

SECRET

or the other - and literally stick him in a room and say, "Here, everything, and tell me what it's like."

MW: The degree of communication between the DDP and DDI on Mongoose is apparently a lot more that it was during the Bay of Pigs Operation.

SH: Oh, much more.

MW: Years ago, when I started amassing the documents that we put together into the Bay of Pigs collection, I wanted to know if there was anything left in the branch over in the DI. So I called up whoever was the Cuban analyst - this would have been, probably, early 1993. I don't remember the analyst's name (I could probably look it up), but he told me - and I don't know if this is true or not. The folklore in the branch was that whoever it was that had been one of the Cuban analysts was called in the Saturday before the invasion because there were all these news stories about Cuban defector pilots having bombed the air field in Havana and then flown to Key West and here they are, they have their planes on the ground and now they are defecting to the United States and this is a big news story. He came in and wrote it up for the current publications at the time and gave it to his editors, and at the last minute somebody came over from the DDP and said "Wait guys, that's a covert action. Those are our planes, those are our pilots, those are B-26's we painted with Cuban markings. This is all a big hoax. You don't need to be reporting this to the President or you're going to look silly." So apparently this has been handed down at the Cuban desk by word of mouth.

SH: It sounds true.

MW: I don't know it that's true or not. You probably know better than I do.

SH: It sounds true. Those things have happened. That's one thing we made sure in Mongoose we didn't do. I can go back to another operation that I was involved in long before we had things like Mongoose and Bays of Pigs and what have you. This is the Indonesian operation in support of the Sumatra colonels in 1957 and 1958. I personally, on my own authority, I never checked with Al Ulmer, who was my Division Chief, or anybody else. I happened to know the DDI/OCI person on

SECRET

the desk on Indonesia, Jeanette Marr. I knew her from OSS days. I used to call her up and we double-talked and I kept her fully informed of anything that might suddenly appear on the horizon without going into the details of our operation or anything like that. She wrote the President's Daily Brief sections on Indonesia and a guy called Cabell insisted on calling the Sumatran colonels "patriots." Everyone else in the Government called them "rebels."

MW: This was the DDCI?

SH: Cabell, yes. He was known as "Rice and Beans" Cabell. Same guy. He insisted on the PDB using the word patriots. Jeanette hated it. She couldn't do anything about it obviously - Cabell insisted. Look at the old PDB's and you'll see that they have patriots, not rebels. We could double-talk because of patriots and it worked fine. When Mongoose came along there was no question in my mind....at least, I would have done the same thing unless Bill Harvey had said "Don't talk to them," but he never did. Bruce Cheever, who was Bill's deputy, thought you had to bring them in, too, to let them know what's going on. You don't go into details of an operation, you don't go into details of your sources. The only guy that ever did that was Des. That was 1963. His final report to Des was simply, "You guys are shooting yourselves in the foot. This information is very good, not just good but very good and you are masking it all with all these crazy by-lines. I know you can't give the true name but you can at least change the by-line somehow." This is what Des used later when he became DDP for a couple of years, to change all the by-line systems throughout the whole DDP. We started to give better descriptions of the sources. Some of these things had some benefits. But coming back to this crazy report, let me come back a second....

BL: The IG report....

SH: In the IG report, the thing that bothered me, too, in there, in reading the IG report was the fact that so many of the case officers - if it's correct - seemed to be confused as to just what the hell they were doing and why they were doing what they were doing. I don't think we ever had that in the Mongoose show. We had Ed Marelius up here in Washington as the Chief of the FI Branch. We had Seymour Bolten as head of the Covert Action Branch, PP, Psychological Warfare Branch. We

SECRET

told General Carter to tell somebody, and I didn't know who the hell it was, he was not supposed to tell until I found out later, it was Ike, Eisenhower, in our Sumatra operation... We were involved in all kinds of crazy nonsense, including air, by the way. Cabell didn't get involved in that, thank the Lord. It was Civil Air Transport planes we were using. A suggestion came to me, through Cabell's office, to me, about something going to be done, I forget exactly what it was, but something ought to be done in the field to make things easier for the rebels. I'll call them rebels. It made no sense at all. Actually had no relation to reality in the field. I didn't even bother checking with anybody, I just decided on my own. It won't work, it doesn't make any sense and the people out there will think we are crazy. Cabell said, it finally got to Cabell talking to me, "Ok Sam, whatever you say is fine." I find out later that the suggestion came not from Cabell but from Ike, through Gordon Gray, who was then the National Security Council guy, through the Agency and down to me. I was the Exec. Why they didn't call Al Ulmer I don't know - maybe he wasn't there - but anyway I get the draft. If they had said the President wants you to do such and such I might have given him a different answer. Ike's got a good military background, better than mine, for God's sakes. That's the one nice thing I liked about this Agency, and always have. I hope it's around, you can really speak your mind.

MW: Sometimes.

SH: Well, all right. Things may have changed. I've been out 20 years, but in my day we screamed bloody murder and we screamed bloody murder about Mongoose. We screamed bloody murder about other things, believe me, over the years, and when it didn't make sense we said so. So help me, Trinidad and then the cutting 80% of the air support, I don't know if Bissell really understood the meaning. He may have thought that by the time they would land Castro would be dead. That's fine, but if you're running a vest pocket operation like that, you had better be sure, and you don't take the chance with 1,500 men or 1,400 men whatever hit the beaches. Bissell was no kind of a guy to - let alone Tracy Barnes - to be involved in assassination plotting. They didn't know what the hell they were doing. Tracy wouldn't know. The record is clear, and it's even in the Church Committee report, for Christ's sake, that a message came from headquarters to the Havana station, when it was still there, talking about assassination. The very next morning, when someone saw