

# INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

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TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1978

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS,  
*Washington, D.C.*

The select committee met, pursuant to adjournment, at 9:15 a.m., in room 345, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Louis Stokes (chairman of the select committee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Stokes, Devine, Preyer, McKinney, Sawyer, Dodd, Ford, Fithian, and Edgar.

Staff present: G. Robert Blakey, chief counsel and staff director; Leodis Matthews, staff counsel; and Elizabeth L. Berning, chief clerk.

Chairman STOKES. A quorum being present, the committee will come to order.

The Chair recognizes Professor Blakey.

## NARRATION BY G. ROBERT BLAKEY, CHIEF COUNSEL

Mr. BLAKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In late March and early April of this year, three members of the select committee—yourself, Congressman Preyer, and Congressman Dodd—as well as three staff members, traveled to Cuba. It was the first of two trips in which the committee sought firsthand information about Lee Harvey Oswald's alleged visit to the Cuban consulate in Mexico City, as well as other evidence about the Kennedy assassination. During the trip to Havana the committee representatives were given an opportunity to interview President Castro himself.

In a 4-hour session, which was tape recorded, President Castro denied that he or any official of his government had anything to do with the death of President Kennedy or with Lee Harvey Oswald other than the visit to the Cuban consulate in September of 1963.

The committee asked President Castro a series of questions. First, the committee asked him to recount whatever details he had learned and could recall regarding Oswald's two visits to the Cuban consulate in Mexico City in September 1963.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that JFK F-429A, a photo taken during the interview of President Castro, be displayed and entered into the record at this point.

Chairman STOKES. Without objection, it may be entered into the record at this place and displayed.

[The information follows:]



JFK EXHIBIT F-429A

Mr. BLAKEY. In addition, may a tape of that interview, JFK F-429B, and a transcript, JFK F-429C, also be included in the record at this point?

Chairman STOKES. Without objection, it may be entered into the record at this point.

[Tape referred to above is retained in committee files.]

[The information follows:]

JFK EXHIBIT F-429C

INTERVIEW OF  
FIDEL CASTRO RUZ  
PRESIDENT OF CUBA

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STAFF REPORT

of the

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION

September 18, 1978

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

Ninety-Fifth Congress  
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## INTRODUCTION

This Staff Report contains an interview held with Fidel Castro on April 3, 1978. It is President Castro's story as told by President Castro, about major areas of the Committee's concern.

President Castro's words have been transcribed from the contemporaneous translations of Juanita Vera and Nellie Ruiz de Zarade. Their translations have been used so as to provide as accurate a transcription as possible. It is based solely on statements made by President Castro; it does not rely upon or cite other source material, or evidence the Committee has uncovered. It is based on an interview conducted by the Committee and staff with President Castro in Havana, Cuba. This interview, released today in its entirety, will also be published as an appendix to the Final Report of the Select Committee on Assassinations.

This Staff Report should not be read as "implying" that the Committee believes or disbelieves the statements made. The Committee is currently analyzing and investigating all aspects of the subjects raised in this interview that are related to this investigation. The Final Report will contain a complete analysis of the subjects discussed during the interview related to the investigation. The Final Report will also incorporate all the material that the Select Committee has acquired as a result of its investigation.

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EXCERPT A

Lee Harvey Oswald's Visits  
to the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City

Stokes: Mr. President, did it come to your attention shortly after the assassination that Lee Harvey Oswald, who was the accused assassin, had had contact with your Embassy in Mexico City?

Castro: Yes. In fact, it was after Kennedy's death that he caught my attention. Because here nobody receives news about anyone filing applications for a visa. These things are always solved through the Office of The Minister of Foreign Affairs. So it never is taken to the government. You know, it is not necessary. This is normal routine work. None of us has anything to do with visas. Some officials knew about it when somebody in particular filed an application there. But tens - or maybe hundreds of thousands of people file applications. But when Kennedy was assassinated and Oswald's actions were published in the newspapers, the officials who had handled visa applications realized that this Oswald could be the same Oswald who had gone to the Consulate in order to apply for a visa. That is why we had news about it, you know? After Kennedy's death we learned that a man by the name of Oswald had gone to the Consulate and filled out an application for a visa - that he had been told that we did not normally give an intransit visa until the country of destination granted one. And,

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then we were told that a person had gotten very upset and had protested in an irate manner because he could not receive a visa. This was the news I had, more or less. The rest you know.

Stokes: We were wondering your . . .

Castro: There is something I would like to add in that connection. You see, it was always very much suspicious to me --that a person who later appeared to be involved in Kennedy's death would have requested a visa from Cuba. Because, I said to myself - what would have happened had by any chance that man come to Cuba - visited Cuba - gone back to the States and then appeared involved in Kennedy's death? That would have really been a provocation - a gigantic provocation. Well, that man did not come to Cuba simply because that was the norm -- we rejected visa applications . . like that. In those days the mechanism was very rigid because, of course, we had suspicions of anyone who tried to come to Cuba. People in charge of granting visas asked themselves: Why does (this applicant) want to come to Cuba? What kind of counter-revolutionary activity could he carry out in Cuba? Maybe the people thought that the person was a CIA or FBI agent, you know, so it was very difficult for a North American, just from his own wishes, to come to Cuba -- because systematically we denied the visas. So, I think that there could always be an exception, but in those times it was very, very difficult to have anyone from the United States come into



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Cuba because there was a tremendous suspicion and because in general permits to (travel to Cuba) were denied. Now, if it was a transit visa going toward another country - let's say -- had the Soviet Union granted the visa, you may be sure that our Consul would have granted the transit visa because the person would not be coming to Cuba only, but would be going to another country. The person would have to come (here) and if the Soviets would have granted the visa, then that would have accredited the person..like, you know, the person would have been given a transit visa because I feel that if the Soviets had granted the visa, then he would have come here. (In that era) it was not so crazy (that he tried) to come to Cuba because if he had obtained the visa from another country, it would have been for certain that our Consul would have granted him the visa to stop here. Now, can you imagine if that person had been to Cuba in October and then in November the President of the United States would have been killed? That is why it has always been something -- a very obscure thing -- something suspicious -- because I interpreted it as a deliberate attempt to link Cuba with Kennedy's death. That is one of the things that seemed to me very strange. . . .

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Stokes: Let me ask you this question, Mr. President. One of the persons that we have talked with since we have been here in Havana has been your former Consul, Mr. Azcue, who was produced at our request by your officials here. He told us that with reference to the man who appeared at your Embassy and who filled out an application for an intransit visa, that the photograph which appears on the visa application is the photograph of the man who died in the United States as Lee Harvey Oswald, but, that this man was not the individual who had appeared at your Embassy in Mexico City. And, my question would be in two parts: One, have you had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Azcue? And secondly, from all the information available to you, would this be your opinion also -- that the man who appeared at the Embassy was an imposter?

Castro: Actually, I don't have an opinion about that. I wouldn't be able to say whether I've met Azcue once. I don't remember now. I have no recollection at present of having met Azcue. Because I had been given the information about all that, I myself did not know whether he was in Mexico or here. It is very likely that I have seen him some time; however, I don't recall having met Azcue those days. Secondly, about the idea of an imposter, I have no special theory on that. As far as I have understood, Azcue has an

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idea on that. I've heard those comments before -- comments about the possibility of a difference, that he noticed the difference between the person who appeared requesting the visa and the person known as Oswald. But, I don't have a theory on that. It is likely that there could be two different people. But, now I am thinking -- if the person had obtained the visa, would he have visited Cuba? That is a hypothesis. What did he want the visa for? From my point of view, the individual could have come to Cuba and compromised us. He would have us compromised. It seems to me that to apply for the visa had the purpose of having the individual come to Cuba. Now, we would have to enter into many conjectures to reach a conclusion on that. Because where did he get the passports? Where did he find the passports that he was taking there? Where was Oswald's passport? What became of Oswald's passports? Those papers should be somewhere.

I don't know what could have been the sense of sending another man. But I wouldn't dare deny that possibility. Actually, we would have to know what would have been the purpose. Why would another person have been sent? I don't know whether you would have a theory about that. Personally, I don't have a theory.

Villa: About the possibility of an imposter, in public sources we have read that the possibility exists that there could be a double that carried out some actions that the real Oswald did not on some occasions in 1963.

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Castro: There is something that I can guarantee. The Cuban government believes that Azcue is a serious and honest man; and that he has never said something differently from what he said the first time. He has more or less kept his story -- as far as I know. I mean, he is a person you can trust. He is a trustful man. That is all I can say about Azcue. But, I may say that if many people have elaborated theories, I am not among them.

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EXCERPT B

Comer Clark's Allegation

Cornwell: One passage reads as follows:

An interview in July 1967 with a British journalist, Comer Clark...do you have the translation of it there?

Villa: Yes.

Castro: Let me see it. I have it here.

Pause: (Approximately one minute while President Castro reads it.)

Castro: This is absurd. I didn't say that.

Cornwell: Did the interview ever occur?

Castro: It has been invented from the beginning until the end.

I didn't say that. How could I say that?

It's a lie from head to toe. If this man would have done something like that, it would have been our moral duty to inform the United States. You understand? Because if a man comes here, mentions that he wants to kill Kennedy, we are (being provoked), do you realize that? It would have been similar to a mad person. If somebody comes to us and said that, it would have been our moral responsibility to inform the United States. How could we accept a man from Mexico to Cuba who tells us that he is going to kill President Kennedy? If somebody is trying to create provocation or a trap, and uh--we would have denounced

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him. Sure, a person coming here or even in one of our embassies saying that--and that never happened--in no part, as far as I know.

Escartin: That refers to the interview you spoke about in the beginning.

Castro: But how could they interview me in a pizzeria? I never go to public restaurants and that man invented that. That was invented from the upper to the bottom. I do not remember that. And, it is a surprise for me to see because I couldn't have said that. You have to see who wrote it. And, what is the job of that journalist? What is he engaged in? And, what prestige has this journalist? Not the one that wrote that book, but the origin of that version. You should have to find who he is and why he wrote it, and with whom he is related--and which sense they have to attribute those words which are absolutely invented. I think it is possible that you would be able to find out who that journalist was. Do you have some news about that journalist in that newspaper?

Villa: He was in Cuba and tried to carry out an interview with you.

Castro: Let me tell you. Of every one hundred interviews that are requested of me I only grant one because

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if I were to give all the interviews that I am requested to, you can be sure that I would not be able to have anything but twenty-four hours of my life to have interviews. I would not have enough time to do anything else. Barbara Walters waited three years for an interview--just almost three years. And even that of Moyers. I didn't want to have that Moyers interview. He started talking and the truth is that he was very insistent from the time he came down from the airplane and in spite of the fact that there was no commitment from me regarding the interview. I granted one. There are a lot of interview requests and it is very difficult, but I would never have given a journalist an interview in a pizzeria.

Dodd: I don't even give interviews in a pizzeria.

Villa: Another element commander. That interview was published in a sensationalist or yellow press from the United States. It is a non-serious newspaper.

Castro: Especially at that time, a lot of barbaric things were published--a lot of lies.

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EXCERPT C

Use of Assassinations

As a Political Weapon

Castro: . . . . . It was really something inconceivable - could have the idea of killing the President? First, because that would have been a tremendous insanity. The Cuban Revolutionaries and the people who have made this Revolution have proven to be intrepid and to make decisions in the right moment. But, we have not proven to be insane people. The leaders of the Revolution do not do crazy things and have always been extremely concerned to prevent any factor that could become a kind of an argument or a pretext for carrying out aggression against our country. We are a very small country. We have the United States 90 miles from our shore which is a very large, powerful country economically, technically, militarily. So, for many years we lived concerned that an invasion could take place..I mean, indirect and at the end a direct aggression. We were very close to that. Yet look at the conclusions we draw. If the elections of 1960 had not been won by Kennedy, but Nixon instead, during the Bay of Pigs, the United States would have invaded Cuba. We mean that in the midst of the fight that Kennedy followed the line that had been already traced.



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There is no doubt that we appreciate very highly the fact that Kennedy resisted every kind of pressure not to have the Marines land in our country. Because, there were many people who wanted the Marines to land here. Nixon himself was in favor of that. Had Nixon been President during the Bay of Pigs invasion, a landing by the military army of the United States would have taken place. We are absolutely convinced of that. However, Kennedy resisted all the pressures and he did not do that. What would that have meant for us? The destruction of the country? Hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of deaths? Because, undoubtedly the people would fight. The people I am absolutely sure about. An invasion of Cuba by the United States would have cost hundreds of thousands of lives, maybe millions of lives. We were aware of that. We have an American military base in our territory, by force. And, it is not assumed that anyone is going to have a military base on someone else's territory, if it is not on the basis of an agreement. However, the United States has military bases in many places of the world, but here, it is by force. From that base, many provocations have been carried out against Cuba. There were people wounded...there were people killed. What did we do? We brought our guards away from the lines, from the fence.

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We never shot at them. Why? Because we made every possible effort so that an incident of that kind would not become a pretext to be attacked. So, we have followed the policy. We had an American boat just three miles away from us for years, a warship full of electronic communications equipment and never a hostile action was carried against that warship. So, there are many events that have proven how careful Cuba has always been to prevent the perpetration of an invasion. We could have died heroically - no doubt about it. Now, that would have been a victory for our people. They're willing to be sacrificed and to die. Yet, it would have been just another page in history..nothing else. So, we have always been very much aware to not give The United States the pretext..the possibility .. for (an invasion.) What was the cause of the missile crisis? The need we had to seek protection in case of an (invasion) from the United States. We agreed on the installation of the (strategic) missiles, because undoubtedly that diminished the danger of direct aggression. That became a danger of another kind, a kind of a global danger we became, but we were trying to protect our country at all times. Who here could have operated and planned something so delicate as the death of the United States President. That was insane. From the

ideological point of view it was insane. And from the political point of view, it was a tremendous insanity. I am going to tell you here that nobody, nobody ever had the idea of such things. What would it do? We just tried to defend our folks here, within our territory. Anyone who subscribed to that idea would have been judged insane, absolutely sick. Never, in twenty years of revolution, I never heard anyone suggest nor even speculate about a measure of that sort, because who could think of the idea of organizing the death of the President of the United States. That would have been the most perfect pretext for the United States to invade our country which is what I have tried to prevent for all these years, in every possible sense. Since the United States is much more powerful than we are, what could we gain from a war with the United States? The United States would lose nothing. The destruction would have been here. The United States had U-2 air surveillancing for almost fifteen years. The planes flew over our territory every day. The women said that they could not go over their terrace naked for the U-2 would have taken a picture of them. That thing we could not allow to happen, you know, because it was demoralizing. So, there were, you know, those flights just very close to the soil. Those kind of flights was really demoralizing for our people. It was impossible to let

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them continue to do that, so we had to shoot at them. On the following day after the missile crisis, we had the need to shoot at those planes, because to have allowed that would have created a demoralization among our people. And, I say that if we allowed that, you wouldn't have been able even to play baseball here. Because those planes came just twenty meters from here, so it was really demoralizing. See, the U-2 came very high, you know, and I tell you, Cuba has been characterized by following a firm policy, a policy of principles. Our position was known after the missile crisis. We were not in a position to make any concessions. That is a known position, but Cuba, the leaders of the Cuban Revolution, have never made that kind of insanity, and that I may assure you. And the biggest kind of insanity that could have gone through anyone's mind here would have been that of thinking of killing the President of the United States. Nobody would have thought of that. In spite of all the things, in spite of all the attempts, in spite of all the irritation that brought about an attitude of firmness, a willingness to fight, that was translated by our people into a spirit of heroism, but it never became a source of insanity. I'll give you practical reasons. Apart from our ideology, I want to tell you that the death of the

leader does not change the system. It has never done that. And, the best example we have is Batista. Batista murdered thousands of our comrades. If there was anyone in which that kind of revenge was justified, it was Batista. However, our movement did very difficult things, but it never had the idea of physically eliminating Batista. Other revolutionary groups did, but never our movement. We had a war for twenty-five months against Batista's army and spent seven years under Batista's dictatorship with thousands dying. But, it never came to our minds.. we could have done it, very well, but we never thought about that, because it was different from our feelings. That is our position. That is why we are interested. That is why I was asking you whether you are really hopeful to give serious conclusions on this. On our part, if there is something we could give you, we would, without any kind of precondition. The information we have offered you is not conditioned to anything. In spite of the fact that the problem is thorny, that doesn't stop this Committee here from giving the impression that we are being judged here, that we are being tried.

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EXCERPT D

Statements Made By Fidel Castro

At the Brazilian Embassy on September 7, 1963

Castro: . . . . . Then a journalist asked me ... and the purpose I had ... I don't remember literally what I said, but I remember my intention in saying what I said and it was to warn the government that we know about the (at-tempted) plots against our lives. I mean, in one way or the other to let the United States government know that we knew about the existence of those plots. So, I said something like those plots start to set a very bad precedent, a very serious one -- that that could become a boomerang against the authors of those actions ... but I did not mean to threaten by that. I did not mean even that .. not in the least .. but rather, like a warning that we knew; that we had news about it; and that to set those precedents of plotting the assassination of leaders of other countries would be a very bad precedent .. something very negative. And, if at present, the same would happen under the same circumstances, I would have no doubt in saying the same as I said (then) because I didn't mean a threat by that. I didn't say it as a threat. I did not mean by that that we were going to take measures - similar measures - like a retaliation for that. We never

meant that because we knew that there were plots. For three years we had known that there were plots against us. So, the conversation came about very casually, you know; but I would say that all these plots or attempts were part of the everyday life.

I do remember about being in the Brazilian Embassy at that time ... that I did make a statement in that sense ... in the sense that I was informed of the plots and that that was a very bad precedent to form the various principles in relation to ...

KENNEDY

## SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

Name Fidel Castro Ruz Date April 3, 1978 Time 6:30 PM  
 Address Havana, Cuba Place Presidential offices

Interview: Present were President Fidel Castro and his interpreter, Senorita Juanita Vera, Captain Felipe Villa, Senor Ricardo Escartin, Zenen Buergo, and Alfredo Ramirez (representing the Government of Cuba). Also present representing the Government of the United States were Congressmen Louis Stokes, Richardson Preyer, Christopher Dodd and staff personnel of HSCA: G. Robert Blakey, Chief Counsel, Gary Cornwell, Deputy Chief Counsel and Edwin Lopez, Researcher/Translator.

The meeting opened and President Castro stated:

Castro: Do you have the supposed statements that I have made? I have tried to remember. There is an individual who says that he interviewed me in a restaurant. That is very strange. I tried to recall him, you know. I tried to recall (the proposed) interview and on one occasion (he) said that it was in a (pizzeria). I just reached a conclusion not only because of the circumstances in which he says the interview was made, but also because of the content of the interview . . . or the alleged interview. I am absolutely certain that that

Interviewer Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Typed Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date transcribed started July 10  
1978



interview never took place. Now, I will have to check that about the (alleged interview at the Brazilian Embassy) because that is true. I mean it's true that I went to the Brazilian Embassy. I've been trying to remember, and I recall the following: It is not that I found out that an attempt was being plotted. Villa, when did an interview occur?

Villa: In September or sometime in 1961. We spoke about my talks with Bill Moyers.

Castro: That I said that was a long time. It was not recent because the attempt was in the time started at the planned date of my time in Cuba. I would say that since 1958 that we knew of it. We were constantly aware of people coming in, the CIA and being provided equipment of the CIA and people into the country with explosives, with automatic target rifles, even barbed wire -- every kind of weapon. Were they organized, since very early, plots at Guantanamo Base. So, that was very well known to us. Then a journalist asked me ... and the purpose I had ... I don't remember literally what I said, but I remember my intention in saying what I said and it was to warn the government that we know about the (attempted) plots against our lives. I mean, in one way or the other to let the United States government know that we knew about the existence of those plots. So, I said something like those plots start to set a very bad precedent,

a very serious one -- that that could become a boomerang against the authors of those actions ... but I did not mean to threaten by that. I did not mean even that .. not in the least .. but rather, like a warning that we knew; that we had news about it; and that to set those precedents of plotting the assassination of leaders of other countries would be a very bad precedent .. something very negative. And, if at present, the same would happen under the same circumstances, I would have no doubt in saying the same as I said (then) because I didn't mean a threat by that. I didn't say it as a threat. I did not mean by that that we were going to take measures - similar measures - like a retaliation for that. We never meant that because we knew that there were plots. For three years we had known that there were plots against us. So, the conversation came about very casually, you know; but I would say that all these plots or attempts were part of the everyday life.

I do remember about being in the Brazilian Embassy at that time ... that I did make a statement in that sense ... in the sense that I was informed of the plots and that that was a very bad precedent to form the various principles in relation to ... I remember (another nefarious precedent) was that of the hijacking of planes. The first planes hijacked in this area were Cuban planes, and the hijacking of the planes was encouraged by the United States government. Even an amount of money was offered as a

reward to the people that hijacked a Cuban plane. And later what happened? Well, it was all the way around -- terrorist elements and insane elements and every kind of people. (Once) the precedent was established, these people started to hijack planes. And that is what I may tell you is part of that experience. And I repeat again that if a similar situation would come about, I could say just the same words -- I could say just-the same. Now, I cannot guarantee because I don't have the exact recollection. I don't have the exact copy of what I said literally. And, of course, one always has to be careful with the versions even on a given statement. But now, what were the intentions of that man when he wrote that he had interviewed me in the restaurant, and writing the things he wrote? There was a deliberate purpose -- of creating confusion, of planting confusion and trying to have Cuba involved in these events.

Stokes: Mr. President, as a result of the statements or the conversation you had with this gentleman at that time, did you ever hear from President Kennedy?

Castro: I am trying to recall the date. I can tell you that in the period in which Kennedy's assassination took place Kennedy was changing his policy toward Cuba. I mean by that he was not adopting measures, not in fact. The whole style and aggressive measures against Cuba existed for many years. First of all, the Bay of Pigs; then the

missile crisis; then the piratic attacks -- those attacks which were organized in Central America and Miami, at a time at which they sent the mother boats to attack the refineries, the warehouses, boats, merchant ships, port installations and even the (innocent) population was also attacked in those days by these people. It has been known later - more or less - for how long these actions lasted. Now at that time, Kennedy was starting to question all these things. One of the facts, one of the events, was that an American official from the United Nations called my house. I don't speak English, so he spoke to one of my comrades who was with me there. After that, I've been able to go with more accuracy through those things. And, I think it was Atwood. I think it was Atwood because later he was appointed Ambassador to Guinea, and that was very significant because it was the first time such a thing happened -- the first time such a gesture came about. And, you could see undisputably that a new trend was coming (into) existence in the sense of established contacts. So, it was a sort of a change (in) policy. I don't recollect exactly what month it was. Have you been able to reconstruct the time at which Atwood (phoned me) at my house?

Escartin: We have been able to reconstruct that date around (inaudible).

Castro: Well, that was after the missile crisis, I think. That was after the Bay of Pigs and the missile crisis. I was of the opinion that the only man who could change that policy was Kennedy himself, because it seemed to me that at

that time it was not a time of the Bay of Pigs. At that time he had more experience. And, he had much more authority. Maybe after the missile crisis, he had much more influence. I was convinced that Kennedy was the man with enough talent and enough courage to question and change that policy. And, people started to (feel) about it. And I felt that a positive act was that famous speech he made at the American University. It was a speech about the need for peace, the need for prevention of war, the destructions that Hitler's invasion on the Soviet Union had caused. (He expressed this) in terms that he had not used for a long time -- that had not been used in the American theory for a long time. I have read all over that speech again. I cannot say that that's a perfect (speech), I feel that it had some gaps, but if you bear in mind what he said, at the moment he said it, in the midst of the cold war, there is no doubt that those statements were of a tremendous value. Now, in addition to that, the unfortunate circumstance happened that in the days previous to Kennedy's death a French journalist visited our country -- Jean Daniels. Then he told me .. he said that he was interested in having a discussion about a special topic with me. I remember that I took him with me to Veradero. Then, in the morning -- it was the morning on the way to Veradero and also at the beach he was explaining to me his purpose. We were talking about all this.

And, I would say that he was bringing a kind of message from Kennedy. In substance, as far as I remember now, he himself has spoken about this on several occasions. But, the most important thing was he told me that Kennedy had explained to him the great danger that existed during the missile crisis, and that Kennedy asked himself whether I (also) was aware of the whole danger that was announced at the time of the missile crisis. But, he was (somewhat) traumatized with all the remembrances of those days. When Kennedy found out that this journalist was coming to Cuba - he had a long talk with this journalist. (He asked the journalist to talk with me, and then return to Washington with a response). We were just talking in those terms. He had to finish explaining to me everything he had talked about with Kennedy and I had to give him an answer about all this. But then at lunchtime or after lunch -- I don't remember quite well -- the first news started to arrive by radio that an attempt against Kennedy had taken place and that he had been seriously wounded precisely at the moment that we were having that talk and that came to be another symptom, that Kennedy was questioning the policy that had been followed so far. Maybe he was elaborating some formula in order to have that policy changed. (From our) point of view, Mr. Kennedy was the only man that at that point had the authority and enough courage in order to bring about the change in that policy.

That was my opinion at that time.

Stokes: Do you remember the name of the journalist?

Castro: Jean Daniel -- a French journalist -- very well known -- enjoys prestige. He (had) met with Kennedy for some time, and he was well impressed with Kennedy and he was precisely letting us know (about) the whole interview with Kennedy, and the things that he had talked about with Kennedy regarding Cuba. It was assumed that I had to tell him something so that he would go back and convey it to Kennedy. But, before we had just finished with our conversation, the news arrived of the attempt against Kennedy's life. Actually, we were very much concerned and immediately we suspected that an effort could be made in order to try to link us... to link that death attempt with the Cuban problems. Because immediately, you know, it seemed to (us that) also within that atmosphere of a cold war, some people could try to have us linked with Kennedy's death -- to the point that we were very concerned and we thought about the measures that we could take in the face of a danger of that sort.

Stokes: Mr. President, I think perhaps in that respect that it might be good for you to tell us what your reaction and that of the Cuban people was to the assassination of President Kennedy.

Castro: I have no objection in telling you my reaction. It was a natural and logical reaction. Actually, I felt sad about it. I received that news with bitterness. Reasons?

First, I think an event of that nature always produces that reaction even when it is a political adversary. It's kind of a repulsion, a rejection. In the second place, I think I have said before that Kennedy was an adversary that we had sort of become used to. I mean that political, a strong political struggle existed. But, he was a known adversary. He was somebody we knew. We had (undergone) the Bay of Pigs, we had had the missile crisis -- so many things had happened. And, at least he was an adversary we knew about. And all of a sudden, you have the impression that something is missing . . . that something is missing. (Thirdly,) on the basis of very deep political feelings, I think the first thing I learned from Marxism was the idea that situations, societies and social processes do not depend on men, but rather that there is a system; and the system cannot be changed by changing the men even on the basis of an old controversy. For the very past century among revolutionaries, between those who thought that the Czar should be eliminated or that the emperor had to be eliminated because they were the chiefs. That was the theory of dictatorships. Marxists always have been opposed to the idea of killing or having a person killed. That was a very much debated topic among the Marxist (elements). That is one of the first things the Marxists learned; and that it doesn't make sense to kill the political leaders . . . to such an extent



that in our own experience here (in Cuba) it never came to our minds the idea that Batista's regime could be eliminated by eliminating the person. We attacked a regiment with 120 men ... over 120 men ... one of the strongest regiments of the country ... in order to take hold of the weapons and to start a struggle against Batista. And, it never came to our minds the idea of killing Batista. If we had wanted to eliminate Batista, we would have been able to. Later 82 men came back to the country from Mexico in a boat that was barely 60 feet long. We traveled 1500 kilometers. We started a war in Sierra Maestra and it never came to our minds the idea of eliminating Batista physically. (Some) people thought that killing Batista would change the system. And finally, maybe one of the things that I regretted the most was that I was convinced that Kennedy was starting to change, himself. And, I was going by the (impression) that I was here talking to that man who was bringing a message from him. Actually, I was sad. I was very badly depressed. The impression I got was very bad. I was very sad about it. He was an adversary; a man with his personal characteristics .. being intelligent.. you may always have the adversaries, but you have an assessment of them as a person, as an intellectual, as political leaders. To a certain extent we were honored

in having such a rival. He was not mediocre. He was an outstanding man. And, that was my reaction.

Stokes: Mr. President, did it come to your attention shortly after the assassination that Lee Harvey Oswald, who was the accused assassin, had had contact with your Embassy in Mexico City?

Castro: Yes. In fact, it was after Kennedy's death that he caught my attention. Because here nobody receives news about anyone filing applications for a visa. These things are always solved through the Office of The Minister of Foreign Affairs. So it never is taken to the government. You know, it is not necessary. This is normal routine work. None of us has anything to do with visas. Some officials knew about it when somebody in particular filed an application there. But tens - or maybe hundreds of thousands of people file applications. But when Kennedy was assassinated and Oswald's actions were published in the newspapers, the officials who had handled visa applications realized that this Oswald could be the same Oswald who had gone to the Consulate in order to apply for a visa. That is why we had news about it, you know? After Kennedy's death we learned that a man by the name of Oswald had gone to the Consulate and filled out an application for a visa - that he had been told that we did not normally give an intransit visa until the country of destination granted one. And,

then we were told that a person had gotten very upset and had protested in an irate manner because he could not receive a visa. This was the news I had, more or less. The rest you know.

Stokes: We were wondering your . . .

Castro: There is something I would like to add in that connection. You see, it was always very much suspicious to me --that a person who later appeared to be involved in Kennedy's death would have requested a visa from Cuba. Because, I said to myself - what would have happened had by any chance that man come to Cuba - visited Cuba - gone back to the States and then appeared involved in Kennedy's death? That would have really been a provocation - a gigantic provocation. Well, that man did not come to Cuba simply because that was the norm -- we rejected visa applications .. like that. In those days the mechanism was very rigid because, of course, we had suspicions of anyone who tried to come to Cuba. People in charge of granting visas asked themselves: Why does (this applicant) want to come to Cuba? What kind of counter-revolutionary activity could he carry out in Cuba? Maybe the people thought that the person was a CIA or FBI agent, you know, so it was very difficult for a North American, just from his own wishes, to come to Cuba -- because systematically we denied the visas. So, I think that there could always be an exception, but in those times it was very, very difficult to have anyone from the United States come into

Cuba because there was a tremendous suspicion and because in general permits to (travel to Cuba) were denied. Now, if it was a transit visa going toward another country - let's say -- had the Soviet Union granted the visa, you may be sure that our Consul would have granted the transit visa because the person would not be coming to Cuba only, but would be going to another country. The person would have to come (here) and if the Soviets would have granted the visa, then that would have accredited the person..like, you know, the person would have been given a transit visa because I feel that if the Soviets had granted the visa, then he would have come here. (In that era) it was not so crazy (that he tried) to come to Cuba because if he had obtained the visa from another country, it would have been for certain that our Consul would have granted him the visa to stop here. Now, can you imagine if that person had been to Cuba in October and then in November the President of the United States would have been killed? That is why it has always been something -- a very obscure thing -- something suspicious -- because I interpreted it as a deliberate attempt to link Cuba with Kennedy's death. That is one of the things that seemed to me very strange. (The facts of the events) seemed very strange also. As it was published, Oswald would have shot several times at a car that was moving with a telescopic (rifle). (I remember) when we trained in Mexico in order to come to Cuba to make revolution we had

several guns like that and it could be that we learned almost everything that could be learned about telescopic pistols, even the differences between different pistols; a normal pistol with a trigger, an automatic pistol and a telescopic (rifle). It is much more practical if you use a normal sight . . . when you try to focus a moving target and you (do it) more accurately .. with that kind than with a telescopic sight. A telescopic sight view gun should be used against a fixed target -- not a moving one -- It is very difficult. And, I tell you it seemed very strange that he used that weapon and that those shots could have been made with that kind of weapon. Because, when you shoot the first charge you have to take the weapon away from your face to (focus) it again, to try to find the object again..the target..and you lose time -- it is quite difficult. I don't know whether later things were technical proof - technical tests were made to see whether - just a normal shooter at that distance and at that speed of the car could have (accurately made such shots). That was something else that was very suspicious to me. But, as far as we are concerned, what was most strange was Oswald's attempt to visit Cuba.

Stokes: Realizing, Mr. President, the enormity of the appearance of Oswald at your Embassy and realizing the significance that it had relative to the assassination itself, was it

important enough that you summon individuals who would have knowledge about his appearance to talk with you or to submit written reports relative to this matter?

Castro: I think what happened was the following: Nobody knew that. The comrades who had news of that, after the events took place, they reported it, I think, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. So, the only thing we did was when the Warren Commission was created and it requested information about this, it was agreed to send all the information we had at that time . . . I recall that we were consulted with something about the visa application and we were willing to offer all the information they wanted. Now it was assumed that they were conducting the investigation. If they had wanted some additional action on our part (material from us), they should have (requested) it. But, they did not request any other (information) since . . . as far as I have understood . . . here we spoke with the people (our people) who had been in Mexico and our people went into the details of what really happened. And, that was very well clarified. Beyond this, there was not much more that we could do. You can imagine there was not much that we could contribute. As far as I have understood, the Mexican lady who used to work at the Consulate was later the object of many pressures -- even some kind of persecution.

Villa: She was arrested by the Mexican police with the purpose of finding out what he had said at the Consulate.

Castro: All that they said -- it was assumed that they wanted her

to say that also while at the Embassy he had made reference to killing Kennedy. So the Mexican police had the purpose of having the Mexican declare that.

Villa: Exactly.

Castro: And, who were the people interested in that? Who could be the people interested in that?

Villa: To us that is very clear.

Castro: But, that is something worth to be taken into account. Why would that lady become the object of that oppression? What do you know about this lady now?

Villa: She lives in Mexico at present. She used to work in the Consulate and she was sympathetic of the Cuban revolution.

Castro: She, of course, has a very high merit and that after that, knowing how these things are, a person that did not enjoy the diplomatic immunity could have been coerced. She could have been blackmailed and she could have been submitted by fear, you know, in order to have her make a statement that would be against Cuba -- harmful to Cuba. So, it is a tremendous merit that this Mexican lady did behave the way she did because you know how people are in some countries of the world. They take a helpless woman without any kind of protection and then she can be forced to say anything. One question I would like to raise with you because we are speaking about that topic about which we are very pleased to give you all the opinions and all the cooperation that you might request that is in our hands. Now, do you think you are going to be able to bring out something really clear on the whole work you're

doing? Do you think you are going to be able to reach a clear conclusion?

Stokes: Mr. President, that is the precise reason why we are here in your country. One of the things we said to your top officials Friday morning at our first session was that we came to your country without any preconceived ideas or notions or conclusions of any type. We have tried to pursue the entire investigation in a fair and objective manner, searching only for the truth. The assassination of President Kennedy was a traumatic experience for the American people. And in addition to the trauma which was incurred by them, we found that a Gallup Poll in January of 1977 revealed that 81% of the American people believe that someone other than Lee Harvey Oswald participated in the assassination of President Kennedy. Only 19% believe that he was a lone assassin. Consequently, the mandate given this Committee by the House of Representatives was for us to investigate all of the facts and circumstances surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy. Precisely, it is our job to ascertain who killed the President. Did such a person have help either before or after the assassination? And then to ascertain in that respect whether there was or was not a conspiracy to kill the President. Additionally, we are charged with the responsibility to ascertain the performance of our own agencies in the United States; that is, the FBI, CIA, Secret Service, all of the American agencies



that participated in some way in the investigation conducted by the Warren Commission. And then lastly, our mandate is to make recommendations to the United States Congress based upon our findings as a result of the total investigation. So we have approached the investigation in that way -- hoping that we will be able to ascertain the truth of these facts and then be able to put to bed the theories, the rumors, the speculation that presently exists around the assassination of President Kennedy.

Castro: Have you had a broad access to all the possible sources of information?

Stokes: Yes, we have. If you have reference to our own agencies and our own files, the answer is yes, we have.

Castro: Are you optimistic about the fact that you'll be able to reach a sound conclusion on this problem? Are you optimistic about it?

Stokes: We are optimistic that even though the job is an awesome responsibility for the eleven men and one woman who are members of this Committee, along with the staff of 115 people, all of whom we feel are dedicated to this task, our final report will be one that will be a highly professional and competent job.

Castro: Any other question that you would like to raise I would be pleased to answer.

Stokes: Could we for a moment, Mr. President, go back to the moment you learned about Lee Harvey Oswald having been at your Embassy in Mexico City? Do you recall a speech that you made on the 23rd of November?

Castro: This is on the twenty ... the speech on the 23rd. Did we have the data at that time that Oswald had been at the Embassy?

Villa: No. No.

Castro: So very likely we did not have it. I think I learned about that some days later and not immediately.

Villa: You mentioned that in the speech on November the 27th.

Stokes: 27th - all right. Then my question would be firstly in two parts. One, if he remembered the speech he made on November 27th, and then secondly ...

Castro: But, you should not confuse the man with the system.

Stokes: Yes, right, right. That's what you told us earlier, right.

Castro: That would be a negative fact for the interest of humanity. These ideas I've always had about this.

Stokes: And with reference to the second part of my question regarding the matters which occurred at the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City which you referred to in the November 27th speech. Do you recall from whom you learned what had transpired at your Embassy?

Castro: I cannot recall. It should have been through Foreign Relations or maybe the Minister of the Interior. Somebody reported to me. We were just reported to about the facts -- that a gentleman had appeared at the Embassy requesting a visa by the same name as the man accused of having assassinated Kennedy. I don't remember how it was told to the American authorities. I remember the

Warren Commission requested through the Swiss Interest Section all the information we had about it. And, immediately, we put at their disposal all the materials we had. Because of course, we were interested more than anyone else in those events being clarified. We were more interested than anyone. At the first moment we were somewhat, you know, uncertain about what was behind this -- whether there were some people that wanted to use that in order to promote an aggression against Cuba. We had many reasons to suspect that because tremendous things had happened in that sense. We thought that maybe some very reactionary element could have wanted to eliminate Kennedy and just on the way try to eliminate Cuba, you know. That's why we were observing the whole development of events. But, some days later it started to be clearly seen that it was not a campaign orchestrated against Cuba. But, I'm not - I have no doubt in the least that if they had had the least evidence to link Cuba, that would have been done. A tremendous campaign would have been made and a very dangerous situation would have been created for us. But, now you have to bear in mind, at least to the extent that we know, that the Warren Commission did not make any charge against Cuba, nor did it conduct any effort in that sense. We were under the impression though, that they were working objectively or that if they were able to discover something, they would handle it. They would expose it. But, we thought that the danger

that we were concerned about in the very first moments were then no longer so bad. The fact that somebody went to the Embassy was what brought about the suspicion that somebody had tried to link Cuba. The other theory is that this individual decided himself just because of his initiative -- to visit Cuba - with what purpose? That nobody knows. You would have to have good doses of naivete to think that he was the one who planned the trip to Cuba -- that he planned the trip to the Soviet Union himself. Actually, all of that is very strange, you know, very rare -- that he tried to go to the Soviet Union; that he tried to go through Cuba -- no other place, but through Cuba; because to go to the Soviet Union you don't have to go to Cuba necessarily. And to this we could add the further event that this individual who could have been able to clarify all because who could have shed more light on this than he himself - Oswald - 24 or 48 hours later. How many hours after the event?

Villa: 28 hours.

Castro: He was killed 28 hours after the event. And the only explanation given by the assassin was a sentimental reason. As far as I recall from what I read at that time he said that he had seen Kennedy's widow crying and seen the whole drama. He decided to take revenge with his own hand. And later on it was known that he was not a kind of a sentimental man; I mean to say he's a psychotic character and in the very face of the policemen -

killed the supposed author of Kennedy's death. Because, who could have verified that better? Why was this man killed? I do know that you have more information than I do -- much more information than I may have on Jack Ruby's personality.. and, if Jack Ruby for a kind of strictly sentimental reason would have gone there to the very police station and in the face of the policemen killed the supposed author of Kennedy's death. All this seemed to us very strange. And that is why we gave such importance to the effort he made in the Cuban Embassy. It was a kind of an attempt by somebody to have Cuba involved in the whole affair, in the whole issue. Another reasonable fact which I think deserves attention, a fact that deserves attention - and that is something that was known afterwards when the Senate Committee conducted their investigations was that practically the same day that Kennedy was killed, a CIA agent was going to have an interview. I do not know whether he had planned that interview with an important agent (Cubela) in order to assassinate me. I felt that a poison was going to be given to that person who was supposed to kill me. So, that is another element which is very suspicious. The same day Kennedy is killed, well about those same days, I get an attempt, a very urgent attempt by an individual with a plan to assassinate me. The Senate (Intelligence Committee) did not give his name, but we know who he was. And, there is no doubt that if one

person had the possibility to carry out that attempt, it was that person. Because, he was a man who came from the revolutionary ranks and he had very much good relations with us. So, I would say that among the very many attempts, plans, plots, collaborations of the CIA, this was one that had many possibilities of success because that individual had access to us. And that visit practically coincided -- that's a very suspicious coincidence with the Kennedy assassination - very .. We did not learn this until the Senate Committee investigation was conducted. Now, in connection with this Embassy, what were you interested in -- in connection with the Embassy and the visit?

Stokes: Let me ask you this question, Mr. President. One of the persons that we have talked with since we have been here in Havana has been your former Consul, Mr. Azcue, who was produced at our request by your officials here. He told us that with reference to the man who appeared at your Embassy and who filled out an application for an intransit visa, that the photograph which appears on the visa application is the photograph of the man who died in the United States as Lee Harvey Oswald, but, that this man was not the individual who had appeared at your Embassy in Mexico City. And, my question would be in two parts: One, have you had an opportunity to talk with Mr. Azcue? And secondly, from all the information

available to you, would this be your opinion also -- that the man who appeared at the Embassy was an imposter?

Castro: Actually, I don't have an opinion about that. I wouldn't be able to say whether I've met Azcue once. I don't remember now. I have no recollection at present of having met Azcue. Because I had been given the information about all that, I myself did not know whether he was in Mexico or here. It is very likely that I have seen him some time; however, I don't recall having met Azcue those days. Secondly, about the idea of an imposter, I have no special theory on that. As far as I have understood, Azcue has an idea on that. I've heard those comments before -- comments about the possibility of a difference, that he noticed the difference between the person who appeared requesting the visa and the person known as Oswald. But, I don't have a theory on that. It is likely that there could be two different people. But, now I am thinking -- if the person had obtained the visa, would he have visited Cuba? That is a hypothesis. What did he want the visa for? From my point of view, the individual could have come to Cuba and compromised us. He would have us compromised. It seems to me that to apply for the visa had the purpose of having the individual come to Cuba. Now, we would have to enter into many conjectures to reach a conclusion on that. Because where did he get the passports? Where did he find the passports that he was taking there?

Where was Oswald's passport? What became of Oswald's passports?        Those papers should be somewhere.

I don't know what could have been the sense of sending another man, but I wouldn't dare deny that possibility.

Actually, we would have to know what would have been the purpose. Why would another person have been sent?

I don't know whether you would have a theory about that.

Personally, I don't have a theory.

Villa: About the possibility of an imposter, in public sources we have read that the possibility exists that there could be a double that carried out some actions that the real Oswald did not on some occasions in 1963.

Castro: There is something that I can guarantee. The Cuban government believes that Azcue is a serious and honest man; and that he has never said something differently from what he said the first time. He has more or less kept his story -- as far as I know. I mean, he is a person you can trust. He is a trustful man. That is all I can say about Azcue. But, I may say that if many people have elaborated theories, I am not among them. I have not operated on a theory like that. I just see many strange things that are not logical. It started with the very attempt of the person to come to Cuba; the calibre of weapon used, the absolutely abnormal way in which those people behaved. I mean there have always



been many strange things that made me (suspicious) about other people. I tell you, I read the book. I read that book "The Death of The President" written by Manchester. Manchester had the theory that this man acted alone and he argues a lot. He makes a kind of psychoanalytical (study) of Oswald and he defends the (lone assassin theory). Many people have a different theory. So, I have not been able to elaborate -- I wouldn't dare elaborate a theory -- for with me, everything would be speculation. On our account and because of our interest, some time ago we started gathering elements in order to have a better founded idea, you know. And, that is why our people started to gather materials and information. A group of comrades has been working in this direction. But, I am very much aware that we don't have access to (sources) of information which are fundamental. We have no access to the CIA archives or the FBI archives. We don't have access to the Warren Commission's files. How could we do something really well founded? When the Cuban government saw the Senate Committee Report, it was something real and it was that that individual who was the man to be given the weapon to kill me in Paris. This man never spoke about that. He was tried and was sentenced on account of the attempts, the plots against our lives. Those plans (had been continuous) and he sent weapons to Cuba until he was discovered. He confessed and told us the truth, but he never spoke about

that interview in which he was going to be given the weapon to kill me and that was published by the Senate Committee. He never made reference to that. That person is alive because I had to request some leniency. I mean, because his crime was very serious. It was a tremendous betrayal. It was treason, and at that time to participate in such an action was very severely sanctioned. And, following a tradition with individuals that had participated in the revolution, whenever it has been possible to prevent drastic measures, we have done so. This gentleman had been a revolutionary leader. He had been a good revolutionary fighter, and the public opinion was very irritated about it. His crime was really very serious. I wrote a letter to the Cuban Tribunal morally condemning him (but asking for leniency). I did it for the public opinion....That is Cubela's case. We learned that later when the Senate Committee Report appeared. But, all these elements made us think about the advisability of organizing some investigation on our account. We had hoped that being in contact with your Committee could give us some elements of judgment for our own information. But, as far as I know, you don't contribute many elements of judgment because -- as I have been told -- you cannot make use of most of the information you possess.

I have been told that one of our hopes was to receive some information. We are giving as much information as we have and we are receiving nothing.

Stokes: One thing I would like to say and I think you ought to know is that many Americans are ashamed of the CIA and the degrading attempts that they've made on your life. And, that's something that disturbs many, many decent Americans and I think you ought to know that. Mr. President, with your permission I'd like to defer to my other colleagues, if they have any questions, if that is agreeable to you.

Castro: Yes, please.

Stokes: Mr. Preyer?

Preyer: Mr. President, you mentioned that you believe that you could transfer power of chains of government without killing the head of the government. That is the tradition of our country also. I speak personally and not for our government, but I join Chairman Stokes in saying that when I read about AMLASH, Cubela and the Church Committee reports I was shocked and outraged. I am confident that is the overwhelming reaction of the American people. I am convinced that the President did not know about that; the head of the CIA, John McCone, did not know of that; or our other high officials; and that this was an aberration of a small group and that it would have

shocked our high officials just as it shocks me if they had known of it. The fact that the Church Report on AMLASH came from the Agency -- from the government itself rather than being leaked through a newspaper story or something of that sort.

Interpreter: Excuse me, I didn't get that last part -- I am sorry.

Preyer: Well, the fact that the information on AMLASH and Cubela was revealed by our government agencies themselves and was not brought out against their will through a leak or newspaper story, I think, indicates the strong feeling in our government that this kind of thing must never happen again. And, we have set up now a House Intelligence Committee and a Senate Intelligence Committee, both new, to insure that it does not.

On the question of our not giving information, but receiving it, let me say we have a common interest in arriving at a final answer, a clear answer, to the question of the assassination of President Kennedy. We are seeking your help in that and your officials have indicated to us they are willing to continue working to help on that. Our Committee goes out of existence at the end of this year. When we file our final report, there will be a great deal of information in it.

Castro: Is it going to be public?

Preyer: It will be public -- which will be of interest to you. Until that time, because of our different jurisdictional problems, there is some evidence which does not belong

to us which we cannot release. But in the final analysis, the full report will make available much information of interest to you and may answer many of the rumors. In the meantime, one reason we press so hard for information is that this is the last opportunity that will probably be made in our country to reach a final answer. The last chance where an official body of Congress -- an official governmental body -- will make a judgment on this question. That is why we hope that any information that bears on this subject that may come up in the next few months and any effort that could be made, even strenuous effort, would be justified because this opportunity may not come again. And I hope very much that we will be able to give clear answers to the questions. Your help will assist very much.

Castro: I think you are right in what you are saying. When I spoke about the hope of obtaining some information, it was not but a hope. It is absolutely our curiosity, you know. But, it is absolutely evident that we have the duty of handing over all the information we may gather. We are very much interested in having Kennedy's assassination clarified because in one way or the other attempts have been made to try to have Cuba involved in it. We have our conscience clear.

There is nothing so important as having your conscience clean -- absolutely clean. That's why it is not a matter of conscience, but rather a matter of political, historical interest to have all these problems clarified. It is also true that the fact that the United States has conducted an investigation on the (attempts on our people) and the fact that (it) has been made public is a very correct thing to do -- very right. Of course, I (hear) that in that publication many names were not disclosed -- on reasons of safety. When we conduct an investigation, in general, we publish everything because ..anyway..but I would have liked for the Senate report to have been more complete. It should have not protected so many people in the interest of the national security because that, you know, diminishes its moral value. It diminishes the moral value of the publication. However, I coincide with you that the fact that the investigation had been conducted and that all those materials were released is something highly positive. Now, you see, I was recalling Bill Moyers' report. Bill Moyers made a very important report of all these attempts -- all these logs on terrorist groups. Now, then, there is one point in which an intimation is made that Kennedy's death could have been a result of all these attempts against our lives. It is to say to a certain extent --

-- Moyers' report -- which has many positive things -- can leave the doubt that Cuba could have had some participation in that because there is a Representative of Congress speaking -- I think I spoke later, and at the end a Senator spoke that said that he had no doubts about that topic. So, we are very much ..we are highly interested in that party being satisfied. Because, even when the Senate Intelligence Report was released, in some people the idea could have become stronger that Kennedy's death could have been our revenge for all that had been planned against us. If Cuba had something to do with Kennedy's death, it would have been indirectly because many people were trained in handling weapons and many things that were not normal were done, and under the shade of these irregularities, terrorism (arises and) develops, so (that) all these acts become the (norm). It was precisely in that sense that I said that it was a nefarious precedent. Can you imagine that in the (entire) world I was one of the naive people who thought that these things could not happen. Not in the Middle Ages, but now in this era in which the whole apparatus of the government can remain very quiet and promote the killing of leaders of other countries? What is to happen to the world in the nuclear era if that becomes a practice? Now we are lucky that all those plans were a failure.

We have not had to (regret the) death of any comrade leader of the revolution. Our attitude is not even that of hatred or resentment. On very rare occasions do we talk to visitors about these problems. That belongs in the past. It happened a long time ago and still the prints exist -- still the poor things exist. You have to see the terrorist attack against a Cuban plane in flight -- a plane that exploded. Before that plane fell down, all the people got burned alive. Seventy-four people died. Who perpetrated that crime but people who were trained by the CIA? We suspect that some CIA agent had to do with that terrorist act. It's very strange, because that happened after Angola. The United States had adopted a very violent attitude towards us and Nixon made very forceful statements against us. One of the individuals who was recently arrested in Miami because he was involved in the preparation of terrorist activities was just declared non-guilty in a trial and he defended himself by saying simply that he had been in the White House. He said who he had spoken with and who gave him the weapons, and precisely those facts, those events, took place a week before the attempt -- before the sabotage on the Cuban plane in flight. And, he is just defending himself by saying that in the trial. He is one of the persons that was in the group who perpetrated the



sabotage. Now, I am going to tell you something. I think that now Carter is - I don't know what Party you belong to - and it is not interesting to the part of what I'm going to say, if I hurt someone's sensitivity I apologize for that, but I would have not trusted Johnson. I may say sincerely, I sincerely believe that Johnson would have followed that line, of the attempts against people's lives, terrorism, subversion. I have no doubt that Nixon was a man without scruples. I was always under a bad impression. I was convinced of that. But now, I see that this President of the United States would not be capable of resorting to that kind of action. There are two things in this connection: One, I think there is an attitude in the public opinion as to that Watergate affair, and the Senate investigations have contributed to create a sort of consciousness. I also think that the politicians have taken that into account, and I think also that personally Carter is a man of a different mentality. If I am asked whether I think Carter would be capable of planning these kinds of actions, I would say no. I would say I don't think him capable of doing such a thing. I am quite convinced. In that sense, we feel more relaxed. We had to defend ourselves from these actions for many years. You should not think that I like to be surrounded by people. I think you have to be alone. I would like to have a

normal life. We have taken many measures in all these years preventing attempts with different kinds of explosives and weapons, attempts with poison, and actually we are not saying all. I will tell you something. I would even say that I underestimated the CIA somewhat because I thought them capable of many things, but when I read the Senate Committee Report, I confess that I had not thought so much. Because, all that from bacterias, viruses, poisons, a shell with explosives, I don't know how many tremendous things. But it was not only that. I want you to know that if we would have been careless, they would have brought a microphone and put it over there in one of the ashtrays and one mike over there in that seat and everything. There were not only subversive activities, but also espionage. There were many activities related to espionage. I remember that around the day in which the sabotage against our plane took place, the CIA asked in a question, to one of their agents here, whether I was going to travel to Africa, whether he could find out what place I was going to visit, what means of transportation I was going to use, I mean, a whole set of investigation which was not political, but rather that could be used for anything else. Now, going back to this topic, one of the things I've gone into recently with some people, is why Cuba - it was really something inconceivable - could have the idea of killing the President?

First, because that would have been a tremendous insanity. The Cuban Revolutionaries and the people who have made this Revolution have proven to be intrepid and to make decisions in the right moment. But, we have not proven to be insane people. The leaders of the Revolution do not do crazy things and have always been extremely concerned to prevent any factor that could become a kind of an argument or a pretext for carrying out aggression against our country. We are a very small country. We have the United States 90 miles from our shore which is a very large, powerful country economically, technically, militarily. So, for many years we lived concerned that an invasion could take place..I mean, indirect and at the end a direct aggression. We were very close to that. Yet look at the conclusions we draw. If the elections of 1960 had not been won by Kennedy, but Nixon instead, during the Bay of Pigs, the United States would have invaded Cuba. We mean that in the midst of the fight that Kennedy followed the line that had been already traced. There is no doubt that we appreciate very highly the fact that Kennedy resisted every kind of pressure not to have the Marines land in our country. Because, there were many people who wanted the Marines to land here. Nixon himself was in favor of that. Had Nixon been President during the Bay of Pigs invasion, a landing by the military army of the United States would have taken place. We are absolutely convinced of that.

However, Kennedy resisted all the pressures and he did not do that. What would that have meant for us? The destruction of the country? Hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of deaths? Because, undoubtedly the people would fight. The people I am absolutely sure about. An invasion of Cuba by the United States would have cost hundreds of thousands of lives, maybe millions of lives. We were aware of that. We have an American military base in our territory, by force. And, it is not assumed that anyone is going to have a military base on someone else's territory, if it is not on the basis of an agreement. However, the United States has military bases in many places of the world, but here, it is by force. From that base, many provocations have been carried out against Cuba. There were people wounded...there were people killed. What did we do? We brought our guards away from the lines, from the fence. We never shot at them. Why? Because we made every possible effort so that an incident of that kind would not become a pretext to be attacked. So, we have followed the policy. We had an American boat just three miles away from us for years, a warship full of electronic communications equipment and never a hostile action was carried against that warship. So, there are many events that have proven how careful Cuba has always been to prevent the perpetration of an invasion. We could

have died heroically - no doubt about it. Now, that would have been a victory for our people. They're willing to be sacrificed and to die. Yet, it would have been just another page in history..nothing else. So, we have always been very much aware to not give The United States the pretext..the possibility .. for (an invasion.) What was the cause of the missile crisis? The need we had to seek protection in case of an (invasion) from the United States. We agreed on the installation of the (strategic) missiles, because undoubtedly that diminished the danger of direct aggression. That became a danger of another kind, a kind of a global danger we became, but we were trying to protect our country at all times. Who here could have operated and planned something so delicate as the death of the United States President. That was insane. From the ideological point of view it was insane. And from the political point of view, it was a tremendous insanity. I am going to tell you here that nobody, nobody ever had the idea of such things. What would it do? We just tried to defend our folks here, within our territory. Anyone who subscribed to that idea would have been judged insane..absolutely sick. Never, in twenty years of revolution, I never heard anyone suggest nor even speculate about a measure of that sort, because who could think of the idea of organizing the death of

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the President of the United States. That would have been the most perfect pretext for the United States to invade our country which is what I have tried to prevent for all these years, in every possible sense. Since the United States is much more powerful than we are, what could we gain from a war with the United States? The United States would lose nothing. The destruction would have been here. The United States had U-2 air surveillancing for almost fifteen years. The planes flew over our territory every day. The women said that they could not go over their terrace naked for the U-2 would have taken a picture of them. That thing we could not allow to happen, you know, because it was demoralizing. So, there were, you know, those flights just very close to the soil. Those kind of flights was really demoralizing for our people. It was impossible to let them continue to do that, so we had to shoot at them. On the following day after the missile crisis, we had the need to shoot at those planes, because to have allowed that would have created a demoralization among our people. And, I say that if we allowed that, you wouldn't have been able even to play baseball here. Because those planes came just twenty meters from here, so it was really demoralizing. See, the U-2 came very high, you know, and I tell you, Cuba has been characterized by following a firm policy, a policy of principles. Our position was known after the missile crisis. We were not in a position to make any concessions. That is a known position, but Cuba,

the leaders of the Cuban Revolution, have never made that kind of insanity, and that I may assure you. And the biggest kind of insanity that could have gone through anyone's mind here would have been that of thinking of killing the President of the United States. Nobody would have thought of that. In spite of all the things, in spite of all the attempts, in spite of all the irritation that brought about an attitude of firmness, a willingness to fight, that was translated by our people into a spirit of heroism, but it never became a source of insanity. I'll give you practical reasons. Apart from our ideology, I want to tell you that the death of the leader does not change the system. It has never done that. And, the best example we have is Batista. Batista murdered thousands of our comrades. If there was anyone in which that kind of revenge was justified, it was Batista. However, our movement did very difficult things, but it never had the idea of physically eliminating Batista. Other revolutionary groups did, but never our movement. We had a war for twenty-five months against Batista's army and spent seven years under Batista's dictatorship with thousands dying. But, it never came to our minds.. we could have done it, very well, but we never thought about that, because it was different from our feelings. That is our position. That is why we are interested. That is why I was asking you whether you are really

hopeful to give serious conclusions on this. On our part, if there is something we could give you, we would, without any kind of precondition. The information we have offered you is not conditioned to anything. In spite of the fact that the problem is thorny, that doesn't stop this Committee here from giving the impression that we are being judged here, that we are being tried.

Stokes: We certainly don't want in any way to convey that, in fact, uh, ...

Castro: No, no, no. I mean not you. I am not thinking of you. I mean that some people could see it that way; that Cuba has been investigated by the Committee.

Stokes: Well, Mr. President, one thing we have done in that respect, we even said to your Cuban Interest Section in Washington when we first began that we wanted to come down here and do this part of the investigation very quietly without any fanfare, without any publicity, and this is the overall way we have tried to conduct our whole investigation..everything is being done quietly in executive session until such time that we compile all the data so that we don't in any way declaim or degrade anyone. Then, hopefully, at the end we can come out with a report that everyone will respect.

Castro: There is something which is not secret.



If I may ask you, is there anything true, or how much could be true about those publications which state that many people who could have had a part in Kennedy's death have died in accidents and things like that?

Stokes: This is one of the difficulties of attempting to conduct an investigation thirteen years after the event has occurred. Obviously, there are people who in the normal course of the investigation we would have wanted to talk with, we cannot talk with because they are now deceased. This is one of the difficulties that we face.

I yield to Congressman Dodd.

Dodd: Mr. President, I won't take much time. I think most of the questions have been asked. I wish we had ...

Castro: I have time. Please don't mind about my time. I made no other commitment today, so I would have time. Nobody is waiting for me.

Dodd: I wish we had an evening just to talk about the Peace Corps, but we will save that for another time. A tape is played?

There are a couple of things here. The question you asked of Chairman Stokes - - - the one regarding the optimism we have over reaching a final conclusion in regard to this effort is one that I think we all ask ourselves almost every day. It is the question that is very important in the minds of many, many people, not only in government, but also of course, the American

people are concerned about our efforts. I said today in one of our meetings that I strongly suspected that your grandchildren and my grandchildren will be reading books about the assassination, just as we read them today about the assassination of Lincoln, another historical figure that had been assassinated, and where the suspicion of conspiracy has existed. I think we would be fooling ourselves if we tried to suggest that at the conclusion of our hearings we were going to end once and for all, all of the speculation for all time. I don't think that is possible.

But, what we are going to try and do, and I think that what we have done successfully over the past year and a half, is to approach this case with an open mind and not prejudge the case. And, the temptations are great to do that. For every day we almost see a new theory. But, we are determined to proceed through this process listening to all sides and then using the evidence that we are able to collect, to reach as definitely as we can, regarding those points that have been nagging at the consciences and minds of the people all across the earth. Two other points: One is that we intend not only to publish our hearings and the conclusion that we reach. We also intend to use every available means of communication in the United States, hopefully television, radio, to conduct open public hearings, not only showing our conclusions, but how we arrived at

those conclusions. We suspect that many, many people do not want to read a boring report, but would rather be better informed by radio and television and newspapers. We intend to hide nothing, to release all information without any fear whatsoever as to where that information leads or what our conclusions would be. I think, I know I can speak for myself, and I'm sure I can speak for everyone else on this Committee. I wouldn't serve on this Committee if I didn't think in the end that I could say to my constituents that I had done an honest and thorough job and that I wasn't hiding anything from them. And, my last point is, Mr. President, that had some of your government officials not mentioned it today, we would have, but it was very encouraging to hear it come from them, that they would like to continue to keep the lines of communication open between themselves, your government and our Committee. And, as that old Chinese proverb goes - a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. And I think this is a good beginning and I want to just say here and now that I have been deeply impressed by your statements. I find your logic compelling and I guarantee you that we will do the very best job we can, including the final report.

Castro: How many legislators do you have on this Committee?

Stokes: There are twelve in all, one lady and eleven men.

Castro: Don't you all have to be involved in elections at the end of this year now?

Stokes: Uh huh. Yes, we do.

Castro: And how would you be able, how would you manage to carry out all this work, and take care of the election campaigns at the same time? How would you?

Dodd: He doesn't have any trouble at all. (About another Congressman.) (Laughter)

Castro: And you work personally in the campaigns, don't you? I mean, with all this? The twelve, I mean the twelve people on the Committee work together, participate in all hearings and all the interviews and all that?

Stokes: The Committee ... I have been in Congress ten years, Mr. President, and I serve on several other committees in the House. And, I know in general they are hard working committees. But, I have never seen twelve people who have worked together the way this Committee has. We work extremely long hours, we have worked into the night when the occasion necessitated it. We have worked Saturdays and Sundays when it was necessary and remained in Washington to work on Committee matters. We just have twelve people who are dedicated to the fact that this is an opportunity to do something of historic nature and they are dedicated to devoting the time that it requires. In addition to the twelve Members of Congress, we have a staff of 115 people. The staff is

headed up by Professor Blakey. You might be interested in knowing that we spent three months searching for a director of the staff. And, we were extremely concerned that we get a person of the highest professional ability, along with integrity that cannot be compromised in any respect, and one who would direct the staff in a way that we would let the chips fall where they may in the final analysis. And to that degree, I am sure....

Castro: Now he has to continue working while you run the re-election campaign.

(Laughter)

Stokes: But, when we go home he has to keep on working right here.

Castro: You would have to go to meet your constituents and then .. that would be the most important moment of all these efforts, you know? The moments to draw the conclusions... Would it be possible for you to finish up the report when due? Don't you need more time?

Stokes: We promised the House of Representatives (laughter) that there would be no further requests for time. I am not worried about time; it is the money part. The House is appropriating about five million dollars over the two-year period for us to complete this investigation...and

Castro: And only 115 people?

Stokes: Well, Mr. Barber of Maryland who watches the purse strings of the House says it involves a lot of money. We have had to face that kind of opposition on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Blakey: Mr. President, I have no questions to ask of you, but less we as guests only asked questions and did not respond to any of yours, let me answer at least in part the last question you asked.

You expressed some interest in what we call the mysterious death projects. The literature about the Kennedy assassination is filled with instances of people who have in some way been connected to the assassination and have themselves died under mysterious circumstances. We are looking into those deaths and seeing whether there are sinister explanations for them. Let me comment on one of them: Now, this is not from our investigation, but from my own information, and he may be a man of some interest to you. Let me put it in context for you. I cannot comment on many of the facts in the investigation. As you put it, much of the information is limited by matters of national security. For example, in our country, it has never been officially acknowledged that AMLASH was Rolando Cubela and nothing that we say here today should be read as an indication on our part that that is true or not true. But to continue..Sam Giancana, who was a Mafia leader

in Chicago, who according to the Senate Intelligence Report, directly plotted on your life, was a person who was under investigation by myself in the Department of Justice and ironically on November 22nd, 1963, I was with the Attorney General, Robert Kennedy, in a meeting of the Organized Crime session and among the subjects taken up at that time was the Attorney General's personal interest in my work in seeking to prosecute Sam Giancana. I bring this to your attention for two reasons: First, to express to you the feeling of one who has spent a great deal of his life working to see to it that members of the Mafia in the United States consistent with due process receive justice. I know from personal knowledge that Robert Kennedy shared those concerns. He would never have been knowingly involved in using those people to plot an assassination of you. And, while I cannot speak of personal knowledge of the President of the United States, there was no difference between them. I say that to express my sense of shame and outrage that members, according to the Senate Intelligence Report, of the CIA were involved in that. Those people who were in charge of our government at that level in my judgment had no knowledge. But to respond more particularly to your question, it is unlikely that Sam Giancana died be-

cause he testified before the Senate Intelligence Committee. As I indicated to some of the members of your staff, Mr. Giancana was responsible for the death of hundreds of people in Chicago, and the remarkable thing is not that he died then, but that he had not been killed much earlier.

Stokes: The last gentleman here, Mr. President, is Gary Cornwell. Gary is the Deputy Chief Counsel for the Kennedy Subcommittee and he would have direct responsibility in terms of the final work product related to the Kennedy investigation. I separate out the Kennedy assassination because as you know we are investigating also the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King. Two murder investigations are going at the same time.

Castro: The five million dollars is for both?

Blakey: You ought to also know, Mr. President, that this is the budget attributable to the Committee itself. In fact, the United States Senate, particularly the people who were responsible for the Church Committee investigation, have been helping this Committee. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has a relatively large staff devoted to getting their files made available to us. We have actually received cooperation from the Central Intelligence Agency. Some members of the staff would say not as fast and as full as we might like, but the final report is not in. The police departments in Dallas



and in Memphis have been helping us and if you consider the work that was done in 1963 and 1964, the actual available resources in the United States devoted to these investigations are considerably more than five million dollars.

Castro: May I suggest something? Why don't you investigate also Oswald's personality in one sense, whether Oswald was also a member of any intelligence agency in the United States?

Blakey: That is among the issues that we are looking into.

Castro: I think that is a very important thing. Because, for me, Oswald's personality - it's a mystery..that first he was in the Army, the Navy, and later he appears in the Soviet Union. He married a Soviet citizen. He came back to the States. I still get the impression that this individual's personality is that of a spy. It is the typical way you recruit a spy and send him to another country. This seems to me very important. I think it is very important to go very deeply into his past, to see if at any time it was possible to really know about his personality. That would be very important. .

Blakey: Of all the questions I think we will answer, that I feel with a degree of certainty, we will. I should also add, Mr. President, that if you consider the resources that your staff has also devoted to this

organization and the time and effort they have put into it, the five million dollars grows even more.

(Laughter)

Castro: Sure, they have been working. But as you know, our contribution is very modest because I think that the fundamental things for the investigation could be conducted only in the United States. And, what we can do is very little, very little. But, from the first moment we made the decision to make available anyone you wanted to talk with. I think that your task is a hard one. Hard, because your prestige is at stake with the investigation. You face a task of tremendous responsibility and in that sense I think a very hard job has been assigned to you.

Stokes: We share your feelings on that, Mr. President.

Blakey: Their job is harder. They are politicians. They must run for reelection. I can always go back and teach.

Castro: Will the report be many volumes?

(Laughter)

How big is the Warren Committee Report? When will the Warren Committee Report be published?

Blakey: The Warren Commission has already been published.

Castro: Warren Commission?

Blakey: Commission. Yes.

Castro: Warren Commission, what was it?

Villa: It was twenty-six volumes. We had two copies of the summary, but we have not seen the twenty-six volumes.

Castro: Have you read all that?

Villa: Yes, we have.

Castro: We have to say that the Warren Commission was objective. They did not try to commit Cuba.

You were a Federal Judge. Then, are you the man with the most experience in this kind of business.

Preyer: Well, in the federal courts we didn't have to deal with anything as complex as this with so many rumors and so many facets to it. Usually, we had a narrow question, so this is really a new experience for me.

Castro: They would give their lives to discover something decisive, you know?

(Laughter)

Is there anyone else you would like to meet?

Villa: Piniero. Piniero worked at the Ministry of Interior at that time. They are interested in speaking to Piniero because he met with Santo Trafficante in the early sixties and gave him 24 hours to leave the country, and also because he met with Ascue.

Castro: We did not even have a Ministry of Interior at that time. He worked as some kind of investigator, but at that time we did not have a Minister of Interior. I think it was for the Army. Some things we have now that we did not have then. They were created, you know, in the course

of the years. The first year everybody did whatever they wanted. There was chaos, you know. The state was not organized, so the people came in and out, absolutely free. There were not the controls that existed later, that were created later, especially in the first year of the revolution. I recall a social problem. All the casinos were closed and thousands of people were unemployed without a solution to the problem. So, we had to take back that measure to gain time to find an economic solution for the people who would remain unemployed when the casinos were closed. So, the state had to cover the salaries of all the people who worked there. And, I want to tell you something else: As you know, recently there was a television conference where efforts were being made in order to have the Cuban government involved in drug traffic, smuggling drugs. That is very curious, you know. I don't know why that theory is expounded now. It is a very recent invention. It happens that we are the one country in this hemisphere that has cooperated the most with the United States without any purpose, I mean, we have no intention of doing the United States a disfavor. But, anyway, on the basis of Cuba's belief with regard to drugs, very severe measures were implemented to prevent them. We have become the number one cooperators of the United States in this area. You don't know how

many boats we have captured here that come along Cuban coasts carrying drugs. You don't know how many planes we have taken here carrying drugs and, of course, over the past twenty years the individuals who have been involved in drug traffic have always been sentenced, always. These were not people that could affect us. They were just going and coming from South America and Central America to the United States. And, they just happened to come here by chance. Dozens of people have been searched on account of drug traffic, on account of the international drug traffic laws. We have eliminated drug use in Cuba and I myself wonder why it is we have to cooperate with the United States if when the embargo was imposed on our country we could have planted ten thousand acres of marijuana and become the largest supplier of marijuana to the United States in combination with all those people. We did not do that since we were blockaded and knowing that in the United States there is a market for marijuana even though the government in this country has fought the most against drugs. Besides in Cuba we don't have drug problems, but we had to even uproot the last plants of marijuana planted in the mountains. And actually, look at how we're being paid back now; they pay us back by trying to link us into the drug traffic. It's incredible, you know. We can say it like that; this is the government that has fought the most against drug traffic in this hemisphere. No

discussion about it. And, we are lucky that we don't have that problem ourselves because unless the State imported cocaine and marijuana, that problem has almost disappeared.

Laughter.

Translator left; said she would be around.

Second translator arrives.

Castro: Well, we have almost finished.

Escartin: Who was the one who made that impeachment about the drug problem where Representative Wolff participated? He was the head of the Committee.

Castro: Why did he do that? Do you know the address, because I am going to write them a note.

Laughter.

Castro: And, I am going to ask a budget for stamps and paper. I'm going to sabotage the next election.

Escartin: Even though he made some political statements with a certain prestige, he is deceitful. It seems that there are some statements made by him on the basis of an investigation and that this man used them as he wished trying to attain certain political objectives of propaganda because you have explained our stand regarding that. And, there is something strange there: A Cuban Counter-Revolutionary was mentioned who made an operation with Colombia which seems to have serious drug problems...and they tried to

link him with us. Afterwards, Hernandez-Cartaya who was a Counter-Revolutionary, participated in the Bay of Pigs. He made some declaration saying that he was anti-Castro and that he had nothing to do with this.

Castro: Just two old friends down there defended me. The President of Columbia defended me also, so I have to thank some two persons who defended me.

Escartin: It is interesting that Hernandez-Cartaya was retained there by the FBI. It seems that somebody is trying to solidify this story..that's the situation.

Stokes: Mr. President, before we continue, Gary Cornwell, I Think, has a couple of questions to ask you.

Cornwell: Mr. President, there was a book published by Daniel Schorr called "Clearing the Air". If you haven't read the book, I would like to read one passage.

Castro: I haven't read that. You know about that book?

Villa: I haven't.

Cornwell: One passage reads as follows:

An interview in July 1967 with a British journalist, Comer Clark..do you have the translation of it there?

Villa: Yes.

Castro: Let me see it. Yes, I have it here. This is absurd.

Pause: (Approximately one minute while President Castro reads it.)

Castro: This is absurd. I didn't say that.

Cornwell: Did the interview ever occur?

Castro: It has been invented from the beginning until the end. I didn't say that. How could I say that?

It's a lie from (head to toe). If this man would have done something like that, it would have been our moral duty to inform the United States. You understand? Because if a man comes here, mentions that he wants to kill Kennedy, we are (being provoked), do you realize that? It would have been similar to a mad person. If somebody comes to us and said that, it would have been our moral responsibility to inform the United States. How could we accept a man from Mexico to Cuba who tells us that he is going to kill President Kennedy? If somebody is trying to create provocation or a trap, and uh...we would have denounced him..Sure, a person coming here or even in one of our embassies saying that..and that never happened..in no part, as far as I know.

Villa: That refers to the interview you spoke about in the beginning.

Castro: But how could they interview me in a pizzeria? I never go to public restaurants and that man invented that. That was invented from the upper to the bottom because you asked me about the Brazilian Embassy and I have no obligation to that and never said it was true. That in the Brazilian Embassy I talked about this problem of the attempt. That was true. I could deny it, but I don't because it was strictly the truth. I didn't remember who the journalist was nor....but I



have the idea that something like that was discussed and that there was a declaration at the Brazilian Embassy. I can't assure it because I don't remember it, but it probably occurred...Later on they tried to present it as a threat and I didn't do it with that intention. Of course, I didn't do it with that intention. But, not that other interview. I do not remember that. And, uh, it is a surprise for me to see because I couldn't have said that. You have to see who wrote it. And, what is the job of that journalist? What is he engaged in? And, what prestige has this journalist? Not the one that wrote that book, but the origin of that version. You should have to find who he is and why he wrote it, and with whom he is related.....and which sense they have to attribute those words which are absolutely invented. I think it is possible that you would be able to find out who that journalist was. Do you have some news about that journalist in that newspaper?

Villa: He was in Cuba and tried to carry out an interview with you.

Castro: Let me tell you. Of every one hundred interviews that are requested of me I only grant one because if I were to give all the interviews that I am requested to, you can be sure that I would not be able to have anything but twenty-four hours of my life to have interviews.

I would not have enough time to do anything else. Barbara Walters waited three years for an interview.. just almost three years. Ane even that of Moyers.. I didn't want to have that Moyer interview. He started talking and the truth is that he was very insistent from the time he came down from the airplane and in spite of the fact that there was no commitment from me regarding the interview. There are a lot of interview requests and it is very difficult, but I would never have given a journalist an interview in a pizzeria.

Dodd: I don't even give interviews in a pizzeria.

Villa: Another element commander...That interview was published in a sensationalist or yellow press from the United States. It is a sensationalist newspaper.

Castro: Especially at that time, a lot of barbaric things were published. They are still being written. Yesterday I was reading an English paper, I don't remember its name, speaking about Angola, and saying that we in military operations against the blacks killed thousands of women and children and so forth. And, I also mentioned before the declaration of that Representative about the drug traffic. Previous to that incident they tried to implicate us in that. If there is somebody in this world that has accustomed himself to listen to the worst things without losing sleep, it is us.

The campaigns that were carried out, directed campaigns that were carried out throughout the world - in western continents and also in the United States - against Cuba and all of us had no precedents. There are a lot of people that are badly informed about Cuba, and we have nothing to hide, nothing. They have spoken about tortures in Cuba, and that was a tradition from the war.. during the Revolutionary War. We never put a finger on another person because we created an awareness in our people. We condemned torture and I can assure you that this is a principal that knows not a single exception in our country, because it would have the repulsion of all the world..Why are our policemen so efficient ..especially the security policemen who protected all of us? Do you know why? Because, it was precisely a police which did not carry out torture. There are a lot of countries where they apply torture and they never discover anything. They never become policemen in themselves. Now our people couldn't be able to receive any information by means of torture, and they develop intelligence, and the technique of investigation and of prevention. There is a time in which we had more than one hundred counter-revolutionary organizations and all of them were penetrated. We knew more than the counter-revolution armies when a person was arrested because there were some things that he didn't

remember: who he met, which places and so forth. I'm going to tell you, there was a time in which penetration of our people increased so much that in turn they became the heads of some of those counter-revolutionary organizations. The police wouldn't be able to develop a technique of investigation and they wouldn't have investigated anything if they just took one person and tried to destroy him. That tradition will never serve. A true police is one which is developed and that will seek intelligent ways of obtaining information. Batista's policemen tortured and didn't discover anything. And, for us there is no problem. Security has a lot of advantages because all of the people are militants within the Revolution - country people, children, neighbors, students, peasants and the women. Everybody is organized and, that is why. Through the agents we know everything that is going on. Let me tell you something. One day a parrot was lost. In Havana, we told this to the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution - about trying to find out where this parrot was, and they found the parrot. Some other time, a woman was at the hospital. She had a daughter. Her daughter was robbed from the hospital, so we had to find the girl. Everybody assumed that it was a mental case of somebody. Of course, that was not published in the newspapers.

Why not? We did not want any panic. We called up all the CDRs and forty-eight hours later, the girl appeared. One person in one place had a child and they hadn't seen that she was pregnant. That woman was obsessed about having a child and she went to the hospital dressed up like a nurse and she took the girl. And, after forty-eight hours, they found her. There was something else: Here we never have a political kidnapping. Here we never have a terrorist activity. We find out earlier. There were some counter-revolutionaries. But, there is something. The greatest part of them went to the United States, especially the wealthy people. The social base of the counter-revolution was transferred to the United States. The United States wanted to take from us the doctors and the professionals - they got half of the doctors. Out of six thousand doctors, they got three thousand. But then that forced us to concentrate on a school of medicine. Now we have twelve thousand doctors - almost one thousand are abroad in different countries working. We have thirty-five hundred students at the Cuban Medicine School. By 1985 with the new facilities now in progress we will enroll some seven thousand students every year. We are going to train thirty-three thousand students at the University. Our doctors are distributed throughout the country, and before they

were all located in the Capitol. So, if the United States wanted to take our professional personnel, they forced us to develop a new system. Fortunately, they didn't take only technical people, but also wealthy people, delinquents, pimps ..

(Laughter).

and exploiters of vices such as drugs, gangsters and all that type of people. They went to the United States. They opened the doors because before the Revolution they had a limit. The United States couldn't receive more than ten thousand and there were a lot of people who wanted to go there trying to find some jobs or social programs. Then, when the Revolution triumphed, the United States opened its doors. Can they repeat that procedure with some other countries? No, they can't. What would happen if the United States opened the way for all those Mexicans who want to go to the United States trying to find jobs? What about all the Brazilians, Colombians, Peruvians..? They opened the doors and they took the social ground work of the Counter Revolution. So, they left the houses. Those houses were turned into schools and dwelling houses for humble people. You understand? And all those who left here, they left these houses for humble people.. and, in the country, the most humble people stayed. You understand? What resources they need to carry on

the Revolution and what social ground work they need for making Counter Revolution, they don't have. That is why the country is defending itself. And that is why we were able to depend on intelligence, and not torture. Thousands of times, they have said that in Cuba we torture. It is like that, but people of all nations know how things were and are in Cuba. We never had any persons disappear. It wasn't a new invention. We would never have that. We never found a dead man in the street. We were forced to legislate tough laws, but nobody was ever sanctioned except through the courts and through previous law. Since we were in the Sierra Maestra, we started making the first law. We said to the people..Well, the assassins and the torturers are going to be punished. Nobody will take revenge in their own hands. That was a promise we made to the people. The torturers were punished and also the criminals, who generally are not punished. You can see now that things are going on in Chile and in some other countries. They are doing unbelievable things. Sometimes I have heard some stories about things going on there, and they are unbelievable. That is why we are not in agreement with their thinking. We have been accused of denying a man his human rights; that is to say that things are worse here then in Chile, Brazil and so forth. Who are they going to tell that story in this case? But, in spite of it all, we have survived.. And the campaigns did not manage to destroy us.

REST OF INTERVIEW CONSISTS OF PERSONAL REMARKS

Mr. BLAKEY. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like now to play the recording of President Castro's answer to that first question.

Chairman STOKES. You may proceed.

[Tape recording played.]

Mr. BLAKEY. Mr. Chairman, the committee's next question was more specific. It dealt with an account published in 1967 in the National Enquirer claiming that Oswald while at the consulate had voiced an intention to assassinate President Kennedy.

Mr. Chairman, I note that JFK F-428 has already been displayed and ask that it be entered into the record. It is a reproduction of that National Enquirer article.

Chairman STOKES. Without objection, so ordered.

[JFK exhibit F-428 follows:]



JFK EXHIBIT F-428

Mr. BLAKEY. It is probably also appropriate to note that that article has had wide circulation. For example, Daniel Schorr repeats it in his book, "Clearing the Air."

President Castro, according to the story in the National Enquirer, had admitted to being told of the threat, though he had taken no action in response to it. The tape of this portion of President Castro's remarks is not suitable for playing in a public room. Consequently, I will read his response.

President Castro said:

This is absurd. I didn't say that \* \* \* It has been invented from the beginning until the end. I didn't say that. How could I say that? It's a lie from (head to toe). If this man would have done something like that, it would have been our moral duty



to inform the United States. You understand? Because if a man comes here, mentions that he wants to kill Kennedy, we are (being provoked), do you realize that? It would have been similar to a mad person. If somebody comes to us and said that, it would have been our moral responsibility to inform the United States. How could we accept a man from Mexico to Cuba who tells us that he is going to kill President Kennedy? If somebody is trying to create provocation or a trap, and uh \* \* \* we would have denounced him \* \* \* Sure, a person coming here or even in one of our Embassies saying that \* \* \* And that never happened. No part, as far as I know \* \* \* But how could they interview me in a pizzeria. I never go to public restaurants and that man invented that. That was invented.

I do not remember that. And, uh, it is a surprise for me to see because I couldn't have said that. You have to see who wrote it. And, what is the job of that journalist? What is he engaged in? And, what prestige has this journalist? \* \* \* You should have to find who he is and why he wrote it, and with whom he is related \* \* \* and which sense they have to attribute those words which are absolutely invented. I think it is possible that you would be able to find out who that journalist was. Do you have some news about that journalist in that newspaper?

Let me tell you. Of every 100 interviews that are requested of me I only grant one because if I were to give all the interviews that I am requested to, you can be sure that I would not be able to have anything but 24 hours of my life to have interviews. I would not have enough time to do anything else. Barbara Walters waited 3 years for an interview \* \* \* just almost 3 years. And even that of Moyers \* \* \* I didn't want to have that Moyer interview. He started talking and the truth is that he was very insistent from the time he came down from the airplane and in spite of the fact that there was no commitment from me regarding the interview. There are a lot of interview requests and it is very difficult, but I would never have given a journalist an interview in a pizzeria.

Mr. Chairman, the author——

Chairman STOKES. Would you suspend for just one moment?

Mr. BLAKEY. Certainly.

Chairman STOKES. I think I misunderstood you. There was some reason you explained for reading that.

Mr. BLAKEY. Yes; the tape unfortunately, as has been my experience, Mr. Chairman, and I am sure yourself in trials, that any effort, when you have a mechanical device inevitably they fail at least once out of three, and while we made an effort to enhance the quality of that portion of the tape, in which President Castro responded to this particular question, we played it and it just simply was not suitable for playing in a public auditorium. It was not audible. Consequently, it was thought best to read it rather than to play the tape.

Chairman STOKES. Thank you.

Mr. BLAKEY. We really did the best we could.

Mr. Chairman, the author of the National Enquirer story was a British freelance journalist named Comer Clark. He died in 1972.

Nevertheless, the committee, while conducting other investigations in England, made an effort to explore Mr. Clark's background and reputation for veracity. Frankly, it was not good. Apparently, he wrote extensively for the sensationalist press in England. His articles include such items as "British Girls as Nazi Sex Slaves," "I Was Hitler's Secret Love," and "German Plans To Kidnap the Royal Family."

On the other hand, even though there may be considerable doubt as to the fact of Clark's interview with President Castro, the committee has been informed that the substance of the Clark article is supported by highly confidential but reliable sources available to the U.S. Government.

Apart from the reliability of the source, whether or not this source may have provided reliable information in this instance is of

course an issue that the committee will have to consider in December. In this connection the Cuban Government has suggested to the committee that the circulation of this story represents a disinformation effort by the Central Intelligence Agency designed to discredit Cuba and to implicate her in the assassination.

Mr. Chairman, President Castro also discussed the general subject of assassination as a means for achieving political change. His thoughts on it are pertinent to the investigation. It would be appropriate, then, to play his response to that question, which fortunately is clear enough to play in a public proceeding.

Chairman STOKES. OK.

[Tape recording played.]

Mr. BLAKEY. Finally, Mr. Chairman, President Castro commented on the specific so-called threat reported in the New Orleans Times Picayune of September 9. It would be appropriate, Mr. Chairman, to play the last excerpt.

Chairman STOKES. You may proceed.

[Tape recording played.]

Mr. BLAKEY. Mr. Chairman, I would note for the record that President Castro was of course speaking in Spanish, and the simultaneous English translation was provided by Juanita Vera.

Mr. Chairman, in August, during the committee's second trip to Cuba, the Cuban Government made available to the committee one Rolanda Cubela, who identified himself to the committee as AMLASH, on the basis of his reading of the 1976 Senate report. It would be appropriate at this point, Mr. Chairman, to enter into the record and to display JFK F-424, a photograph of Mr. Cubela.

[The information follows:]



JFK EXHIBIT F-424

Chairman STOKES. Without objection, it may be entered into the record and displayed accordingly.

Mr. BLAKEY. Mr. Cubela indicated that he had been prosecuted and convicted by the Cuban Government for plotting against Premier Castro. He said that during that prosecution he did not inform the Cuban Government and the Cuban Government did not learn that his plot had the support of CIA personnel. The Cuban Government affirmed Mr. Cubela's assertion. He also indicated that he had no evidence on which he could say that any official of the U.S. Government or of the CIA higher than his case officer was aware of the assassination aspects of his plot. The Cuban Government suggested that the AMLASH plot in operation on November 22, 1963, as outlined in the Senate report, could not, therefore, have served as a provocation by the U.S. motivating Cuban retaliation against President Kennedy.

Mr. Chairman, another aspect of the committee's investigation of Oswald's trip to Mexico had to do with any associations Oswald may have had while he was there other than those at the Cuban consulate and the Soviet Embassy. The Warren Commission concluded he had none, that he kept to himself throughout his stay. It turns out, however, that 11 days after the Commission concluded its investigation and issued its report in September 1964, a Mexican woman came forward with quite a different version of Oswald's activities in Mexico City.

Her name is Elena Garro de Paz. Though now divorced, she was at the time the wife of Octavio de Paz, the noted poet and Mexican diplomat. Elena Garro herself is an accomplished author.

Ultimately, Elena Garro's story came to the attention of American intelligence services. As far as it is known, no service initiated a full-scale followup investigation. One reason might be that Elena Garro's credibility is controversial. This committee has been told, on the one hand, that she is absolutely trustworthy, while others have claimed that the same vivid imagination that has made her a literary success has also tended to color her perception of actual events.

That being said, Elena Garro's story is interesting, as is the way it has unfolded in this investigation.

Elena Garro says that along with her daughter, Elenita, and her sister, Deba Galvan, she was invited to a party at the home of her cousin, Ruben Duran Navarro, then the brother-in-law of Sylvia Tirado Duran. She first said that the party was in early October 1963, though, after inspection of her personal calendar for that period, she adjusted the time to late September.

There were three young American men at the party, she says, the guests of Sylvia Duran, and one of the Americans was Lee Harvey Oswald. She describes one of his companions as tall and slender with long blond hair, a gaunt face, and a protruding chin. The other was tall also, with short, light brown hair.

In 1964, Elena Garro became a friend of an American foreign service officer named Charles Thomas, and, over time, she related her story to him in detail. She explained that when she had gone to the American Embassy in October 1964 and told her story, the man she talked to seemed to believe little of it.

She told Thomas that Oswald was wearing a black sweater at the party, and that he stared at the floor a lot. She said the three Americans stuck together rather than mix with the other guests. She said that Eusebio Azcue, the Cuban consul, was also at the party.

Elena Garro told Thomas that on the day of the assassination, she and her daughter went to the Cuban Embassy and shouted, "assassins."

This she claimed was before she saw a newspaper photo identifying Oswald as the suspected assassin.

After she and her daughter returned home on November 22, 1963, a man she thought was an agent of the Mexican Ministry of Government came to her house and told her and Elenita that they were in danger of being harmed by the Communists. He took them to a "sanctuary", a small hotel called the Vermont, where they remained for 8 days. It was after getting to the hotel that Elena Garro first saw a picture of Oswald and realized she had seen him at the Duran party.

This man, who must be referred to here as Mr. X, advised Elena Garro to beware of the American Embassy, that it was staffed by Communists.

Elena Garro also claimed that several months after the assassination she was visited by two Communists who warned her not to tell her story.

Shortly after the assassination, Elena Garro told Thomas, an American woman came and spent several days at her home. This woman, who must be referred to here as Ms. Y, was told the story one evening by Elena Garro's sister, Deba Galvan, who had been

drinking. Ms. Y urged the two women to tell their story to American authorities in Texas, not in Mexico. Failing that, Ms. Y offered to arrange a meeting with a high-ranking American official in Mexico. It never transpired, because Elena Garro and Ms. Y had a falling out.

Ms. Y did, however, send the first report on Elena Garro and her story to American authorities in 1964.

Charles Thomas, the American service officer, was concerned about the Elena Garro story and reported her account in memoranda that were circulated in the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. Nevertheless, when the reports reached Washington, neither the CIA nor the FBI showed any interest. No investigation was ordered, even though, on October 10, 1966, it was learned an Elena Garro had indeed been registered at the Hotel Vermont over the period she claimed she was there in 1963.

Charles Thomas returned to Washington in 1967 when his tour of duty in Mexico ended and he was "selected out" of the foreign service in 1969 for failure to be promoted. In 1971, having had some 2,000 job applications rejected, he committed suicide. In 1974 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, having determined that his dismissal was a mistake, had through an act of Congress Mr. Thomas posthumously reinstated.

Mr. Chairman, the committee on Friday of last week received permission from the State Department to make public a group of previously classified documents dealing with Mr. Thomas and Elena Garro de Paz' story. While they have been declassified, there are certain privacy aspects of them that would make it inappropriate to include it in this record now.

Nevertheless, I would ask that they be marked as JFK F-403 and inserted in this record at this point after they have been duly edited.

Chairman STOKES. Without objection it may be done.

[The information follows:]

## JFK EXHIBIT F-403



## DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

September 20, 1978

Dear Mr. Stokes:

This refers to my letter of September 15, 1978 concerning your September 13 request for the declassification and release of six documents about Charles William Thomas and Elena Garro de Paz.

The Department's Bureau of Inter-American Affairs concurred in the declassification and release of the major portions of the documents, enclosed at Tab A. These six documents contain certain information which still warrants classification pursuant to E.O. 11652. The deleted information, if released, could damage U.S.-Latin American relations or reveal confidential sources and methods which remain a part of U.S. Embassy operations.

The Bureau of Inter-American Affairs also agreed to the declassification and partial release of four other documents, which appear in the CIA files on Elena Garro de Paz. These documents appear at Tab B. However, the Department requests that the Select Committee not make these documents a matter of public record. These documents may assist the Select Committee in understanding the background story of Elena Garro de Paz. However, because the nature and substance of these documents relate more specifically to U.S.-Latin American relations and not directly to Ms. Garro de Paz, the Department would prefer that the Committee not cite these documents in the public record.

The Honorable

Louis Stokes, Chairman

Select Committee on Assassinations  
House of Representatives

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As always, I appreciate the Select Committee's cooperation in all matters of record releases. I hope the release of the enclosed documents will prove useful to the Select Committee in conducting the hearings into the circumstances surrounding the death of President John F. Kennedy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Douglas J. Bennet". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.  
Assistant Secretary for  
Congressional Relations

Enclosures:

As Stated

**UNCLASSIFIED**

5601 Potomac Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20016  
July 25, 1969

Honorable William P. Rogers  
Secretary of State  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In winding up my affairs at the Department of State, there is a pending matter which I believe merits your attention.

Lee Harvey Oswald, the presumed assassin of President Kennedy, was alleged to be present at a party given by a Mexican communist sympathizer and attended by the Cuban Consul, a veteran intelligence officer, when he was in Mexico shortly before the assassination. There are allegations that the Mexican Government may have been aware of Oswald's presence at that party and that the Cuban Government may have tried to intimidate others who saw him there.

A careful investigation of these allegations could perhaps explain them away. Until then, however, their public disclosure could reopen the debate about the true nature of the Kennedy assassination and damage the credibility of the Warren Report.

Since I was the Embassy officer in Mexico who acquired this intelligence information, I feel a responsibility for seeing it through to its final evaluation. Accordingly, I have prepared a memorandum (enclosed) explaining this information and its initial assessment, keyed to three memoranda of conversations with my Mexican informant.

I believe you would want to consider carefully whether to let well enough alone in this case, or whether the risks attending possible public disclosure of these allegations make further investigation warranted.

Respectfully,

  
Charles William Thomas

Enclosure:

Memorandum and four attachments.

**UNCLASSIFIED**

per Francis J. McNeil  
ARA - 9/15/78



UNCLASSIFIED

July 25, 1969

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald in Mexico

1. While serving as Political Officer in the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City from 1964 to 1967, I became quite friendly with the Mexican playwright, Elena Garro de Paz. An intelligent, witty, and outspoken woman, I found her a very useful if sometimes biased source of political gossip and personal history on significant Mexican personalities. She introduced my wife and me to many important people in Mexico. She was also particularly knowledgeable about agrarian affairs. A biographic report that I prepared on her on May 3, 1966 is attached (Tab A).

2. On one occasion, Miss Garro inadvertently mentioned to me that she had been at a party with Lee Harvey Oswald and two American companions when Oswald was in Mexico just before the Kennedy assassination. The party had been at the home of her cousin, Ruben Duran. The memorandum of that conversation, dated December 10, 1965, is attached (Tab B). I had not read the Warren Report, but I assumed that if Oswald had been to such a party in Mexico, it would have been well known to the Embassy. I also knew Miss Garro to be something of a professional anti-communist who tended to see a communist plot behind any untoward political event. However, the episode about her being escorted into hiding at an obscure hotel intrigued me. Accordingly, I decided to report the matter in writing. I gave the memorandum of conversation limited distribution within the Embassy, and did not send any copies to Washington.

3. A few days later I was called to the office of Mr. Winston Scott, who headed the Embassy's Political Research Section. Also present was Mr. Nathan Ferris, the Embassy's Legal Attache. They had noted with interest my December 10 memorandum of conversation. They pointed out that there had been a great many rumors about Oswald at the time of the assassination and that some could not be verified and others had proved false. They asked me, however, to try and get a more detailed replay of Miss Garro's story. Mr. Scott made clear that the FBI had full responsibility for any further investigations of the Oswald case. (B)(2)

4. In a memorandum of conversation dated December 25, 1965 (Tab C), I provided a much more detailed and accurate restatement of Miss Garro's alleged encounter with Oswald and subsequent developments. Certain errors in my original presentation were corrected. Miss Garro guessed that the date of the party at her cousin's house was in early September, 1963. She admitted that she had gone to the Embassy to report briefly about this matter on an earlier occasion.

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per Francis J. McNeil  
ARA 9/15/78

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5. I got no reaction to the second memorandum from Messrs. Scott and Ferris. However, the Deputy Chief of Mission, Clarence Boonstra, who had been Charge d' Affaires at the time of the Kennedy assassination and subsequent Oswald investigation, told me that Oswald had not been in Mexico on the date given for the party. He stated, furthermore, that the informant had changed her story. When I explained that she hadn't changed her story but that rather I now had given a more accurate account of it, he reiterated that the date was wrong and seemed to dismiss the whole affair.

6. Some time later, Elena Garro told me she had found her old calendar and had reconstructed the date of the party at which she had seen Oswald. She stated it had been in late September rather than early September. (Oswald was in Mexico from September 26 to October 3, 1963.) I accordingly went to Mr. Ferris' office and informed him of this. He replied that she had given the late September date accurately when she had come to the Embassy and made her original report to the FBI. He added, however, that someone who was at the party had stated that there were no Americans there. He did not reveal who had provided this information. I asked Mr. Ferris to tell me frankly if he thought I should continue pursuing this matter. He advised me that it was not necessary since he considered the Oswald case closed, stating again that he had heard all these rumors before.

7. Although the date of the alleged party had been placed in the proper time frame, I was puzzled at the report that there had been no Americans at the party. I had assumed that Miss Garro could have clearly been mistaken about the identity of the Americans she saw there, but never doubted that she had seen some Americans. Although, I had met Elena Garro's sister, Deva Guerrero, I had never discussed the Oswald case with her. Mrs. Guerrero's grown son, however, told me that he was quite convinced that his mother had seen Oswald.

8. Although I pursued the matter no further, I felt obligated nevertheless to report in writing the developments described in the memorandum of conversation dated July 13, 1966 (Tab D). I thought it was particularly strange that the Cuban Government would carry as Miss Garro's address the small hotel where she was allegedly hidden away after the Kennedy assassination by a man identified with the Mexican Ministry of Interior. I should perhaps add that it was I, rather than Miss Garro, who first noticed the address. At the least, the letters lend some cross confirmation to her story about the small hotel. At the most, they provide a source of endless speculation about conspiracy and international intrigue.

9. In early 1967, in the context of the Garrison investigation of the Oswald case, which had opened in New Orleans, Allen White made an interesting comment to me about the investigation of Oswald's activities in Mexico. He stated that the DSF (the security police attached to the Ministry of Interior) had interrogated the

(B)(2)

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ARA 9/15/78

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Durans after the assassination about a party which Oswald had reportedly attended, but that the transcript of the interrogation was entirely unsatisfactory by normal investigatory standards. Furthermore, the party inquired about was not the one at Ruben Duran's house, reported by Elena Garro, but at an entirely different place. This transcript may well be the source of Mr. Ferris' belief that Elena Garro's story had been checked out and found to be untrue.

10. It would appear that whereas the FBI has discounted the Elena Garro allegations, the CIA is still considerably disturbed by them. The CIA may not have pressed for further investigation, however, for a number of reasons: 1) considering the sensitive overlap and subtle competition between two intelligence collecting agencies, it had to yield to the FBI's clear jurisdiction; 2) there are obvious complications in conducting such an investigation in a foreign country;

(B)(2)

Under

the circumstances it is unlikely that any further investigation of this matter will ever take place unless it is ordered by a high official in Washington.

11. If all the allegations in the attached memoranda were true, they would not in themselves, prove that there was a conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. However, if they were ever made public, those who have tried to discredit the Warren Report could have a field day in speculating about their implications. The credibility of the Warren Report would be damaged all the more if it were learned that these allegations were known and never adequately investigated by the competent American authorities.

12. Reference is made again to the biographic report (Tab A) on Elena Garro. She is hardly an ordinary or average person. Her strengths and weaknesses become exaggerated precisely because she is not. It would be easy and convenient to sweep this matter under the rug by claiming that Miss Garro is an unreliable informant since she is emotional, opinionated, and "artistic." I have been affected at times by that temptation, myself. No American official, however, knows her better than I do. On the basis of the facts that I have presented, I believe that, on balance, the matter warrants further investigation.

13. Finally, the record should show that a representative of a major American publication has at least some knowledge of this story.

*C. Thomas*

Charles William Thomas  
July 25, 1969

UNCLASSIFIED

Per Francis J. McNeil  
ARA 9/15/78

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Foreign Service of the United States of America

## BIOGRAPHIC DATA FORM

## INSTRUCTIONS

For full instructions on submission of biographic data and use of this form see 4 FSA 500.

Charles Wm. Thomas

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## NAME

Elena GARRO de Paz

## NATIONALITY

Mexican

## PRESENT POSITION

Mexican Writer

## DATA AND REMARKS

1. Elena Garro, the mercurial wife of Octavio Paz, was born of Spanish parents in Puebla on December 11, 1917. She attended the National Autonomous University of Mexico and later did graduate work at the University of California (Berkeley) and at the University of Paris. She has long been married to Octavio Paz, a career diplomat who is also one of Mexico's finest poets and leading intellectuals (author of El Laberinto de la Soledad). Since her husband went to his present post as Ambassador to India, she has been separated from him, apparently with their mutual consent. Her 20-year-old daughter, also named Elena, resides with her in Mexico City.

2. Having spent 17 years of her life in Europe, she has a rather un-Mexican objectivity about her native land and has a reputation for being one of its more articulate detractors. At the same time she is very emotionally committed to many aspects of Mexican life and has made an important contribution to its artistic development.

3. While enjoying the reflected glory of her prestigious husband, she has become a significant writer in her own right. Fogor Sólido, El Rey Negro, La Señora en su Balcón, Ventura Allende, and Andarse por las Ramas, are plays that have had appreciative audiences in Europe, where they have been translated into German, as well as in Mexico. Two more plays, Perada Empresa and El Viaje, are in preparation. Her short stories are collected in a volume called La Semana de Colores. The Literary Supplement of the London Times has called her novel, Los Recuerdos del Porvenir, a "splendid success." One critic has said of her: "For Elena Garro, there is no frontier between reality and fantasy; in any case, the latter is a second reality—perhaps more intense—to which one may penetrate without passport or forewarning, thanks to the effectiveness of a literature fired with passion, flavor, and life." It might be added that the frontier between reality and fantasy is also difficult for her to distinguish in real life.

4. A witty, urbane, and opinionated woman (she speaks Spanish, French, English, and German) with an unflagging sense of humor, she has reportedly had a stormy marriage with Octavio Paz, whose social conventionality she continually and liberally shocked with her erratic and whimsical behavior. Although her forthright opinions and sharp wit tend on occasion to ruffle feathers in Mexico, her important social, literary, and political connections render her fairly immune from

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Continue Data and Remarks on Plain Sheets

per Francis J. McNeil  
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serious counterattack. Her plays are being currently produced in Mexico City and Zurich, and she has just had a lengthy exclusive interview with one of the large morning dailies here. Politically, she appears to be Catholic and traditionalist, and in her admiration for German culture she occasionally exhibits flashes of National Socialism. Although on domestic political issues, her views seem progressive, she often describes herself as a reactionary, because this is the term her communist friends apply to her. Her political connections run the gamut of the political spectrum. During her moments of bitter denunciation of corruption in the ruling PRI, she often threatens to join the Communist Party.

5. Miss Garro has for many years been an active worker in the Confederación Nacional Campesina (CNC), the agrarian arm of the PRI, and is particularly close to the recent CNC Secretary General, Javier Rojo Gómez. She has been a tireless propagandist and agitator on behalf of the poorer Mexican peasants, and she is on close personal terms with and apparently enjoys the respect of peasant leaders from all over the country. Her house is a constant meeting place of peasant leaders, and she was recently paying the hotel bills of over 100 of them who were suffering delays in getting their grievances heard. She has on occasion published articles bitterly criticizing the governments agrarian policy, particularly the alleged political assassination of troublesome peasant leaders, in such leftist publications as Siniente and Sucesos. All this demonstrates that she is somewhat fanatic on the subject of campesinos. While she detests the new head of the CNC, Amador Fernández, she has cultivated, partly for her own protection, President Díaz Ordaz, Director of Agrarian Affairs, Roberto Aguirre Palancares, who is now a frequent visitor to her home. She is also very friendly with and a strong supporter of Carlos A. Madrazo, former President of the PRI and ex-Governor of Tabasco, because of his sympathy for the plight of the peasants and his desire to reform the PRI.

6. Elena Garro's brother (Eduardo?), who also resides in Mexico City, is a construction contractor for plumbing and electrical work. He seems less emotional than Elena and is not concerned with politics. A sister, Deva, is married to a second-rate painter named Guerrero Galván. According to Elena, she is a communist sympathizer. Another sister is married to an American and resides in Cuernavaca. Three cousins, Lydie, Foracio, and Rubén Durán, are all reportedly communist sympathizers. Horacio's wife, Sylvia Durán, is employed by the Cuban Embassy here. Elena Garro is very close to her daughter, Elenita (or Chata), who echoes her mother's multivarious views and has considerable influence over her. Elenita is not well educated, but unfortunately she is rather well read and has been prematurely exposed to ideas which she has not yet properly understood and assimilated. Accordingly, she can be obnoxiously outspoken.

7. Miss Garro is well disposed toward the United States and has been friendly and forthcoming with Embassy officers. Her broad range of

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Llena GARCIA de Paz

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significant personal friends, the views of many of whom are important to the Embassy, makes her a useful Embassy contact, and she is currently carried as a target in the Embassy's Youth Program. Despite her access to much that is going on beneath the surface in Mexico, including peasant unrest, the fact that she has a tendency to romanticize developments in reporting on them makes it difficult at times to determine what degree of credence to place on what might well be useful and concrete information.

8. She lives in a modest but comfortable house on Calle Alencastre 220 in Lomas Virreyes. Her telephone number is 40-20-57.

P: CWTomas:hag

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December 10, 1965

## Lee Harvey Oswald and Kennedy Assassination

Elena Garro de Paz, Mexican writer; wife of Octavio Paz  
Charles W. Thomas, Political Officer

ASB, DCM, P, P/R, CND, L

In the course of a discussion about other matters, Sra. de Paz mentioned that she had met Lee Harvey Oswald, the presumed assassin of President John F. Kennedy. She was very reluctant to discuss the matter, but finally imparted the following information. Needless to say, the source of this information should be carefully protected.

1. In September, 1963, shortly after her return from abroad, she went to a party at the home of Rubén Durán, who is married to her cousin. Her daughter, Elenita, accompanied her. There she met Oswald and two other young Americans who were with him. The three young Americans remained apart from the other guests. She expressed an interest in talking to them, but was discouraged from doing so by some of the other guests.

Most of the guests at the party were Communists or philo-Communists. She remembers seeing the Cuban Consul, Aguirre (phonetic); General Clark Flores of the Mexican Olympic Committee; Silvia Durán, who she later learned was Oswald's mistress while he was here; Emilio Cardellón, the writer, who she thinks is now in the United States; and a Latin American Negro man with red hair.

3. In November, 1963, when the identity of Kennedy's assassin became known, she and her daughter went to the Cuban Embassy and, once admitted through the front gate, shouted "assassin" and other insults at the staff there.

4. Shortly afterward, she and her daughter were visited by a friend, Manuel Carvillo, who was then an official in the Secretariat of Gobernación, and were told he had orders to escort them to a small and obscure hotel in the center of town. They were kept there for eight days under pretext that they were in danger.

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When she told Carville she wanted to go to the American Embassy and explain what she knew of Oswald's connections here with Mexican Communists and Cubans, she was told that the American Embassy was full of Communist spies. She said Carville tries to give the impression that he is an extreme rightist. He now has a job at Ballas Artes.

5. Some of the other people who were at the party with Oswald were taken to the state of Veracruz, where they were "protected" by Governor Lopez Linares. Rubén Durán is reportedly "protected" by General Clark Flores and is now driving a big car and looking very prosperous.

6. Many Communists and philocommunists here believe Kennedy's assassination was the result of a Communist plot engineered by Fidel Castro. Rubén Durán has subsequently told her that he is not really a Communist and that it had been a great mistake to kill Kennedy.

P/CWThomas:hag

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Dec. 25, 1965

Lee Harvey Oswald and Kennedy Assassination

REFERENCE: Memorandum of Conversation, December 10, 1965

Elena Garro de Paz, Mexican writer  
Charles Wm. Thomas, Political Officer

AMB, DCM, P (2), P/A, L, CEB, CR/T (2)

On December 25, Sra. de Paz again discussed at considerable length her alleged encounter with Oswald. Also present, as they were at the original conversation on this subject, were my wife and Sr. de Paz' daughter, Elekita. Some further information on this subject was given subsequently on January 9, 1966. During this latter conversation, Sra. de Paz admitted that she had gone to the Embassy on an earlier occasion with her daughter and mother-in-law and had talked to two Embassy officers (presumably from the Legal Attaché's Office) about this matter. She said since the Embassy officers did not give much credence to anything they said, they did not bother to give a very complete story. The following information supplements and in some instances corrects that given in the memorandum of December 10.

1. Lydia, Horacio, and Rubén Durán are all cousins of Sra. de Paz. Silvia Durán is married to Horacio, who is a rather weak man. Horacio was converted to communism by Ricardo Guerra. Sra. de Paz has never had anything to do with Silvia, though she trusts and considers a whore. Rubén was born in the United States and served in the US Army during the war. He still goes to the US from time to time but has no relatives or particular connections there. Lydia also travels occasionally to the US. The party in question was held at the home of Rubén Durán.

2. She believes that the date of the party was about September 2 or 3, 1963. It was a few days before the visit of the Soviet astronaut, Gagarin. She believes it was a Monday or Tuesday because it was an odd night to have a party.

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(September 2 and 3 so, in fact, fall on Sunday and Tuesday.) She cannot conveniently reconstruct the date from her calendar because it is in a desk which is now stored away with a lot of other furniture blocking it.

5. At the party, the man she assumed was Oswald wore a black sweater. He tended to be silent and stared a lot at the floor. Of his two young American companions, one was very tall and slender and had long blond hair which hung across his forehead. He had a gaunt face and a rather long protruding chin. The other was also rather tall and had short, light brown hair, but he had no real distinguishing characteristics. All three were obviously American and did not dance or mix with the other people. The three were evidently friends, because she saw them by chance the next day walking down the street together.

4. Although Sra. de Paz had returned from an extended stay in Europe only in June or July, she had already met Eusebio Azcue and knows positively that he was at the party. On another occasion (it was not clear whether before or after the party in question), she attended a party where she saw, among others, Eusebio Azcue; Emilio Carballido, the pro-Castro writer; and a Latin American Negro man with red hair. (These last two were not at the Durán party as was mistakenly stated in the December 10 memorandum.) Carballido and Azcue, along with some others, were in a heated discussion on that occasion about President Kennedy, and they came to the conclusion that the only solution was to kill him. Sra. de Paz said that Carballido is known as a Castro agent in Mexico. He has been to Red China, the Soviet Union, and many times to Cuba. Following the assassination of Kennedy, he spent about a year in Cuba. When he returned, he got a job teaching at Rutgers University through Dr. José Vazquez Lora, who was formerly with the Rockefeller Foundation in New York and who is now a professor at Rutgers. Carballido is presumably still there. The day after the assassination, Elena Paz encountered Sra. de Azcue in Sanborns. On seeing her, Sra. de Azcue turned and hurried out of the store. Azcue was immediately called back to Havana after the assassination, and his wife followed him shortly thereafter.

5. Others present at the Durán party in addition to her and her daughter were Horacio and Silvia Durán; Lydia Durán; Sra. de Paz' philocomunist sister, Dora Guerra; General José Jesús Clark Flores and his mistress, a Guatemalan woman; a medical doctor from Delinde Hospital; a young American couple, both fat and blond, who were spending their honeymoon in Mexico; a 40-year old Mexican woman in a red dress; and a rather strange man who claimed to be Mexican but did not look or talk like one. His first name was Alejandro and he subsequently wrote Elena Paz several love letters. She claims she turned these in to the American Embassy. Ricardo Guerra, a communist, and his wife, Rosario Castellanos, a writer, were both supposed to come to the party but declined to come, according to Sra. de Paz, when they learned that she would be there.

6. On Saturday, November 25, 1963, the day after the Kennedy assassination, Sra. de Paz' brother drove her and her daughter at about 3:00 p.m. to the Cuban Embassy. Her brother was embarrassed by their behavior and drove a block up the street to wait for them after letting them out. The two women then went inside the gate and shouted "assassin" and other insults.

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7. Later that day, they were visited by a friend, Manuel Calvillo, who said that they were in serious danger from the communists and that he would take them to a small hotel where they would be safe for a few days. (It was not clear whether he said he was acting under orders or not.) Calvillo was known around town to be an undercover agent for the Secretariat of Gobernacion and to be a personal friend of Jose Palomares and Gustavo Diaz Ordaz; accordingly they believed and trusted him. Among other things he said was that Sylvia Duran had been arrested. This was not public information at that time.

8. Since she could not remember the name of the hotel, Sra. de Paz took me to the part of town where she remembered it to be, and we found it. It is the Vermont Hotel, located at Calle Vermont 29. It is one and a half blocks west of Avenida de los Insurgentes just south of the Viradeto. She stated that the hotel is owned by someone from San Luis Potosi and is used by businessmen from that area. She and her daughter did not personally register at the hotel. She thinks Calvillo registered them as relatives or friends of his from San Luis Potosi. Although modest, it is a modern and comfortable-looking hotel. They stayed there until the following Friday and hardly left their room.

9. It was not until after they were in the hotel and saw the newspapers and the photographs of Oswald that she and her daughter both came to the independent conclusion that he was one of the young Americans at the Duran party. When Calvillo visited them at the hotel, she told him she wanted to report to the American Embassy what she knew about Oswald's connections with local communists and with Azcar. Calvillo said she shouldn't go because the American Embassy was full of communist spies. When she returned to her house the following week, guards were posted outside it.

10. When she saw her sister, Dora Guerrero, after returning home, the latter was terrified because of Oswald's presence at the Duran party. She had come to the conclusion independently that it was Oswald whom she had seen there. Sra. de Guerrero was also very angry with the Duran's because she thought they had become involved in the assassination plot for money. Despite being a philocommunist, she was an admirer of President Kennedy's because she is also a patriot and a monarchist. About two months after the assassination, Sra. de Guerrero was called in by two communists, whom she refuses to identify, and was warned with threats never to reveal to anyone that she had been to a party with Oswald. She remained so terrified that she would not accompany Sra. de Paz to the American Embassy to tell what she knew of Oswald.

11. A short time after the assassination, Emilio Carballeda, the pro-Castro writer, took the Durans to Jalapa, Veracruz and kept them out of the way for a while until the initial shock of the Kennedy assassination wore off. Carballeda has connections with the University of Veracruz Press.

12. Also shortly after the assassination, an American woman named June Cobb came and spent several days in Sra. de Paz' house. She was sent by their mutual friends, Enrique Cado, a Costa Rican who is now June Cobb's roommate and who was formerly the mistress of Varignon Moral when he was with the Engelbiller Foundation,

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## Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: July 13, 1966

SUBJECT: Further on Oswald and Kennedy Assassination

REFERENCE: Memorandum this Subject of December 25, 1965

PARTICIPANTS: Elena Garro de Paz, Mexican writer  
Charles Wm. Thomas, Political Officer

COPIES TO: AMB, DCM, P, P/R, I, CMB, CE/T (2)

1. Sna. described some developments which may have some bearing on her claim that she saw Lee Harvey Oswald at a party at the home of her cousin, Rubén Durán, when Oswald was in Mexico prior to the Kennedy assassination.

2. She stated that her writer friend, Carlos Solorzano, is quite well acquainted with Cuban Ambassador Joaquín Hernández Armas. She said Solorzano was apparently not particularly leftist but that his brother, Alfonso, was a communist. Ambassador Hernández had told Solorzano that he would very much like to meet Sna. Paz. Solorzano accordingly arranged a party at his own home on June 30, 1966, and invited both of them. Also present were Tito Montalman and his wife, Elvira Vargas, the leftist journalist with Noticias who is a close personal friend of President Díaz Ordaz; Emanuel Carballo, the pro-Castro writer; Joaquín Díaz Canais, head of the publishing firm called Editorial Martín; and Juan Soriano, the painter. She said she was probably invited to make her feel at ease, since he is a friend of hers and was the only anti-communist there besides herself.

3. During the evening, Ambassador Hernández, whom she described as intelligent and cultured, concentrated his attention on her and did his best to flatter her by lauding her literary productions. In addition, he expressed great interest in her friend, Carlos Solorzano. He issued a personal invitation to her to attend the annual literary festival of the Casa de las Américas in Havana. She explained to him that she was not a Fidelista and that she wouldn't go to Havana unless Juan Soriano went with her. Hernández then invited Soriano to attend as well, but the latter roundly denounced the Castro regime over the objections of the others present, who urged them both to attend the festival.

4. Later, her friend, Víctor Rico Galán, the pro-Castro journalist, who, she says, personally dislikes Ambassador Hernández, warned her not to go to Cuba unless

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5. On July 4, a driver from the Cuban Embassy delivered to her home on Calle Alencastre in Lourdes Virreyes an envelope containing two letters and some printed matter from the Casa de las Americas in Havana. The first letter, written last October, gave her address as Vermont 33, and the second letter, written in April, gave her address as Vermont 39. The envelope for the first letter, with the above address, was marked for return to the sender, which was the Cuban Embassy here. The second envelope, which contained the whole package, had no address as it was hand-carried to her home (see attachments).

6. Sra. Paz stated that the only possible reason the letters were addressed to her at Calle Vermont was because she spent several days at the Hotel Vermont immediately after the Kennedy assassination (see referenced memo). The correct address of the hotel, however, is Vermont 29. She concluded the Cuban Government carried that street and number, with a minor error, as her regular address.

7. Since Manuel Calvillo had taken her to the hotel ostensibly to protect her from the communists, this raised the question of how the Cubans obtained that address. She stated that as far as she was aware, the only people who knew she had been at the Hotel Vermont were Manuel Calvillo and two close friends of his, Ernesto de la Peña and Margarita Michelena. Two other friends of these three who might have learned of it are Eunice Odio and Juan Cobb. She said she had always been very suspicious of all three of these people because they had gone out of their way to cultivate her when she returned from Europe in 1963 and had made such a point of being outspoken professional anti-communists. She remembered that many years ago Margarita Michelena was a communist. She now wondered whether Calvillo and perhaps the other two as well were Cuban agents. She stated again that Calvillo was a close personal friend of Jose Palomares and Gustavo Diaz Ordaz, and that guards, presumably from Gobernacion, had been placed outside her home when she had returned from the Hotel Vermont. In fact, since Calvillo's recent dismissal from his position at the Secretariat of Education (for leaking information to the press about the Fondo de Cultura Economica), he had shown her two personal telegrams from President Diaz Ordaz assuring him that another job would be found for him in the future. She added that she had told Calvillo that she had gone to the US Embassy at one point to tell what she knew about her alleged encounter with Oswald. To add to her suspicions, she remembered that what appeared to be a gunman who often accompanied Calvillo and Palomares was a Spanish refugee named (fnu) Valencia. She said Valencia's first wife was a Russian communist he had married during the Spanish Civil War. She had subsequently taken their children and returned to the Soviet Union.

8. She thought it possible that the Cuban Embassy had now deliberately given her the letters from the Casa de las Americas with the Vermont Street address in order to frighten her. She was already concerned about what appeared to be three gunshots that had been fired through her upstairs.

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rear bedroom window while she was out of the house about three weeks ago. She said that with all the leftists in town accusing her of being an agent of the FBI and the government irritated with her because of her support for Carlos Madrazo, she did not feel entirely safe living alone with her daughter. She said her brother was now sleeping at the house to ease their anxiety.

9. Finally, Sna. Paz stated that she had recently encountered her cousin, Lydia Durán, and that the latter had been very friendly and wanted to meet her again. She said Lydia was very poor and had a small job with Diffusion Cultural at the Anthropological Museum.

Attn: [redacted]

As stated (to P/R, L, and CSD only)

P: CWS:Thomas:hag

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HERNANDEZ, Amador — A- Director of Education for the State of Chihuahua

(B)(2)

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B- A friend of Elena Garro de Paz who was cultivated for her protection because of his membership in the political party of power.

C- None

ROQUE, Eusebio — A- Subject is the Cuban Commercial attache to Mexico.

B- Attended the party given by Ruben Duran which Oswald allegedly attended.

C- Reflects that Subject had contact with Oswald at the Cuban Embassy and that an argument between Oswald and Subject occurred because Subject could not issue Oswald a visa to go to Cuba, at the direction of the Cuban Government.

HERNANDEZ Armas, Joaquin — A- Subject is the Cuban Ambassador to Mexico.

B- Subject is a close associate of a communist friend of Elena Garro de Paz.

C- None

Information Obtained from Sources

- Department of State Records
- Mr. C.W. Thomas' Correspondence
- The Warr Commission Report

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ARA 9/15/78



67

ALSP. NO.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

May 12, 1960 MAY 12 1960

REF. 2.

55	ACTION	DEPT.	EX-10	BUREAU OF	100-6
For Dept.	ARMY	1 N	ARMY/2	INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS	
Use Only	REC'D	F OTHER	7-3	5610/2015-2	505-2
	6/15	O	CIA-10	USIA-10	FBI-1

SUBJECT:

### Communist Agitation Among Student Groups

Mendoza - Mendoza - Mendoza - Mendoza - Mendoza -  
 Nuevo Laredo - Nuevo Laredo - Nuevo Laredo -  
 The Consulate learned from a very reliable source that several weeks ago

agitors, \_\_\_\_\_ and a third not yet identified, sent three to Ciudad Juarez to incite student groups to demonstrate against and stone the American Consulate at Ciudad Juarez on May 23, 1960, Students' Day. The Chessman case, United States-Cuban Policy, and attacks on Mexican monopolists (Eloy Vallina, in particular) are to be used as the slogans for their student demonstration. Their efforts have resulted in very little success to date, with only La Escuela Normal Nocturna giving them any backing. Apparently they are quite disappointed with the results, but intend to establish a cell among the students in Juarez to solidify their position. Arturo Gemis, the leader of the three-man group, has returned to Chihuahua City, leaving the other two to carry on the work. At the moment the attack on the Consulate seems likely to fail; however, the Consulate will watch their future activities very closely and will request police protection if and when appropriate.

This may very well be a local problem, in which case other posts in Mexico may not be affected. However, if the purpose behind the demonstration is to create the impression that widespread anti-United States feeling exists in Mexico, all posts may be attacked.

William D. Wright  
American Consul General

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DEPARTMENT PASS TO:

1 copy each Consulate in Mexico

LAPezzullo;h.in

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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per Francis J. McNeil ARA 9/15/78

812.432/5-1260

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# LAST

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REF : CERF, Section D, Item III-A.

25	AC 1001	DEPT.	1001	1002
For Dept.	ARR-4	IN	RM/R-2 REP-1 RM-7 E-7 ICA-11 EUR-5	
Use Only	11/25	OTHER	COM-12 CIA-10 TAR-2 TR-3 AGR-5	

SUBJECT: EXCON: Possible Use of Free Port of Tijuana for U.S. Merchandise  
Destined for Cuba.

From a source within the Cuban Government believed to be reliable came information indicating that the Bank for Foreign Commerce of Cuba (BANCC) was planning to use the free port of Tijuana, Mexico, as point of entry for U.S. merchandise ultimately destined for Cuba.

Architect Eusebio AZCUE, Cuban Commercial Attaché to Mexico, reportedly talked recently with BANCEC officials in Habana regarding two advantages of using Tijuana for this purpose:

1. It is a free port.
2. It has a great deal of movement and hence there is less possibility of being conspicuous than in a city on the Gulf of Mexico.

According to the plan, BARGEET would make available some \$3,000,000 in credits for purchasing raw materials and spare parts needed for Public Works equipment which is out of commission. Possibly the credit would be increased later to obtain vital parts for sugar mill machinery and other important factories. The Public Works department was to furnish a list of the raw materials needed but the rest was yet to be determined.

Representatives of U.S. firms in Mexico would be utilized; most of the representatives were described as not knowing the destination of the merchandise. An unnamed American firm in Tijuana was suggested as participating; a (presumably) Mexican firm called "Don Lazaro's son" was mentioned as being trustworthy for the transaction.

Through another source the Embassy learned that Cuban Commercial Attaché Azcue had mentioned a Mexican algodonero (cotton dealer, broker or grower) as possibly being of assistance in a third country transaction, suggesting the possibility that "Don Lazaro Hijo" might be connected in some way with the cotton business.

ECON:LEColby:mlb

ASSIGNED TO:  
NAME OF OFFICER  
OFFICE SYMBOL

ACTION	DATE OF
TAKEN	ACTION

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
BUREAU OF  
INTERAMERICAN AFFAIRS  
NOV 2 1960

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COMMENT: It is likely that Sr. Azcue, upon his return to Mexico, will play a prominent role in this transaction, assuming that the financially hard-up Castro Administration can make available the necessary credits, or is not able to obtain the merchandise in other ways.

The Embassy realizes that the information presented above is sketchy and is not in a position to obtain details, nor to follow the progress because the contacts were "one-time contacts" and brought the information to the Embassy at some personal risk. However, it may fit in with other information already known to the Department and serve as background for such additional information on this subject as the Embassy may chance to pick up at a later date.

For the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim:

*E. A. Gilmore, Jr.*

E. A. Gilmore, Jr.  
Counselor of Embassy for  
Economic Affairs

ACTION REQUESTED: Department please pass copies to Mexico City, Monterrey, Ottawa and London.

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27		AIRGRAM		104-17-3 Cuba-71-1	
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A2		A-13		ATR MATI	
NO.				HANDLING INDICATOR	
TO		Department of State		SEP 29 12 11 33	
				GROUP 3	
				Downgraded at 32-year intervals.	
				not automatically declassified.	
FROM		AmConsul, TAMPICO		DATE: Sept	
				DEPARTMENT OF STATE	
				MEXICAN AFFAIRS	
SUBJECT		Visit of Cuban Ambassador to Tamaulipas		SEP 30 1964	
REF				SEP 30 1964	
				LCON	
				HWC	
				AD	
<p>Cuban Ambassador to Mexico Joaquin HERNANDEZ Armas arrived at Tampico on the evening flight of CMA on September 5, 1964. Hernandez was met at the airport by Cuban Consul José L. POSADA Torres and his wife, Camilo Domenech; Commercial Counselor of the Embassy, and Attaché Alejandro Rodriguez, who had preceded Hernandez by car, and a group of less than twenty local people. No state or municipal officials were present.</p> <p>On Sunday, September 6, a barbecue was offered in the visitors' honor by Ego. Alfonso MURIEDA of Petroleos Mexicanos at his home in Colonia Petrolera. Murieda is a known communist.</p> <p>On Monday, the Cubans traveled to Cd. Victoria where they were received by Governor Praxedes BALBOA and other officials of the state government. The Governor had a private luncheon for the Ambassador and his party. The Governor also accompanied them on visits to schools, government buildings and the museum.</p> <p>The Cubans were in Cd. Mante on Tuesday, accompanied by Lic. Cristobal GUEVARA Salinas, Executive Officer of the state government, and Amado TREJO, Director of the Office of Press, Information and Tourism of the state. According to sources in Mante, no enthusiasm could be generated for a mass greeting; therefore, some school children and municipal employees were ordered out to greet the Cubans.</p> <p>The Cuban Ambassador visited the Ingenio (sugar mill) of Mante and had a long talk with its manager, Ing. Mamel ZORILLA Rivera. Zorilla is a well known leftist. Information available indicates that he has long been under Communist Party discipline.</p>					
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AmConsul, Tampico

The visitors were entertained at supper at a dingy cafe on the edge of Cd. Mante. It is not known by whom they were entertained or who attended. It is understood that only a few persons were present. The party also visited a school and the new Social Security Hospital.

Newspapers stated the next day that the Cubans had announced that they will buy 40,000,000 pesos worth of Tamaulipas cotton. If true, it is probable that about fifty per cent of the cotton will be purchased from the Ingenio del Mante. Members of the cooperative planted 4,000 hectares in cotton this year.

On Monday afternoon, the Mayor of Tampico was instructed by telephone from Cd. Victoria to give a luncheon for the Cuban Ambassador at the Casino Tampiqueño on Wednesday, September 9. The maximum number of persons authorized was twenty. The luncheon was duly held, but it appears that there was some difficulty in filling twenty places. Only fifteen persons, including the four Cubans, attended. A list of those present is attached. Mayor INGUANZO told me in confidence that he was ordered by Mexico City and Cd. Victoria to give only this luncheon and to invite only city officials. Also, he was ordered to discourage private citizens from making any displays of friendship.

A buffet supper for one hundred twenty persons was given by the Cuban Consul at the Gruta Azul of the Hotel Tampico on the evening of September 9. The affair was attended by the general and admiral commanding the military and naval zones and the finance officer of the military zone. The Mayor told me that he did not attend.

The Cubans have emphasized the commercial in their public and private talks. They continually reiterate their desire to buy cotton, henequen, beans and onions. They grow lyrical over the advantages to Tamaulipas that such trade would bring. Communism or politics are never mentioned.

In Cd. Victoria, the Ambassador talked at length with Oscar GUERRA Elizondo, representative in Tamaulipas of the Department of Agriculture and Cattle Raising. The arrangements for this and other commercial discussions were made by the Banco de Comercio Exterior at Mexico City. According to a reliable source, no contracts or agreements were signed.

The Ambassador is said to have offered grants for five youths from Tamaulipas to visit Cuba. One, a third year law student, José HEFTYE Cuella, who probably will make the journey, said that he had been nominated by the Governor. The Consulate will attempt to learn and report details soon of the exact method of selection as well as the names and backgrounds of other nominees.

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A-13

AmConsul, TAMPICO

In the Consulate's view the visit should be considered a failure. The minimal courtesies accorded by the state and local authorities; the very poor press coverage; the reported failure to reach any firm commercial agreements; and the apathy of the public (including students) must have been disappointing indeed to the Cubans.

*Leland W. Warner, Jr.*  
Leland W. Warner, Jr.  
American Consul

Enclosures: *CH*

Copies of newspaper articles

cc: Counselor for Consular Affairs  
Counselor for Political Affairs  
Political Research  
Director, Mexican Affairs, Washington, D. C.

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AIRGRAM

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TO : DEPARTMENT OF STATE

HANDLING INDICATOR

FROM : Ambassador, MEXICO

DATE: January 13, 1965

SUBJECT: Mexican Treatment of Sixth Anniversary of Castro Regime

REF :

The activities of the Cuban Embassy here in connection with the sixth anniversary of the Castro regime were almost ignored by Mexican press. The leftist El Día (January 5) did carry a brief item on Ambassador Joaquín HERNÁNDEZ Armas' reception, held on January 4, and reported the Ambassador's participation in the traditional wreath-laying ceremony at the Independence Monument earlier in the day. But El Día omitted any editorial eulogies, contrasting sharply with the moderate Excelsior's attack on the "abominable extremes" incurred in Cuba, made in the course of a commentary (January 5) on Secretary Rusk's recent observation that the menace of Castroism had declined.

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per Francis J. McNeil ARA  
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Page 2, A-605 from Mexico

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Mexican Participants in Havana Celebrations

A number of Mexican leftists are known to have visited Havana in order to participate in the celebrations at the invitation of the Cuban regime (see the enclosure to this despatch for a list of certain of these persons).<sup>2</sup> It is interesting that no top-level member of the Mexican Communist Party (PCM) went to Havana, although the members of the National Directorate of LOMBARDO Toledano's Popular Socialist Party (PPS) did participate in the ceremonies at the Cuban capital. A variety of reasons were probably responsible for the absence of any top-level PCM officials. These officials were presumably very busy making final arrangements for the National Congress of the PCM-dominated faction of the Central Campesina Independiente (CCI-Independent Peasants' Central), which opened on January 6 (see Weeks 51 and 1). Among other reasons, it is possible that the PCM leadership also concluded that this was not a particularly opportune time to converge on Havana, particularly in view of the recent change of administration here (see in this connection the Embassy's A-579 of December 29, 1964).

For the Ambassador:

*Wallace W. Stuart*  
Wallace W. Stuart  
Counselor of Embassy  
for Political Affairs

- 1/ The text of the brief Diaz Ordaz message to President Dorticos was released to the press by the Cuban news agency Prensa Latina on January 8 and was picked up without comment in El Dia of January 9, 1965.
- 2/ According to the Ultimas Noticias of January 2, 1965, the "Panamanian Communist leader and agitator Moises CARRASQUILLA Vazquez" passed through Mexico City on January 1 en route to Havana for the anniversary celebrations.

Enclosure: (CONFIDENTIAL/NO FOREIGN DISSEM) (M)

List, as described above.

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per Francis J. McNeil ARA  
9/15/78



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Encl. No. 1  
A-605 from Mexico

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2 Certain Mexicans Known to Have Participated in Ceremonies in Havana Mark-  
ing Sixth Anniversary of Castro Regime

Ernesto ~~CABALLERO~~ Esperón  
Margarita ~~CASTILLEJOS~~ Salazar  
Máximo ~~CORREA~~ Camargo  
Elvira Manzano de ~~CONZALEZ~~  
Jorge ~~CONZALEZ~~ Ramírez  
Carlos ~~LAGUNES~~  
Nicolás ~~PEREZ~~ Ramírez  
Gloria ~~POPOCA~~ Ortega  
Rosa ~~FUIG~~ Fernández  
Lazaro ~~RUBIO~~ Felix.  
Alfredo ~~SAINZ~~ Delgado  
Miguel A. ~~VELASCO~~

(8)(2)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

per Francis J. McNeil  
ARA - 9/15/78

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Mr. BLAKEY. The committee has also tried to locate Mr. X and Ms. Y to no avail.

The committee also sought to interview another individual who was employed in the Cuban Embassy in 1963. Although the interview had been prearranged, he left Mexico City suddenly the day committee investigators arrived, and returned the day they were scheduled to depart.

The investigators, having decided to stay an extra day, contacted the former employee by phone, but he refused to speak with them. The committee has learned that Mexican authorities had been requested not to allow the committee investigators to interview the employee.

Members of the Duran family were questioned about Elena Garro's allegations. They denied that they socialized with the people she said were at their party, although Sylvia Duran did recall that Elena herself may have been at one or two parties at her home in the fall of 1963. Sylvia Duran denied that Oswald had been there.

Another Mexican has claimed to have been in contact with Oswald in Mexico City. Oscar Contreras Lartique told an American foreign service officer (not Charles Thomas) in 1967 that as a student at the University of Mexico in 1963 he had met Oswald as he was leaving a roundtable discussion at the School of Philosophy.

Contreras, who described Oswald as "strange and introverted," said he spent the rest of the day, that night and part of the following day with Oswald and some other students. He said Oswald told them he had come to the university looking for pro-Castro students who might help persuade the Cuban Embassy to grant him a visa. Oswald told them, Contreras said, that he was from California and was a member of a pro-Castro organization in New Orleans.

Contreras was later reinterviewed by American authorities. He refused to identify other students who had met Oswald, because he said they were still active revolutionaries. Contreras stated that originally Oswald was suspected of being an American intelligence agent, that he never mentioned President Kennedy or assassination, and that he repeatedly expressed a wish to get to Cuba promptly.

Mexican authorities have reported to the committee that there was indeed an Oscar Contreras Lartique registered at the University of Mexico in 1960, but not in 1963. They also reported that Oscar Contreras had once signed a manifesto written by a pro-Castro student group, but that the group ceased to function in 1962.

Nevertheless, the committee placed some significance in Contreras' story because it has been learned that a professor from the University of Mexico held philosophy seminars at the Duran home. The philosophy professor, a close friend of the Durans, was a well known Marxist at the university.

The committee tried to arrange an interview with Contreras through Mexican officials, but when its investigators arrived, Contreras disappeared.

In summation, Mr. Chairman, I must frankly state that the committee has, with the exception of certain witnesses made available by the Cuban and Mexican Governments, largely been frus-

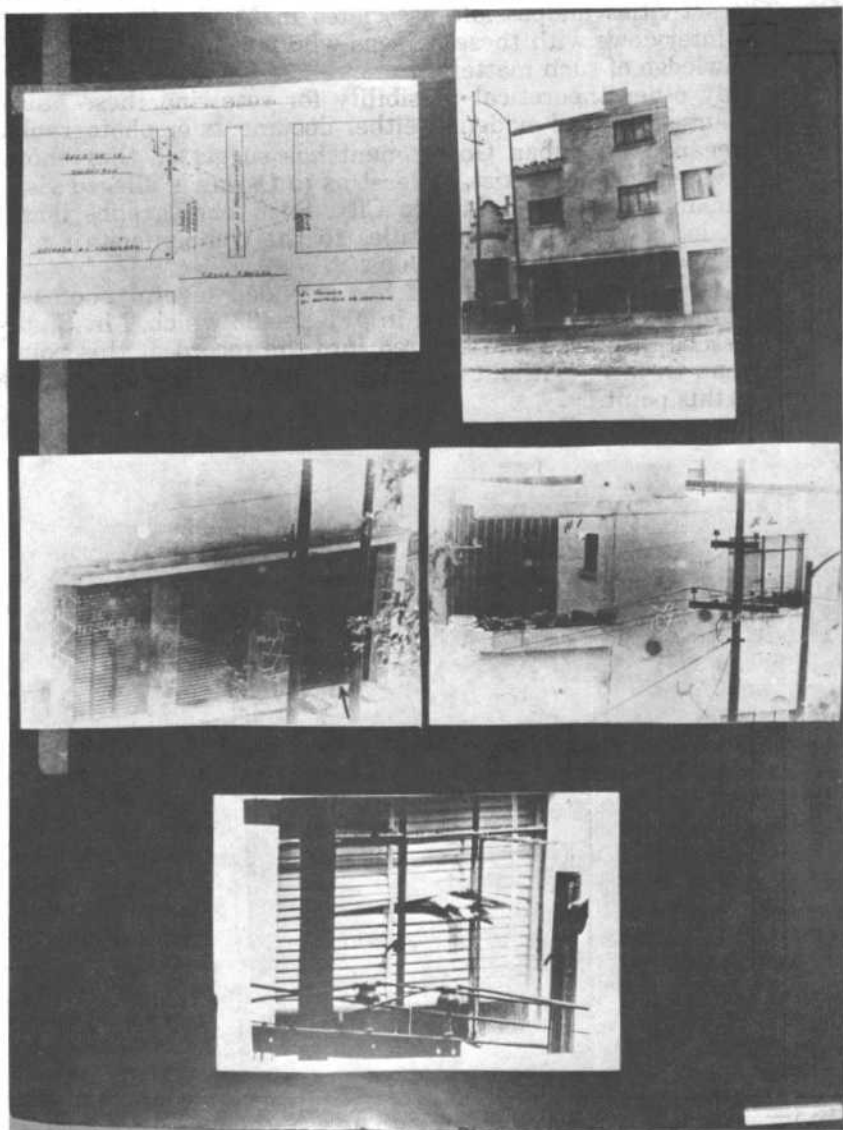
trated in its attempts to investigate the nature of Lee Harvey Oswald's activities and possible associates in Mexico City through personal interviews with those persons who purportedly have first-hand knowledge of such matters.

The only other theoretical possibility for resolving these issues was, of course, physical evidence, either documents or photographs. In this regard, the Cuban Government has suggested that photographic evidence should exist, at least as to Oswald's alleged visits to the Cuban consulate in Mexico City. Such photographs might well include, of course, the identities to the companions, if any, who were with him on those occasions.

In fact, the Cuban Government has provided several photos to the committee. They are reflected in JFK F-438 which, Mr. Chairman, I ask be displayed and entered into the record at this point.

Chairman STOKES. Without objection it may be entered into the record at this point.

[The information follows:]



JFK EXHIBIT F-438

Mr. BLAKEY. To support its claim that there was a photographic surveillance site across the street from the Cuban consulate in 1963, the Cuban Government, Mr. Chairman, has indicated that the top left of the photograph represents a diagram of the Cuban consulate on the left and on the right of the building that is displayed immediately to the right of that diagram. It is from that building that they suggest that photographic surveillance took place.

The three bottom photographs on the exhibit illustrate examples of their ability to photograph the photographer, during the course of his surveillance of the Cuban consulate.

Mr. Chairman, I would indicate that the committee has conducted an extensive investigation to determine who, if anyone, was responsible for the surveillance outlined in this exhibit in the periods of time during which that surveillance was in operation.

It has also sought to identify and personally interview those individuals who may have conducted the surveillance and to obtain, if possible, all relevant photographs.

Once again, however, I have to report to you, Mr. Chairman, that the committee's efforts have met with frustration. No photographs of Lee Harvey Oswald or of any other person who can be said to be an associate of his have been located.

Mr. Chairman, that ends today's presentation on Cuba, Mexico and the assassination.

Chairman STOKES. Thank you, Professor Blakey.

Before you proceed to the next section, once again I think it appropriate for me to indicate for the record the kind of cooperation that was necessary for this committee to obtain in order to do the extensive type of investigation that we have done in this particular area.

I acknowledged in the latter part of yesterday's hearings the kind of cooperation we had gotten from Cuban Government officials. But I might appropriately note at this time that to my knowledge and to the knowledge of the members of this committee, it is unprecedented for a head of a foreign nation to subject himself to interrogation by a congressional committee.

Not only did President Castro spend in excess of 4½ hours with this committee, but he made it clear and apparent to us that in every respect his officials were to give us complete cooperation.

I think the final record in this case will indicate the voluminous documents and witnesses that we interviewed in this area and virtually every request made by this committee was complied with, even to the extent of the fact that the committee when it went there conducted itself in the same way we have attempted to do our work here and that is to work quietly and without any type of fanfare.

And for that reason, we made the same type of request in Cuba that our work there not be announced, that we be accorded the opportunity to work privately and quietly and to that extent the President and his officials afforded us the kind of housing that we needed in order to remain out of public view.

So I think that the record ought to appropriately acknowledge the fact that this committee was given extensive cooperation by President Castro and his officials and we are grateful for that cooperation.

Professor Blakey?

Mr. BLAKEY. Mr. Chairman, it would be appropriate now to shift the focus of the hearing somewhat from Cuba, Mexico City and the assassination, and begin today and in the days that follow an examination of the performance of the agencies.

The first agency whose performance in 1963 and 1964 will be examined is the Secret Service.

Of all of the Federal agencies that were in any way involved in protecting President Kennedy or investigating his assassination, the Secret Service has come in for the most scathing criticism. Within hours of the tragedy in Dallas, press accounts were pointedly suggesting that the agency had been derelict in its duty to provide Presidential security.

The more obvious questions were first raised. Why had the motorcade been routed through Dealey Plaza, an open, park-like area surrounded by tall buildings? Why wasn't there more physical protection for the President—why, for example, were there no agents in the limousine itself, forming a human shield? Why was the limousine moving at such a slow speed? And why were agents in an open car directly behind the limousine so slow to respond at the sound of the first shot?

The Warren Commission was quite blunt in its admonishment of the Secret Service:

The Commission has concluded that at the time of the assassination the arrangements relied upon by the Secret Service to perform this function were seriously deficient.

And, the Commission adds in its final report:

The Commission believes that the facilities and procedures of the Protective Research Section of the Secret Service prior to November 22, 1963, were inadequate.

The approach of the Warren Commission seems to have been (a) to document the conduct of Secret Service agents physically present at the assassination scene; and (b) to record the perceptions of supervisory personnel as to Secret Service performance on the trip to Dallas and to reforms called for to improve the protective operations of the agency.

The select committee, while not disregarding the performance of the Secret Service on November 22, 1963, has attempted to go one step farther. It has assembled data on threats against President Kennedy from Secret Service files, in an effort to establish a basis for a fair, objective analysis. This has enabled the committee to scrutinize the extent to which Secret Service protective measures reflected the agency's grasp of potential danger to the President during the Kennedy years.

In other words, was the Secret Service in part to blame for the assassination because it failed to gather sufficient information on security problems in Dallas, or because it failed to analyze that information for its full significance?

The questions this committee posed for itself were these:

1. How skillfully did the Secret Service acquire information about threat activity around the country?
2. What was the quality of the insight used to analyze the information?
3. Did protective operations in the field reflect a thorough awareness of threat activity?

Before we get to testimony bearing on these questions, it would seem useful to consider for a moment the historic background of the Secret Service and its evolving role in Federal law enforcement.

It is worth noting that the Kennedy assassination was the first and only event of its kind since the Secret Service was assigned to full-time protection of the President in 1901, as a result of the

assassination of William McKinley. Originally, when it was formed in 1865, the Secret Service was not given responsibility for Presidential protection, even though that was the year Lincoln was murdered.

The primary purpose of the Secret Service at the outset was to deal with counterfeiting which had become a national outrage in the period before 1862 when a standardized national currency was adopted. By the end of the 1860's the new agency had all but eliminated the problem.

For the balance of the 19th century, the Secret Service engaged in various criminal detection activities. It investigated the Ku Klux Klan in the 1870's, Spanish espionage in the 1890's, organized crime in New York City in the eighties and nineties, and syndicated gambling in Louisiana at the turn of the century.

Even with the assignment of Presidential protection as its primary role, the Secret Service was not guaranteed, however, necessary annual appropriation to carry out the task. It wasn't until 1908 that the agency's mission was clarified, and, at that, for an ironic reason.

When the Secret Service exposed the participation in land fraud schemes by Members of Congress from several Western States, legislation was passed restricting the operations of the agency and creating a new Federal law enforcement body which ultimately became the Federal Bureau of Investigation. So, the original FBI men were eight agents transferred from the Secret Service.

The law limiting the Secret Service's responsibilities left it with two concerns: Treasury matters, or counterfeiting, and protection of the President. On occasion, however, it was given exceptional assignments.

During World War I, for example, it went after German saboteurs, and in 1921 it was the body that investigated the roles of Secretary of the Interior Albert B. Fall and Attorney General Harry M. Daugherty in the Teapot Dome Scandal.

From about 1930 on, the Secret Service was an anticounterfeiting agency with the additional assignment of protecting the President. For the latter function, on only two occasions before November 22, 1963, was the agency tested by an actual assault on a President:

In February 1932, the car in which President Roosevelt was riding was fired on in Miami, killing the mayor of Chicago, Anton Cermak. In November 1950, members of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party tried to force their way into Blair House, the temporary home of President Truman.

It ought to be clear, therefore, that the best way to evaluate the performance of the Secret Service at the time of the Kennedy assassination is to look at it not so much in the context of history, but rather in the context of the climate in 1963 and how well the Secret Service appreciated that climate, especially as it might have been evident in Texas.

President Kennedy posed a problem for the Secret Service from the start. As a policymaker, he was liberal and innovative, perhaps startlingly so in comparison with the cautious approach of President Eisenhower. His personal style was known to cause agents assigned to him to tear their hair. He traveled more frequently than any of his predecessors, and he relished contact with crowds

of well wishers. He scoffed at many of the measures designed to protect him and treated the danger of an assault philosophically, if someone wanted to kill him, he reasoned, it would not be very difficult to stop him. On at least one occasion, President Kennedy was literally "lost" by the Secret Service detail guarding his hotel room.

Indeed, on the very day of the assassination, Presidential Assistant Kenneth O'Donnell is reported to have told a Secret Service agent, "you are not at fault. You can't mix security and politics. We chose politics."

The core of the Presidential security arm of the Secret Service is the White House detail, which in 1963 was composed of 36 special agents. In addition, there were six special agent drivers, eight special agents assigned to the Kennedy family, and five special officers detailed to the Kennedy home in Hyannisport, Mass. On the trip to Texas, there were 28 special agents in the Presidential entourage.

In all, out of 552 employees in November 1963, there were 70 special agents and 8 clerks—17 percent of the total Secret Service work force—assigned to protecting the President and Vice President directly or to the Protective Research Service, a preventive intelligence division charged with gathering and evaluating threat information and seeing that it is usefully disseminated.

In addition, there were 30 employees in the office of the Chief of the Secret Service, plus 313 agents and 131 clerks in 66 field offices, all of whom were on call to assist in Presidential protection.

The time of need for the most manpower was in 1963, as it is now, when the President traveled and was exposed to crowds of people in open spaces. Then, the Secret Service called on municipal, county, and State law enforcement agencies for personnel who assisted in the preparation of large-scale protective plans.

In planning a Presidential trip, a set of procedures was customarily followed. It is expected that they will be detailed in testimony today, along with answers to certain specific issues stemming from the Kennedy assassination, such as securing buildings along a parade route and liaison between the Secret Service and other agencies, Federal as well as State, county, and local.

From the beginning of its investigation of the Secret Service, the committee realized the great importance of the Protective Research Service. PRS is the memory of the agency, and it is responsible for analyzing threat data. By reviewing PRS files and interviewing its personnel, the committee has sought to clarify just how much the Secret Service, as an agency, knew about the sort and degree of the dangers the President faced in the fall of 1963, and to learn what protective tactics had been devised in response to them.

The committee was at pains to make a valid distinction between major and minor threats to the President in order that it could concentrate on the followup action to the significant ones. A threat was considered major if (a) it was verbal or communicated by a threatening act, and (b) if it created a danger great enough to require an in-depth and intense investigation by the Secret Service or other law enforcement agency.

The committee examined all threat profile investigations from March to December 1963, 313 of them in all, and it incorporated



into its analysis information on some major threat activity back to December 1962.

The committee also considered the following questions in its investigation of Secret Service threat activity files, questions raised by the Kennedy assassination itself:

One: Was there an indication of a conspiracy to harm Secret Service protectees?

Two: Was there information developed in investigations of earlier threats that might be useful in the investigation of the assassination?

Three: Was the pertinent information in the Secret Service files made available to the Warren Commission?

The first witness today will be Inspector Thomas J. Kelley. Inspector Kelley was assigned to represent the Secret Service in the investigation of President Kennedy's assassination. Inspector Kelley served as Secret Service liaison to the Warren Commission.

Inspector Kelley received a B.A. from Providence College and an LL.B. from Georgetown University Law School. He has been the special agent in charge of the Philadelphia Field Office, an Inspector in the Washington office, the Assistant Director of Protective Intelligence and Investigations in Washington, D.C., and he currently is the Assistant Director of Protective Operations in Washington, D.C.

Inspector Kelley is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police and he has served as consultant to several Far Eastern police agencies, as well as consultant to the Dominican Republic on protective matters.

It would be appropriate at this time, Mr. Chairman, to call Inspector Kelley.

Chairman STOKES. The committee calls Inspector Kelley.

Sir, would you raise your right hand and be sworn?

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you will give before the committee is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

#### **TESTIMONY OF INSPECTOR THOMAS J. KELLEY, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PROTECTIVE OPERATIONS IN WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Inspector KELLEY. I do.

Chairman STOKES. The Chair recognizes counsel for the committee, Leodis Matthews.

Mr. MATTHEWS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kelley, at this time are you retired from the Secret Service?

Inspector KELLEY. Yes, in February 1978.

Mr. MATTHEWS. In 1963 you were a member of the Secret Service inspection detail?

Inspector KELLEY. Yes.

Mr. MATTHEWS. What were your duties and responsibilities?

Inspector KELLEY. The duties of the inspector from the Chief's office at that time were to conduct the field investigations of the activities of the Secret Service both in the field, at headquarters, and on the protective details, to make periodic inspections of the offices.

Mr. MATTHEWS. Were you concerned about the performance of the agents in those investigations?