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an oil drum.

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

Who Killed John Roselli?

But we haven't told you the strangest part of all yet, the part you're really not going to believe. It is that when the great national political community of solons, scribes, gentlemen, spies and managers of the general-wellbeing heard about poor Johnny, they said: "Oh, Momo." Some of them hurt harder, of course. They said: "Fancy that!" But most of them did nothing at all except say: "Momo."

WE'RE GOING TO tell you a little story now. Once there was a President who was murdered. His brother was murdered too. A long time after they died some very strange facts came to light. It turned out that while they were running the government, the government was trying to get two Mafia mobsters to arrange the murder of someone else—the head of a small, hostile neighbor state. It also turned out that one brother—the one who was President—apparently had a girlfriend who was the girlfriend as well of one of the mobsters. And one of the mobsters, whose nickname was Momo, was prominent on the list of criminals the President's brother was trying to put in jail. The story may sound complicated, but life is complicated, and the complications in this case got even more so. For when a committee of the Congress wanted the two mobsters to come and tell them something about all this, only one of them—the one called Johnny—came. The other one, Momo, was murdered in his house a week before they wanted him to testify. Johnny, however, told his story to one committee and then went to Florida. There he was murdered. His body was found in an oil drum. Then some fishermen found him, dead in

Forgive us for lapsing into storybook. We do it for a reason which is that the simple unadorned facts of the John and Robert Kennedy-Fidel Castro-CIA-Mafia-Momo Giancana-Johnny Roselli-Judith Exner-Church Committee-Schweiker Committee saga need to be put forward in stark outline for their meaning to be understood. It is really, as the sophisticated wisdom goes, "paranoid" on our part to brood about the suggestive and possibly monstrous interconnections between all these facts and to wonder why they are not the object of intense press and government scrutiny? What accounts for the general indifference in high places? What accounts for the eagerness with which we all seem to accept that familiar tipoff that we shall be hearing no more about the latest crime—i.e., the pronouncement that Mr. Roselli's dispatch to an oil drum and Beyond had "all the earmarks of a gangland slaying." Those are the good old "earmarks" we hear about when it is just too certain, that we shall hear nothing more.

The supposition of course is that the Gang which runs gangland has its reasons and its methods and that, disagreeable as these may be, they really lie outside the proper realm of public concern because they amount to a system of justice which 1) only affects those dumb enough to get involved in it in the first place and 2) tends only to punish those who have committed what the rest of us would regard as heinous crimes anyway. Not that these are things people can be expected to assume. But we think in this case the assumptions have even less validity than they would have on a clear day, which isn't much. And that is because if we know anything, we know that the Mafia operations in which Messrs. Giancana and Roselli figured had become intertwined with the operations of the United States government. Never mind that the decisions of the guilty bigwigs which made this so may rank among the most abominable decisions ever taken in the U.S. government. The plain fact is that, given the provocative and suggestive history of the two men, it is not possible for either Congress or the Executive Branch to look the other way or to complainantly accept the earmarks-a gangland slaying.

After Mr. Giancana was killed, the Church Committee and the Schweiker Committee took up the trail. The director of the CIA, William Colby, felt obliged to state that the CIA had nothing to do with the murder—and Mr. Colby likewise pronounced the other day that he was certain the CIA had not done in Mr. Roselli. The mere fact that the question is raised these were meant to be the answers, bad enough, raised tells us, anyway, that much more in the way of inquiry is warranted. We have urged the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence as well as the Justice Department to make an investigation of Mr. Roselli's death. We think the Department should not only make that investigation, despite FBI Director Clarence Kelley's disclaimer of jurisdiction, should advise the Attorney General's personal attention. Such attention is needed because of the elaborate and not entirely reassuring history of relationships between the FBI and the CIA and the various participants in the whole sorry saga.

We are not suggesting that any agency of government—or even any of those agency's fringe retainers—were the murderers. We are suggesting that there is an overlay of potentially embarrassing information sufficiently persuasive to keep an awful lot of people from wanting to have this thing aired. We also think that the Select Committee should reserve the right to pursue the matter. Congress, after all, can hardly be expected to sit idly by while its witnesses are being done in. Nor do we see how the public can be granted the political establishment, in particular can turn its attention away just when we are all satisfied that a much greater effort must be made by the government—which means both the Executive Branch and the Congress—to insure that the enactments were not the subjects of appalling crimes and scandals.

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Dr. HAROLD H. KNOX, who has published studies, and our best histori