hold high office the inevitable  
10 result would be chaos and at worst pave the way for Communist  
11 takeover. Consequently, we conclude that his removal must  
12 be an urgent and prime objective, and under existing conditions  
13 this must be a high priority of your covert action".

14 And you have read that language as meaning killing, right?

15 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

16 Mr. Schwarz. I want to ask you if you continue to  
17 read it as killing in the light of the third paragraph of  
18 the cable which reads as follows:

19 "To the extent that Ambassador may desire to be con-  
20 sulted you should seek his concurrence. If in any particular  
21 case he does not wish to be consulted you can act on your  
22 own authority where time does not permit reference here.

23 "Paragraph 4, this message has been seen and approved  
24 at competent level of the Department of State".

25 Do you still believe in the light of the authorization

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1 to discuss the matter with the Ambassador that assassination  
2 was involved?

3 Mr. Bissell. Yes, especially since there is evidence  
4 here that it was discussed with and approved at State, and  
5 in the light of the background in this Special Group.

6 Mr. Schwarz. You don't think this is referring to  
7 a coup?

8 Mr. Bissell. I don't think so. But I can't be  
9 perfectly certain. But I think it refers to more than that.  
10 I think actually it is saying, his removal by some means or  
11 other is the very high priority objective. I would infer  
12 from this that what we know was discussed at least in the  
13 Special Group, and that is that removal might be by the means  
14 of assassination, although obviously others would be preferred.

15 Could I add one word in answer to that question. I am  
16 almost certain I am correct, that the then Ambassador to  
17 the Congo was Edward Gullion.

18 Mr. Baron. I believe it was Timberlake.

19 Mr. Bissell. I think Gullion had arrived by this  
20 time. But certainly in Gullion's regime there was extremely  
21 close collaboration between the Ambassador and the Chief of  
22 Station. And the Ambassador was an individual who would have  
23 been quite prepared to contemplate this kind of action.

24 Mr. Wides. Mr. Bissell, just to make sure the record  
25 is complete in terms of your efforts to analyze that, if I

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1 also he made an effective penetration of Lumumba's supporters  
2 both in the Congo, and as it were, in the line of funding  
3 and supply in Europe.

4 Mr. Dawson. So, he was in place, so to speak?

5 Mr. Bissell. Yes.

6 In other words, he was a dual agent.

7 Mr. Dawson. Did he have access directly to Lumumba?

8 Mr. Bissell. I think he did, yes.

9 Mr. Dawson. Do you remember having been told that he  
10 sometime in November or December went to Stanleyville?

11 Mr. Bissell. I don't remember the specific case, but  
12 it fits the pattern very well. What I do remember is one  
13 operation. But he knew of, he was close enough to -- he  
14 was used as a courier from Lumumba, I think, first in the  
15 capitol, and then later from Stanleyville to Europe. And  
16 on one occasion, because he had penetrated so effectively, he  
17 was aware that a large amount of cash was being taken by two  
18 other couriers down to the Congo, and as a result of his  
19 awareness of that, and all the details of that trip, that  
20 shipment was intercepted.

21 Mr. Dawson. The Chief of Station testified about  
22 having an agent that had access.

23 Would this have been the agent that he believed he  
24 would have access to?

25 Mr. Bissell. I believe he would have, yes.

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1 Mr. Dawson. Thank you.

2 Mr. Wides. Mr. Bissell, touching briefly on Indonesia  
3 when you testified to the Rockefeller Commission, and this  
4 was reviewed very summarily when he testified before us, that  
5 you recalled some possibility -- some planning of a possibility  
6 of assassinating Sukarno, progressing as far as the identifica-  
7 tion of an asset who might be recruited for this purpose,  
8 but the plan was never reached and never perfected to a  
9 point where it was decided to go ahead.

10 Do you recall anything, or do you have any information  
11 that would be relevant to our information that a Moslem asset  
12 from the Middle East was recruited who was considered for  
13 an operation in Indonesia against Sukarno with the crypt  
14 <sup>02</sup> OPERATION, and an operation that in regard at least to the  
15 assassination aspects had been started by Kim Roosevelt be-  
16 cause of his ties with the Mid-East?

17 Does that ring a bell at all?

18 Mr. Bissell. No, sir. That one I don't remember at  
19 all. I remember enough of the plan that I referred to  
20 know that what you speak of was a different activity.

21 Mr. Wides. And the one you referred to involved  
22 indigenous Indonesians?

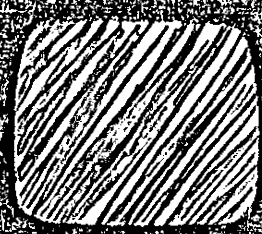
23 Mr. Bissell. I think it involved -- I don't know  
24 what nationality the asset, but I think it involved a  
25 member of an air crew on a commercial airline, -- not on a

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Mr. Schwarz. Thank you very much.

(Whereupon, at 4:25 p.m., the hearing was concluded.)

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**TOP SECRET**