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## JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM

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TAB F: EXECUTIVE ACTION CAPABILITY  
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the [Army] Attache without further informing any member of the Department of Defense of the White House. This possibility would be contrary to the sworn testimony of [David Phillips], William Broe, Thomas Karamessines, and William Colby. Fourth, members of the White House staff authorized the CIA to convey orders to the [Army] Attache on the basis of high or highest government authority. Further, that the White House staff directed that the [Army] Attache's superiors in the Pentagon not be informed. This possibility would contradict the sworn testimony of Dr. Kissinger and General Alexander Haig.

D. The (False Flag Base)

In order to minimize the risks of making contact with the dissident Chilean officers, the task force decided in late September to set up a ("False Flag Base," i.e., to send four staff officers to Chile posing as nationals of other countries to supplement (Colonel Wimert's) contacts with Chilean military officers. (\*) Given the limitations of the Station's resources and (Colonel Wimert's) visibility, Headquarters felt the use of ("False Flag Officers") was necessary because "We don't want to miss a chance." (One of these officers posed as a ~~Brazilian~~ intelligence officer so that "any flap would be a ~~Brazilian~~ one." (Headquarters 363, September 27, 1970)

\*The use of "False Flag Officers" is not, according to David Phillips, "an unusual practice," either by the CIA or foreign intelligence services. (Phillips testimony, pp. 47-48)

#### IV. CIA Efforts to Promote a Coup

##### A. The Chilean Conspirators

Anti-Allende coup plotting in Chile centered around several key individuals. One of these was retired General Roberto Viaux, the General who had led the "Tacnazo" insurrection a year before.\* Following the "Tacnazo" revolt, and his dismissal from the Army, Viaux retained the support of many non-commissioned and junior officers as well as being the recognized leader of several right-wing civilian groups. (CIA Briefing Paper, "Special Mandate from the President on Chile," July 15, 1975)

Another individual around which plotting centered was General Camilo Valenzuela, Commander of the Santiago Garrison. General Valenzuela was in league with several other (active duty) officers, (including <sup>06,08</sup> Admiral <sup>06,08</sup> Hugo Tirado, Navy Commander in Chief, <sup>06,08</sup> General Vicente Huentela, Director, <sup>06,08</sup> General of the Carabinero (police) Corps, <sup>06,08</sup> General Canales, Director of the Military Academy, and <sup>06,08</sup> General Joaquín García, <sup>06,08</sup> second in command, <sup>06,08</sup> Air Force.) (CIA Report on Chilean Task Force Activities, November 18, 1970) All of these officers, with the possible exception (of <sup>06,08</sup> General <sup>06,08</sup> Canales) were in contact with Viaux as well.\*\*

\*This revolt was engineered by Viaux ostensibly for the purposes of dramatizing the military's demand for higher pay, but was widely interpreted as an abortive coup.

\*\*The record of meetings between Viaux and the active duty military officers is incomplete. The record does show, however, that Viaux met with <sup>06,08</sup> General <sup>06,08</sup> Minera, around October 7. (Chile Task Force Log, October 7). On October 12 Viaux met with General Valenzuela (Chile Task Force Log, 14 October). One cable from Santiago indicates that <sup>06,08</sup> Admiral <sup>06,08</sup> Tirado may have been a member of Viaux's inner circle of conspirators <sup>06,08</sup> (Station 545, 16 October 1970). At the very least, <sup>06,08</sup> (Tirado) was in contact with Viaux.

Although a distinction can be made between the Viaux and Valenzuela groups, as CIA witnesses did throughout their testimony before the Committee, the principal distinction between the two was that the latter was led by active duty military officers. The two groups were in contact with each other. The record also indicates that they worked together in at least two of the three Schneider kidnap attempts.



U.S. policy. (Santiago 469, October 5; Santiago 473, October 6)\*

Three days later the Chief of Station told ~~General Humberto~~ ~~Commander~~ of the Carabineros that "the U.S. Government favors a military solution and is willing to support it in any manner short of outright military intervention." (Task Force Log, 9 October) ~~General Humberto~~ informed the COS that there was no chance of a coup by the Chilean Army high command. (Task Force Log, 10 October)

On October 7, (Colonel Wimert) approached members of the War Academy in Santiago who in turn asked him to provide light weapons. This was (Colonel Wimert)'s first contact with the Army ~~Lt. Colonel~~ to whom he would ultimately pass three submachine guns on October 22. \*\* At this meeting, the ~~Lt. Colonel~~ told (Colonel Wimert) that he and his colleagues were

trying to exert force on Frei to eliminate Gen. Schneider to either replace him, send him out of the country. They had even studied plans to kidnap him. Schneider is the main barrier to all plans for the military to take over the government to prevent an Allende presidency. (Santiago 483, 8 October)

\* According to the CIA's wrap-up report on Track II, between October 5 and October 20, the CIA Station and the (Army) Attache--for the most part the latter--made 21 contacts with key military and Carabinero officials. (CIA Report on Chilean Task Force Activities, 8 November 1970)

\*\* In his testimony, (Colonel Wimert) indicated that the ~~Lt. Colonel~~ was affiliated with General ~~Canales~~ (Wimert testimony, p. 52). In a cable sent to Headquarters on October 18, in which the ~~Lt. Colonel~~'s request for three submachine guns was made, the Station indicated that (Wimert) believed the Army officer, and his companion, a Navy ~~Captain~~ were in league with Admiral ~~Blanco~~ (Station 562, October 18). At another point in his testimony, (Wimert) stated, "There was Valenzuela here and the Navy Captain and the Army Lt. Colonel and the Air Force General over here." (Wimert testimony, p. 107). The Committee has been unable to determine the exact affiliation of the Army Lt. Colonel. However, as previously stated, both General ~~Canales~~ and Admiral ~~Blanco~~ were affiliated with General Valenzuela and Admiral ~~Blanco~~ was in contact with General Viaux.

-32-

The next day, October 8, Headquarters cabled the Station in response to the Wimert-Lt. <sup>06</sup>Colonel meeting. Headquarters took note of Schneider's resistance to coup plans and stated:

...This would make it more important than ever to remove him and to bring this new state of events...anything we or Station can do to effect removal of Schneider? We know this rhetorical question, but wish inspire thought on both ends on this matter.  
(Hqs. 628, 8 October)

During the first week of intensive efforts chances of success looked unusually bleak. The Chile Task Force Log commented:

[President Frei and] the highest levels of the armed forces unable to pull themselves together to block Allende. The Chilean military's tradition of non-intervention, Frei's reluctance to tarnish his historical image, General Schneider's firm constitutional stand, and most importantly, the lack of leadership within the government and military are working against a military takeover.  
(Task Force Log, 8 October)

The following day the Station made reference to the "rapid(ly) waning chances for success." (Santiago 487, 9 October) This pessimism was not dispelled by their simultaneous judgment: "Station has arrived at Viaux solution by process of elimination." (Santiago 504, 10 October) Three days later the Task Force agreed: "We continue to focus our attention on General Viaux who now appears to be the only military leader willing to block Allende." (Task Force Log, 13 October)

If Viaux was the CIA's only hope of staging a coup, things were bleak indeed. His own colleagues, Generals <sup>06</sup>~~Quera~~ and Valenzuela described him as "a General without an army." (Santiago 495, 9 October) Yet in the first two weeks of October he came to be regarded as the best hope for carrying out the CIA's Track II mandate.

-33-

Although (Colonel Wimert) was instructed not to involve himself with Viaux because of the high risk involved (Santiago 461, 5 October), he served initially as a contact to Viaux through [an Argentine military Attache. The Argentine reported on October 5 that Viaux wanted several hundred paralyzing gas grenades to launch a coup on October 9. (Santiago 476, 6 October) Headquarters turned down the request, concluding that a "mini-coup at this juncture would be counterproductive" and Viaux should postpone his plans, "while encouraging him in a suitable manner to maintain his posture so that he may join larger movement later if it materializes." (Headquarters 585, 6 October)

The primary purpose of the ["False Flag Base"] was to contact Viaux, and it very rapidly relieved (Wimert and the Argentine Attache) of that task. Viaux reiterated his demand for an air drop of weapons to the ["False Flagger,"] and again the response was the same: reject the demand for arms, but encourage him to keep planning. In essence the Agency was buying time with Viaux: "We wish to encourage Viaux to expand and refine his coup planning. Gain some influence over his actions." (Headquarters 689, 10 October) To achieve this latter purpose, Headquarters authorized passing \$20,000 in cash and a promise of \$250,000 in life insurance to Viaux and his associates, as a demonstration of U.S. support. (Headquarters 729, 13 October)

On October 13, Headquarters again indicated its concern over Schneider by asking: "What is to keep Schneider from making statement in early hours which will freeze those military leaders who might otherwise join Viaux?" (Headquarters 729, 13 October) The Station's response later that same day was "Viaux intends to kidnap Generals Schneider and Prats within the next 48 hours in order to precipitate a coup." (Santiago 527,



13 October) This Viaux kidnapping of Schneider was reported by the Station "as part of a coup that included Valenzuela." (Station 529, 13 October)

At about this time the Station began to receive encouragement from its other contacts. On October 14, ten days before the Chilean Congress was to vote, the Task Force Log concluded:

Now we are beginning to see signs of increasing coup activity from other military quarters, specifically, an Army General (name deleted), Admiral ~~Blanco~~ the forces in Concepcion and Valdivia and perhaps even Frei and ~~Basch~~ 06  
(Task Force Log, 14 October)

#### C. October 15 Decision

To summarize, by October 15, General Viaux had advertised to his contact a desire to proceed with a coup, had indicated he would deal with the Schneider obstacle by kidnapping him, had met at least once with Generals ~~Huentel~~ and Valenzuela and had once postponed his coup plans.\*

On October 15 Thomas Karamessines met Henry Kissinger and Alexander Haig at the White House to discuss the situation in Chile. According to the Agency's record of this meeting, Karamessines "provided a run-down on Viaux, the ~~Amiles~~ meeting with ~~Blanco~~ and, in some detail, the general situation in Chile from the coup-possibility viewpoint." (Memorandum of Conversation/Kissinger, Karamessines, and Haig, 15 October 1970) A decision was made at the meeting "to de-fuse the Viaux coup plot, at least temporarily:"

\* The reason for Viaux postponing his coup plans was the subject of a cable from Santiago to Headquarters:

We discount Viaux's statement that he had called off his coup attempt because of (False Flag Officer)'s impending visit. Other reporting indicated Viaux probably not able or intending move this weekend. (Santiago 499, 10 October)

There is also reason to believe that General Valenzuela was instrumental in persuading Viaux to postpone. According to the Chile Task Force Log:

Station reported that on 12 October General Valenzuela met with General Viaux and attempted to persuade him not to attempt a coup." (Chile Task Force Log, 14 October)



It was decided by those present that the Agency must get a message to Viaux warning him against any precipitate action. In essence the message should state: "We have reviewed your plans and based on your information and ours, we come to the conclusion that your plans for a coup at this time cannot succeed. Failing, they may reduce your capabilities in the future. Preserve your assets. We will stay in touch. The time will come when you with all your other friends can do something. You will continue to have our support." (15 October Memorandum of Conversation, Kissinger, Karamessines, Haig)

The meeting concluded, according to the Agency's record, "on Dr. Kissinger's note that the Agency should continue keeping the pressure on every Allende weak spot in sight--now, after the 24th of October, after 5 November, and into the future until such time as new marching orders are given. Mr. Karamessines stated that the Agency would comply."\*

The following day CIA Headquarters cabled the results of the White House meeting to the Station in Santiago:

2. It is firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup....We are to continue to generate maximum pressure toward this end utilizing every appropriate resource.

3. After the most careful consideration it was determined that a Viaux coup attempt carried out by him alone with the forces now at his disposal would fail. Thus it would be counterproductive to our Track Two objectives. It was decided that CIA get a message to Viaux warning him against precipitate action. (Headquarters 802, 16 October)

The message was supplemented by orders to "continue to encourage him (Viaux) to amplify his planning; encourage him to join forces with other coup planners." (Headquarters 802, 16 October) The message concluded: "There is great and continuing interest in the activities of  of  Valenzuela et al and we wish them optimum good fortune." (Ibid.)

\* Secretary Kissinger's recollection of the October 15 meeting is not in accord with that of Mr. Karamessines or the cable (Headquarters 802) that was sent the following day to the Station in Santiago. This matter will be discussed in Part V of this report.



#### D. Coup Planning and Attempts After October 15

The decision to "de-fuse" General Viaux was passed to Viaux's ~~father-in-law~~ on October 17. The ~~father-in-law~~ responded that it did not matter because they had decided to proceed with the coup in any case. (Santiago 533, 17 October) At the final meeting of the CIA ("False Flag") and Viaux's ~~father-in-law~~ on October 18, the Agency was informed that the coup would proceed on October 22, "and that the abduction of General Schneider is first link in chain of events to come." (Santiago 568, 19 October) An "emergency channel" of communication with Viaux was maintained. (Report on CIA Chilean Task Force Activities, 18 November 1970, page 21)

As previously stated, by mid-October things suddenly looked brighter for a coup being mounted by the high-level Chilean military contacts. \*

As a CIA overview statement in Track II stated:

Coup possibilities afforded by the active duty military group led by General Valenzuela and Admiral ~~Blanco~~ had always seemed more promising than the capabilities of the Viaux group. These military officers had the ability and resources to act providing they decided to move and organized themselves accordingly.

(CIA Briefing Paper, "Special Mandate from the President on Chile," July 15, 1975, p. 5)

By mid-October those military officers appeared to be moving in this direction.

On the evening of October 17, (Colonel Wimert) met with the Army ~~Colonel~~ and the Navy ~~Captain~~. They requested 8 to 10 tear gas grenades,

\*Two coup plotters, Generals ~~Canales~~ and ~~Canales~~ made one last attempt to persuade General Schneider to change his anti-coup position on October 15. The Station reported that the meeting turned out to be a "complete fiasco. Schneider refused to listen to General ~~Canales~~ eloquent presentation of Communist action in Chile...and adamant in maintaining his non-involvement stance." (Santiago 548, 16 October)

That same day, General Valenzuela informed (Colonel Wimert) that he, (General Huerta, Admiral Tirado and an Air Force General) were prepared to sponsor a coup. (CIA Report on Chilean Task Force Activities, 18 November 1970) Their plan was to begin with the kidnapping of General Schneider on the following evening, October 19, at a military dinner being given for Schneider,\* after which Schneider would be flown to Argentina, Frei would resign and leave Chile, Admiral Tirado would head the military junta, and dissolve Congress. With respect to the kidnapping of Schneider, the cable reports:

General Viaux knowledgeable of above operation but not directly involved. He has been sent to Vina to stay with prominent physician. Will be seen in public places during 19 and 20 October to demonstrate fact that above operation not his doing. Will be allowed to return to Santiago at end of week. Military will not admit involvement in Schneider's abduction which is to be blamed on leftists. (Santiago 566, 19 October)

The kidnapping of the evening of October 19 failed because General Schneider left in a private vehicle, rather than in his official car, and his police guard failed to be withdrawn, but the Army Lt. Colonel assured Colonel Wimert that another attempt would be made on October 20. (Santiago 582, 20 October)

Colonel Wimert was authorized to pay Valenzuela \$50,000 "which was the price agreed upon between the plotters and the unidentified team of abductors."

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\* The ("False Flag Officer") who was in contact with Viaux at the time the Valenzuela plan was given to (Colonel Wimert) apparently understood that Viaux was involved in the October 19 attempt. He stated:

Q. Were you told any of the details of how the (Viaux) kidnapping would be carried out?

Mr. Sarno. They indicated it was going to be at some sort of a banquet which the General (Schneider) would be attending.

(Sarno testimony, p. 37)

-41-

Station unaware if assassination was pre-meditated or whether it constituted bungled abduction attempt. In any case, it important to bear in mind that move against Schneider was conceived by and executed at behest of senior Armed Forces officers. We know that General Valenzuela was involved. We also near certain that Admiral ~~Viala~~ ~~Viala~~, Army ~~(Colonel)~~ ~~(Colonel)~~ and Navy ~~(Captain)~~ ~~(Captain)~~ Witting and involved. We have reason for believing that General Viaux and numerous associates fully clued in, but cannot prove or disprove that execution or attempt against Schneider was entrusted to elements linked with Viaux. Important factor to bear in mind is that Armed Forces, and not retired officers or extreme rightists, set Schneider up for execution or abduction.... All we can say is that attempt against Schneider is affording Armed Forces one last opportunity to prevent Allende's election if they are willing to follow Valenzuela's scenario.

(Santiago 598, 22 October)

#### P. Post October 22 Events

The shooting of General Schneider resulted immediately in a declaration of martial law, the appointment of General Prats to succeed Schneider as Commander in Chief, and the appointment of General Valenzuela as chief of Santiago province. These measures, and others taken, caused the Chile Task Force to make the following initial judgment:

With only 24 hours remaining before the Congressional runoff, a coup climate exists in Chile....The attack on General Schneider has produced developments which closely follow Valenzuela's plan....Consequently the plotters' positions have been enhanced.

(Chile Task Force Log, 22 October)

On October 23, Director Helms reviewed and discussed Track II:

It was agreed...that a maximum effort has been achieved, and that now only the Chileans themselves can manage a successful coup. The Chileans have been guided to a point where a military solution is at least open to them.

(Task Force Log, 24 October)



**TOP SECRET**

Records of the Meeting Kissinger told Karamessines that "our handling of the problem during the earlier meeting had been perfect and he added we were doing fine and keep it up." (Memorandum for the Record/Chile, 22 September 1970, by Thomas Karamessines)

B. October

October 5

A cable sent to Santiago, released by Karamessines, requested a report on how the Station planned to contact the three Chilean Generals --(Prats), Valenzuela (and ~~Huerta~~)--named in a cable of September 30. (Headquarters 449) The October 5 cable indicated that the report was needed for a discussion with Kissinger on October 6. (Santiago 556, 5 October 1970) Karamessines presumed such a meeting had taken place, although he had no specific memory of it. (Karamessines testimony, pp. 69-70) His calendar for October 6 indicates that he attended a 40 Committee meeting on Chile. (Karamessines calendar) Kissinger chaired the 40 Committee.

October 6

The Station reported that General Viaux was "ready to launch golpe evening 9 October, or morning 10 October." (Santiago 472, 6 October 1970) In response, CIA Headquarters labeled the prospective coup one "with scant chance of success which will vitiate any further more serious action." The Station was directed to try to "stop ill-considered action at this time." (Headquarters 585, 6 October 1970)

Kissinger testified he had not been informed of the Viaux plan, supporting his recollection with the fact that the CIA memorandum of an October 10 conversation between Karamessines and Haig (see below) makes no mention of any previous plots. (Kissinger testimony, p. 24)

- 49a -

October 15

Karamessines met with Kissinger and Haig at the White House to discuss Track II. According to the CIA memorandum of conversation, Karamessines gave a run-down on Viaux, <sup>of</sup> ~~Charles~~ and <sup>of</sup> ~~Blanco~~ and "the general situation in Chile from the coup-possibility viewpoint." It was concluded that Viaux did not have more than one chance in twenty--perhaps less--to launch a successful coup. Kissinger ticked off the list of negative repercussions from an unsuccessful coup. The CIA record of the meeting continues:

5. It was decided by those present that the Agency must get a message to Viaux warning him against any precipitate action. In essence our message was to state: "We have reviewed your plans, and based on your information and ours, we come to the conclusion that your plans for a coup at this time cannot succeed. Failing, they may reduce your capabilities for the future. Preserve your assets. We will stay in touch. The time will come when you with all your other friends can do something. You will continue to have our support."

6. After the decision to de-fuse the Viaux coup plot, at least temporarily, Dr. Kissinger instructed Mr. Karamessines to preserve Agency assets in Chile, working clandestinely and securely to maintain the capability for Agency operations against Allende in the future.

8. The meeting concluded on Dr. Kissinger's note that the Agency should continue keeping the pressure on every Allende weak spot in sight--now, after the 24th of October, after 5 November, and into the future until such time as new marching orders are given. Mr. Karamessines stated that the Agency would comply.

(Memorandum of Conversation/Dr. Kissinger, Mr. Karamessines, Gen. Haig at the White House, 15 October 1970)

**TOP SECRET**

498  
meeting on the 15th (see below) to have discussed the results of the October 14th message. But the CIA record makes no mention of any such discussion. (Kissinger testimony, p. 53)

October 14

The Senior Review Group met to discuss Chile. (Karamessines calendar)

October 15

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(Memorandum of Conversation/Dr. Kissinger, Mr. Karamessines, Gen. Haig at the White House, 15 October 1970)



Kissinger, in his testimony before the Committee, regarded the CIA memorandum of conversation as substantially correct, although somewhat more detailed than he would have remembered. (Kissinger testimony, p. 52) He believed the Agency had been told to "stand down and preserve your assets."

Kissinger believed that the gist of the October 15th meeting as recorded in the CIA memorandum was incompatible with the order the CIA issued to its Station the next day, an order ostensibly based on the October 15th meeting. And, he noted, in writing its memorandum of the meeting of the 15th, the CIA had a "high incentive to preserve the maximum degree of authority." (Ibid., pp. 55-56) The October 16th order indicated that Track II had been reviewed at "high USG level" the previous day, and stated:

2. It is firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup. It would be much preferable to have this transpire prior to 24 October but efforts in this regard will continue vigorously beyond this date....

4. There is great<sup>6</sup> and continuing interest in the activities of ~~(Sandoz)~~ ~~(Sandoz)~~ Valenzuela et al and we wish them optimum good fortune.

(Headquarters 802, 16 October 1970)

Kissinger recalled the October 15th conversation as "turning off the coup plans rather than giving a new order to do them." (Kissinger testimony, p. 56) Haig agreed in his testimony.

The conclusions of that meeting were that we had better not do anything rather than something that was not going to succeed....My general feeling was, I left that meeting with the impression that there was nothing authorized."

(Haig testimony, p. 13)

Lodge further warned that "the US must not appear publicly in the matter, thus giving the 'kiss of death' to its friends" (Cable, Lodge to Harriman, 8/26/63).