

Mr. BLAKEY. With your permission, I would like to read part of pages 2 and 3.

The Mafia began its activities in Cuba in the 1920s taking advantage of the existing corruption among successive leaders of Cuba. During the 1940's, they extended their mechanisms of control, though covert, to the workers unions in different sections of Cuba which would allow them in future to control everything related to their entrants. These were strengthened with the blow of March 10.

Mr. Chairman, the reference to March 10 is a reference to the date that then Senator Batista overthrew the lawful government of Cuba at that time.

Continuing the quote:

A time when the Mafia began to build its capital through legitimate businesses in structuring luxury hotels, casinos, and tourist attractions to exploit tourism. With reference to the administration and operation of the Mafia in 1958, the same possessed the control of gambling casinos which existed in the luxury hotels and cabarets.

The don of the Mafia was Santos Trafficante who was in charge of all gambling while the administrators of these casinos were primarily Cubans or foreigners linked to the Mafia. The gambling halls were under the direction of chiefs assigned by the Mafia who made sure all of it functioned properly at the gaming tables. The Mafia obtained great profits through these gambling casinos. We can cite as an example the casino of the Hotel Riviera which in 1 year obtained a net profit of \$1,400,000. The business of the Mafia not only consisted of gambling but also extended to control of the drug traffic, jewelry, foreign currency, matters of prostitution and pornographic movies.

Upon the triumph of the revolution in 1959, all gambling halls were closed.

We see, Mr. Chairman, that through McWillie, if not others, Trafficante may have had an association, at this point an association only with Jack Ruby. How close or to what effect is as yet undetermined. Now it can be fairly asked, could Santos Trafficante also have been involved in plots against President Kennedy? The committee's next witness is Jose Aleman. Mr. Aleman is the son of a former minister of education in the Cuban Government in the late 1950's. He was actively opposed to the Batista regime. In the early 1960's, he was supporting efforts to overthrow Castro. In a context of mutual business entrants, Mr. Aleman and Mr. Trafficante met at least once, perhaps on several occasions, prior to November 1963. It would be appropriate at this time, Mr. Chairman, to call Mr. Aleman.

TESTIMONY OF JOSE ALEMAN

Mr. PREYER. Mr. Blakey, do I understand that Mr. Aleman also wishes to invoke rule 6?

Mr. BLAKEY. No, Mr. Chairman, he has changed his mind and he will permit both cameras and other recording devices to be operated.

Mr. PREYER. At this time the committee calls Mr. Aleman.

Mr. Aleman, do you solemnly swear the evidence you are about to give this committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. ALEMAN. I do.

Mr. PREYER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Cornwell for the questioning.

Mr. CORNWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Aleman, where were you born?

Mr. ALEMAN. In Havana.

Mr. CORNWELL. Havana, Cuba?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. PREYER. I don't believe Mr. Aleman's microphone is on, or put it in front of you a little closer to you.

Mr. ALEMAN. Thank you.

Mr. CORNWELL. What was the occupation of your father in Cuba?

Mr. ALEMAN. He was Minister of Education.

Mr. CORNWELL. Under President Prio?

Mr. ALEMAN. Under President Grau.

Mr. CORNWELL. And how long did your family remain in Cuba?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, until 1947, they came to Miami, and then my father died in 1950.

Mr. CORNWELL. After that, did you remain in Cuba?

Mr. ALEMAN. I was a student at Miami University and then I remained in Cuba for some time.

Mr. CORNWELL. Apart from education in Miami, then you continued to reside in Cuba until approximately what year?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, 1960.

Mr. CORNWELL. And during that period of time, prior to leaving Cuba, you were active in efforts to overthrow Batista; is that correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. What basically was the nature of your role in those attempts?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, we were fighting against a dictatorship, totalitarian government, and we formed part of a few underground activities in Havana.

Mr. CORNWELL. Among other things, I understand that you were one of the leaders of the famous attempt on the Presidential Palace in 1957, is that correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. After leaving Cuba, did you continue to be active in attempts during that period to overthrow Castro?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. And, very briefly, what was the nature of your role in such activities?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, I tried many things, because in Cuba, before I had tried to do something against Communist totalitarian regime of Fidel Castro. Most of the activities, they didn't have any success whatsoever, because I was arrested many times, and there were so many things over there that I had to leave the island, the pressure I had.

Mr. CORNWELL. In 1963, where were you living and what was your occupation?

Mr. ALEMAN. I was living in the Scott Bryan. I had that property of mine.

Mr. CORNWELL. You were living—

Mr. ALEMAN. That is a hotel. Scott Bryan Hotel.

Mr. CORNWELL. You were living in Miami and you owned and managed the Scott Bryan Hotel?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. CORNWELL. During approximately that period of time did you have occasion to meet Santos Trafficante?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes, I did.

Mr. CORNWELL. Who introduced you to him or how did that introduction come about?

Mr. ALEMAN. Mr. George Nobregas came to me after we had some other conversations with some other individuals and there were American businessmen, and those American businessmen had lost a lot of property in Cuba, then he came to me and he said Santos wants to meet you. I some way refused because I had to testify against Santos' people in 1960.

Mr. CORNWELL. All right, who was Mr. George Nobregas?

Mr. ALEMAN. Mr. Nobregas was in all the activities against the Batista regime and also against Fidel Castro.

Mr. CORNWELL. And do you have any knowledge of how it was that he may have known Santos Trafficante prior to that time?

Mr. ALEMAN. The possibility that while we were smuggling arms in the 1950's they had all the connections with other Mafia people and they came about to maybe he was connected with them.

Mr. CORNWELL. So you have told us that when the suggestion was first made that you should meet with Trafficante, you were reluctant to do so, the reason being that you had previously testified against associates of his in a trial, is that correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. Correct.

Mr. CORNWELL. Who were those associates?

Mr. ALEMAN. Sammy Mannarino and Norman Rothman.

Mr. CORNWELL. The trial involved criminal charges and those individuals were convicted; is that correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. I believe so. I am not very sure about it. I left the Chicago grand jury in a hurry and I later on had some threats from them and that was it. I don't know, I didn't even ask about a trial.

Mr. CORNWELL. All right. In spite of your reluctance, however, did you ultimately go to one or more meetings with Trafficante.

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes, I did. I had various meetings with Santos Trafficante.

Mr. CORNWELL. And roughly during what period of time did the meetings take place?

Mr. ALEMAN. July, June, 1963, around that time.

Mr. CORNWELL. Where were the meetings?

Mr. ALEMAN. One of them, the meeting was at Junior's Restaurant. Another was at the Scott Bryan, and I don't know how many there were, three.

Mr. CORNWELL. The name of the restaurant was Junior's?

Mr. ALEMAN. Junior's Restaurant.

Mr. CORNWELL. And the other meetings occurred at the Scott Bryan Hotel?

Mr. ALEMAN. Correct.

Mr. CORNWELL. What was your objective in attending the meetings with Trafficante?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, Mr. George Nobregas came to me and said that J. J. Vila, director of public relations in the city of Miami, wanted to see me because he had a message from President Bosch of the Dominican Republic and President Bosch was a man that was very grateful to my father and that he wanted to talk to me about bringing to the Dominican Republic a lot of businessmen and whoever wanted to invest there.

Mr. CORNWELL. So you understood that it was a request from people with business interests?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. That you assist in the introduction?

Mr. ALEMAN. Excuse me. At the same time, he said that one of the possible individuals that was interested in going was Santos Trafficante, going to the Dominican Republic.

Mr. CORNWELL. All right, well, that then explains what you were told about Santos Trafficante's reason for wanting to talk to you, he wanted, I take it, to see if there was a possibility of you achieving some introduction with President Juan Bosch?

Mr. ALEMAN. That is correct.

Mr. CORNWELL. What was your reason for attending the meeting? Did you have a different motive or objective?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, other than the objectives of trying to overthrow Castro. He talked to me about, in favor of, the contracts in Dominican Republic, that I had a project, condominium project, and he wanted to facilitate the means for a loan with the Teamsters Union.

Mr. CORNWELL. So he suggested he could help you by securing a Teamster's loan for a condominium project you were interested in?

Mr. ALEMAN. Correct.

Mr. CORNWELL. Now, it has been reported that at one of these meetings, or on one of these occasions on which you met and spoke with Trafficante, you and he engaged in a political discussion or a discussion of the Kennedy administration.

Mr. ALEMAN. He did most of the talking. I mean, he was talking about President Kennedy and this is a thing that I want to bring to this committee that——

Mr. CORNWELL. Before you tell us what he said, if you wouldn't mind, tell us where the conversation occurred?

Mr. ALEMAN. At the Scott Bryan Hotel.

Mr. CORNWELL. And in what type of room? Was it a type of room that a guest would use?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes; a pretty large room.

Mr. CORNWELL. On this occasion, how many persons were present?

Mr. ALEMAN. There was Mr. Macho Gener, Nobregas, separated from the sofa and a chair, Santos Trafficante was sitting on the chair, and I was sitting on the sofa.

Mr. CORNWELL. It would be like a normal hotel room?

Mr. ALEMAN. It was a apartment, a large apartment.

Mr. CORNWELL. All right, Trafficante was sitting in like a comfortable leisure chair, that sort of thing?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. CORNWELL. What were the other two men doing? Macho——

Mr. ALEMAN. Macho Gener was leaving the room at various times and Nobregas was separating like he didn't want to participate in the conversation.

Mr. CORNWELL. And apart from the part of the conversation that I want to have you explain in detail, why did this particular meeting occur, was it part of the general conversations over the business interests you have already described or was it of some other nature?

Mr. ALEMAN. He talked various things. One of the things he said Hoffa could not secure the loan so far because he had a lot of troubles with the brothers Kennedy.

Mr. CORNWELL. OK. So, in other words, he was providing information on the same subjects that you had previously told us about, the possibility of a loan through Hoffa and the Teamsters for the condominium project?

Mr. ALEMAN. Correct.

Mr. CORNWELL. Then, the conversation, was it a relatively brief one or did it cover a long period of time on this occasion?

Mr. ALEMAN. It covered about 3 or 4 hours.

Mr. CORNWELL. Was it primarily related to business or was it a general discussion just between two people who sit down and talk?

Mr. ALEMAN. It was a general conversation.

Mr. CORNWELL. And during this period of time tell us specifically what was discussed, what was said by Mr. Trafficante, and what, if anything, you said in reply with respect to Hoffa and the political scene?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, he was very much upset. He said that the way the President was getting into Hoffa, a man of the workers, blue collar, and a man that was a very hard-working individual, and that at the same time he was very much upset, I mean, he thought for a long period of time.

Mr. CORNWELL. Very much upset what Kennedy had been doing to Hoffa, and he felt sympathetic toward Hoffa describing him as a man——

Mr. ALEMAN. Very much.

Mr. CORNWELL [continuing]. Of the workers?

Mr. ALEMAN. Very much.

Mr. CORNWELL. Go ahead. What did the conversation lead to next?

Mr. ALEMAN. At one point he said, "You see this man, he is not going to be reelected, there is no doubt about it, he has been the man that has been giving everybody a lot of troubles and he is not going to be reelected" and I don't know why he said that to me or anything. Then he said——

Mr. CORNWELL. Did you make a reply to that?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes; I said he has a lot of Democrats backing him and so far it looks very well. I don't see anything that he is not going to be reelected or anything.

Mr. CORNWELL. And what, if anything, did he reply?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, he said he is not going to be reelected, you don't understand me, he is going to be hit.

Mr. CORNWELL. Prior to that, had you heard the expression "he is going to be hit," the term before? Are you familiar with that expression?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, it is going to be hit with a lot of votes from the Republicans or anything. I didn't have any idea at that moment, that is why I want to bring this to the committee. I don't have no possible idea why he said it.

Mr. CORNWELL. Have you ever heard anyone use the expression "he is going to be hit" on any other occasion?

Mr. ALEMAN. Not whatever. I mean, maybe if you are talking about something, I mean—that is all. I never, I never thought at that moment anything whatsoever.

Mr. CORNWELL. The question is, Have you ever heard that expression, "he is going to be hit"?

Mr. ALEMAN. In what respect?

Mr. CORNWELL. On any other occasion?

Mr. ALEMAN. No.

Mr. CORNWELL. In any of your activities in the attempts on Batista or Castro, any of your dealings with Norman Rothman, or Sam Mannarino, have you heard this expression?

Mr. ALEMAN. That was 1957, 1956, when we were trying to smuggle arms.

Mr. CORNWELL. OK, you had heard it during that period?

Mr. ALEMAN. No, no.

Mr. CORNWELL. The question is had you heard that expression on other occasions?

Mr. ALEMAN. No, no.

Mr. CORNWELL. Well, then, if you hadn't when Santos Trafficante said he is not going to be reelected, he is going to be hit, did you ask him to elaborate on that phrase?

Mr. ALEMAN. To the best of my recollection I thought that he was maybe saying at that time that he could provide a loan and that he was making a story or he was upset about that, and then he just made an alibi about the loan or something like that. That was my thought about it.

Mr. CORNWELL. The question was, when he used the expression did you ask him to elaborate, to explain the exact meaning of his phrase, "he is going to be hit"?

Mr. ALEMAN. He was talking, and I didn't, I wasn't interrupting for about a long time, and he kept on talking and talking and talking, and that is it.

Mr. CORNWELL. So the answer is you didn't ask him to explain?

Mr. ALEMAN. I didn't ask him anything. I just took it like somebody saying something, and I took it as you know, like he is talking about a lot of foolishness.

Mr. CORNWELL. OK, let me see if I can get what is in your mind, then, as to the specific details of the conversation.

You first brought up Mr. Hoffa and the pressure that Kennedy was placing on him. He then suggested that Kennedy would not be reelected. You interjected an opposing view that you thought—

Mr. ALEMAN. No way, whatsoever?

Mr. CORNWELL. No?

Mr. ALEMAN. No way, whatsoever.

Mr. CORNWELL. You said—

Mr. ALEMAN. I respect the President of the United States and in no way whatsoever tried to say anything that I could take that the President was going to have some problem or anything like that, he just said maybe he is going to be, the way he said that word, I interpreted with a lot of votes from the Republican Party or something like that.

Mr. CORNWELL. After Mr. Trafficante indicated that he wouldn't be elected, you said something in reply to the effect that you thought he would be, is that accurate?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. And at which point Mr. Trafficante replied no, he is going to be hit.

Now, you told us he went on speaking at that point, is that correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. You see, this happened 15 years ago and to the best of my recollection I think that is the word he put. I am not saying positively that, I mean, the wording he put was something he is not going to make it, something like that, that is it, he is not going to be reelected. In a long conversation like that I didn't pay too much attention on it.

Mr. CORNWELL. Let me ask, Mr. Chairman, if we might show the witness JFK exhibit F-602?

Mr. FITHIAN [now presiding]. Permission granted.

[A document was handed to the witness by the clerk.]

Mr. CORNWELL. This is a newspaper article which we have marked for identification.

Mr. FITHIAN. Does counsel wish that to be entered into the record?

Mr. CORNWELL. We would request that it be entered into the record at this time.

Mr. FITHIAN. Without objection, it shall be ordered.

[The above referred to JFK exhibit F-602 follows:]

The Mafia, The CIA And Castro

By George Crile III

Crile is Washington editor of Harper's magazine and is writing a book on the CIA's Cuban operations for Doubleday. His article on the CIA's man in Havana, the Cuban agent code-named AN LASH, appeared in Outlook on May 2. In this article, he examines the CIA's other major attempt to plot the assassination of Fidel Castro, which failed for what may have been similar reasons.



By John McKinley for The Washington Post

ANY ODD TRIBUTES have been offered to the American character, but few can rival that of Sen. J. Lee Rankin upon reviewing the total failure of the CIA's persistent efforts to kill Fidel Castro. "Thank God," he said, "we're just not very good at that sort of thing."

Most thoughtful observers seemed to draw the same reassuring conclusion. Even the American Mafia dons who had been recruited by the Agency to carry out Castro's execution were seen as too incompetent to be really evil. The portrait drawn by the Senate Intelligence Committee casts them more in the light of characters out of "The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight," bumbling over Castro but apparently never getting around to making an attempt on his life.

Such interpretations of these deadly undertakings are doubt comforting, but they are unlikely to be more than exercises in wishful thinking. To begin with, Sen. J. Lee Rankin (D-N.C.) tells us "the theory that prevailed in the [Senate Intelligence] Committee was that the Mafia never tried to kill Castro, that we were being misled."

The committee did not pursue this, but an independent examination of the available record of one of the Mafia figures involved in the plot makes us consider the troubling possibility that at least some of the CIA's Mafia associates were working with Castro.

Such a combination would hardly have seemed likely when the CIA set out to recruit the Mafia. Almost all the major underworld families had invested heavily in Cuba and Castro was fast moving to seize their holdings. He had even put some of their members in jail. The Mafia's willingness to do the CIA's dirty work would not then have required explanation.

Sam Giancana and John Roselli are the two mobsters generally identified with the Mafia-CIA plot. But a third, Santo Trafficante Jr., was perhaps the most important of the three, for it was his men, both in Miami and Havana, who were supposed to carry out the murder.

Trafficante is generally identified as the don of southern Florida, but he is also one of the chiefs in the Mafia's loose national confederation. Once the Agency decided to turn to the mob, it was inevitable that Trafficante's assistance would be sought. Alone among the principal dons, he had lived in Cuba. He had built a large organization there and still had a number of associates in Castro's Havana. Moreover, his professional experience made him ideally suited for assassination work.

He had learned the business from his father, Santo Trafficante Sr., who came from Sicily in 1890 to Tampa, where he built and ran his crime family for the next 50 years. In 1940, a year after surviving a shotgun attempt on his life, Santo Jr. succeeded his father.

In the first few years of his rule, Tampa was plagued with gangland murders. He was himself a leading suspect in the 1957 barbershop execution of Albert Anastasia, the old chief of Murder Incorporated. Accompanied by a Cuban associate, Trafficante had been in Anastasia's New York hotel suite the night before the killing. According to reports of the Senate Permanent Investigations Committee, Anastasia had been attempting to move in on Trafficante's Cuban gambling operations.

The following month, Trafficante was arrested at the Mafia national convention at Apalachin, N.Y. Ten years later, his eminence was again confirmed by his appearance at the La Stella Restaurant in New York with Carlos Marcello, Carlo Gambino and several other of the country's leading dons.

He was, in short, one of the major crime bosses in the United States and, significantly, the don most deeply affected by Castro's revolution. Not only were his gambling casinos seized but he had been jailed in Cuba. One would assume that such a man might have contemplated taking on Castro independently. At that time, in 1960, Castro's grip on Cuba was by no means secure. Once Trafficante accepted his CIA commission, Castro's days should have been numbered.

A Question of Loyalties

THE INITIAL PLOT called for poisoning Castro in his favorite Havana restaurant, where one of Trafficante's men worked. The CIA's Technical Services Division supplied deadly botulinum toxin which Robert Maheu, who was coordinating the mob's efforts for the CIA, passed to an exile associated with Trafficante at the Fontainebleau Hotel in Miami Beach. From there Trafficante's courier was to deliver the poison pills to the man in the Havana restaurant.

All of this took place in March and April of 1961, just

before the Bay of Pigs. Accounts vary as to why the plan failed. One version is that the authorization to administer the poison never came through; another, that Castro stopped going to the restaurant.

The most intriguing theory was proposed by the CIA's deputy-inspector general, Scott Breckenridge, to a Senate staff member. Breckenridge, who had been responsible for investigating the CIA-Mafia plot, maintained that "Trafficante had been providing Castro with details of the plot all along."

But why would Santo Trafficante, of all people, do this? One possible explanation is his supposed involvement in 1961, report on Trafficante by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics: "There are unconfirmed rumors in the Cuban refugee population in Miami that, when Fidel Castro ran the American racketeers out of Cuba and seized the casinos, he kept Santo Trafficante Jr. in jail to make it appear that he had a personal dislike for Trafficante, when in fact Trafficante is an agent of Castro. Trafficante is allegedly Castro's outlet for illegal contraband in the country."

The report goes on to summarize contradictory reports on Trafficante's relationship with Castro but, because of its date, the allegations quoted are of great interest. Back in 1961, the Mafia's anti-Castro credentials were impeccable. The informants relied on by the narcotics agents may have been wrong in their conclusion, but it is hard to think of a possible self-serving motive for fabricating such a story.

There are other indications that there may have been some working arrangement between Castro and the mob. Several reliable witnesses — most notably Crayton Lynch, who was a senior case officer with the CIA in Miami for eight years — assert that during the crucial early 1960s Castro relied on Cuban Mafia contacts for much of his intelligence in the exile community. And once again Santo Trafficante emerges as a central figure, for Castro is reported to have paid off his Mafia agents through the Florida numbers racket — Bolita — which Trafficante runs.

Here another Bureau of Narcotics report — this one prepared by agent Eugene Marshall — is instructive: "Fidel Castro has operatives in Tampa and Miami making heavy Bolita bets with Santo Trafficante Jr.'s organization. The winning Bolita numbers are taken from the last three digits of the lottery drawing in Cuba every Saturday night." According to this report, prior to the drawing, these operatives communicate with Cuba and advise which numbers are receiving the heaviest play. The Cuban lottery officials then rig the drawing. "According to this report and others, Castro's agents were robbing Trafficante of a large share of his profits. The Narcotics Bureau was afraid that, if Trafficante's Bolita operation were ruined, he would concentrate even more on the drug trade."

But Trafficante was in an even better position than the feds to know about raids on his profits. Had he chosen to, he could have solved the problem overnight by shifting the payoff numbers from the Havana lottery to the weekly dog races in Miami, as he finally did in the late 1960s. If, then, these reports are to be believed, Trafficante's Bolita may have served as one of the paymasters to the Cuban intelligence network in the United States.

Divided Loyalties

TO THOSE ONLY loosely familiar with Cuba in the 1950s, and the Mafia's intricate role there, it must seem absurd to suggest that the underworld could collaborate with Castro's intelligence. But the Mafia is not a monolith and not all of its branches had been Castro's enemies. The Mafia had placed most of its bets on the dictator Fulgencio Batista, but it had also served as the gun runners for the revolutionaries. Castro, as well as most other important Cuban revolutionary leaders, had previously dealt with and relied on one or another underworld family for arms to carry on the fight.

As the owners and managers of the luxury hotels and gambling casinos in old Havana, the Mafia had played a pervasive role in Cuban life. Soon after Castro's victory, its leaders were no longer welcome in Cuba as its operations were progressively closed down; but it still had friends and former business associates high in Castro's government. The complexity of the Mafia-Castro relationship is exemplified by the ambiguity that surrounded the imprisonment and release of Trafficante himself in 1959.

It was a time when thousands of enemies of the revolution (and Trafficante clearly seemed to fall into this category) were being summarily taken out and shot. The Bureau of Narcotics report suggests the possibility that

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Associated Press

Havana, 1939: Santo Trafficante's arrest.

he had agreed to work with Castro and that the killing was designed to provide cover. But officially, he got out of Cuba thanks to the services of his resourceful lawyer, Rafael Garcia Bango. Bango is himself another good example of that era's ambiguities — not least because his brother Jorge was and is one of Castro's closest friends and advisers. He is Castro's regular handball partner and is the minister of sports, a prestigious post in Cuba.

After getting Trafficante out of Cuba, Bango stayed on for the turbulent first seven years of the revolutionary government. Then, in 1956, he left for Miami, where he came to the attention of a federal anti-crime strike force which had Trafficante under surveillance. According to one strike force official, the two men had what amounted to a "father-son relationship." Eight months later Bango was arrested and jailed in Spain for passing counterfeit American money.

Significantly, Bango is now back in Cuba. That an important mob attorney, whatever his family connections, should find life palatable in the new Cuba is at least curious. But there seem to be nothing but contradictions in the lifestyles of Trafficante and his friends.

Mysterious Gratitude

FOR THE NEXT PART of Trafficante's history we turn to Jose Aleman, an exile in Miami who became involved with Trafficante in 1962 through his cousin, Garcia Bango. Aleman had been a rich young playboy in Havana, one of the leaders of the almost successful 1957 attack on Batista's presidential palace. His considerable wealth had enabled him to purchase a home in Florida where he owned the Tradewinds Motel and much other Miami real estate, including the Miami Stadium. The Tradewinds figured prominently in the revolution, for by 1957 most of the leading revolutionaries in Havana had fled into exile, including many of Castro's followers, and most ended up by staying there at Aleman's expense.

After the revolution, Aleman returned to Cuba and stayed a year before he was forced into exile again — this time as a counter-revolutionary. On arriving in the United States, he was met by George Davis of the FBI with a subpoena to appear as a witness against a mafioso named Norman Rothman at a trial in Chicago.

Aleman had had frequent dealings with the Mafia when he was buying guns for the revolution. He had met Rothman in 1958 when the latter was trying to save his Cuban investments by ingratiating himself with the anti-Batista forces. Rothman offered to flood Cuba with fake

The Mafia, The CIA And Castro

currency in order to bankrupt the economy and bring down the government. In return he wanted to be able to maintain his gambling operation. Aleman had rejected his offer. He tried to avoid testifying, but the FBI reminded him that, if he did not cooperate, he might be subject to prosecution for illegal gun running.

Aleman's relationship with the FBI had initially been hostile. The Tradewinds "was an armed barracks," explained George Davis, who was assigned to monitor the exile activities, and the FBI had tried to close it down. But by late 1958 the Bureau had cause to change its mind. Aleman had visited the State Department to warn that Fidel Castro was a Communist, and he persuaded one of the Communist revolutionaries staying at the Tradewinds to brief the FBI on the nature of the party in Cuba.

All of this stood Aleman in good stead with the Miami FBI office, particularly after Castro revealed his political affiliations. And after his testimony in the Rothman trial, Aleman's relationship with the Bureau grew very close. The FBI men came to rely on him, not only as a useful source of information, but as a guide to understanding the customs and thinking of the exiles. "Jose's a real nice fellow," the now retired Davis remarked. "He's a reliable individual."

After his appearance at Rothman's trial, Aleman continued to meet regularly with his contacts at the FBI to report on exiles he suspected of being Castro agents. He also told them of an extraordinary series of meetings with Trafficante.

Trafficante's Indiscretion

WHEN ALEMAN'S FATHER died, his stepmother inherited most of the fortune and the inheritance taxes were so high that Jose Jr., who had already lost his land holdings in Cuba to the revolution, was forced to sell the Miami Stadium and the Tradewinds Motel. By 1962 he was in debt, with his only asset the three-story Scott Bryan Motel, on Collins Avenue and 33rd St., in Miami Beach.

Some time in September of 1962 an old revolutionary colleague who resided at an apartment at the motel told Aleman that Trafficante wanted to see him. The colleague explained that Trafficante felt indebted to Aleman's cousin, Garcia Bango, and wanted to express his gratitude by helping Aleman out of his financial difficulties. He was prepared to arrange a \$50,000 loan from the Teamsters Union. Aleman's friend assured him that the loan was perfectly legal and that it had already been cleared by Jimmy Hoffa himself.

Aleman was understandably wary — particularly

since he had so recently testified against a Mafia leader. But sure enough, the Tampa godfather did visit Aleman at the Scott Bryan and offered him the loan — \$1.5 million to replace the ramshackle motel with a 12-story glass wonder, complete with a penthouse apartment for Aleman.

Aleman says that Trafficante spent most of the evening philosophizing. "He spoke almost poetically about democracy and civil liberties." But then he turned to the Kennedys; they were not honest, they took graft and they did not keep a bargain. He complained about their attacks on his friends, saying, "Have you seen how his brother is hitting Hoffa, a man who is a worker, who is not a millionaire, a friend of the blue collar? He doesn't know that this kind of encounter is very delicate. Mark my words, this man Kennedy is in trouble, and he will get what is coming to him." Aleman says that he argued that Kennedy would get reelected, and Trafficante replied, "No, Jose, he is going to be hit."

Aleman says that he reported this conversation to his FBI contacts, who expressed interest only in Trafficante's business proposals. Aleman assumed that they dismissed the Kennedy wranglings as gangland braggadocio.

For the next year, Trafficante used the Scott Bryan as his business headquarters, running an apartment whenever he came to town. Aleman met with him frequently to discuss the Toussaint loan and Trafficante soon began to lead Aleman into other kinds of conversations and to introduce him to other Mafia figures like Angelo Bruno of Philadelphia. Aleman, like his FBI contacts, could not quite figure out what Trafficante was doing. But he played along, hoping the loan would come through. Also the FBI considered his information valuable and he was picked to be of service.

Starting in late 1962 and continuing through the summer of 1963, Aleman says that three Cubans he had known in Havana and as the Trudeford, who had gone to work for Castro after the revolution, appeared in Miami and then left for Tulsa. He suspected them of being Cuban agents and he told this to the FBI. "I advised the FBI in long conversations that I thought something was going to happen. . . . I was telling them to be careful." By this time Aleman says he was meeting quite frequently with his FBI contacts. They listened to what he said but rarely seemed interested in his speculations.

About the end of October, 1963, the same exile who had introduced Aleman to Trafficante asked Aleman to sign a petition bitterly critical of President Kennedy. Aleman was no great admirer of the Kennedy's. He signed the petition but immediately had second thoughts, especially when it was reproduced in several Cuban newspapers in Miami.

On the day of the Kennedy assassination, Aleman arrived home to find that the FBI had telephoned. "I was worried that, because of the petition, they might suspect me." But what they were interested in was Trafficante's previous statement that Kennedy was going to be "hit."

"Two agents [Aleman] to quote certain one of them was Paul Scranton] came out to see me. They wanted to know more and more. I finally had to tell them he didn't say he was going to do it. He just said Kennedy was going to get hit." The agents stayed until they had explored every possible angle and then told Aleman to keep the conversation confidential.

The only source for all of this is Aleman, who claims that he personally repeated everything to various officials of the FBI, especially George Davis and Paul Scranton in 1962 and 1963. Both agents acknowledge their frequent contacts with Aleman but both declined to comment on Aleman's conversations with Trafficante. Scranton explained he would have to have clearance: "I wouldn't want to do anything to embarrass the Bureau."

The Enemy of My Enemy

IN SEEKING to destroy both the Castro regime and the Mafia empire, the Kennedys had aroused two desperate enemies, each with a tradition of violence and covert action. No proof that either was connected with the assassination of President Kennedy has ever been produced. But their traditions and their predicament at the moment when Kennedy was cut down make either eligible suspects. And when the two-front war that the Kennedys were waging is viewed through the experience of Santo Trafficante, it becomes at least interesting to speculate on the possibility of these two powers operating in concert.

The possibility becomes even more intriguing if one chooses to take seriously a memorandum to the director of the CIA recently declassified from the Warren Commission files. It reports the conversation of a British journalist, John Wilson (also known as Wilson-Hudson) at the American Embassy in London, just four days after Kennedy was killed. Wilson said that in jail in Cuba after the revolution in 1959 he had met an American "gang-



Chicago Daily News

The late Sam Giancana, in 1966.

ter-gambler named Santos who could not return to the U.S.A. because there were several indictments outstanding against him. Santos opted therefore to remain in prison for a period of time paying Castro in dollars for his room for a period of time paying Castro in dollars for his rather luxurious and definitely non-prisonlike accommodations. While Santos was in prison," Wilson says, "Santos was visited by an American gangster type named Ruby."

It is tempting to make much of such a document but more needs to be known about the English journalist, about the memo and about Jack Ruby's travels before any conclusions can be made. Probably the only witness who could help answer the questions raised here are the CIA's old Mafia associates. The Church committee only managed to interview one of them, John Russell Sam Giancana, due to give his testimony, was executed the day before. Santo Trafficante was never called as a witness. The committee staff claimed he could not be found.

None of the extraordinary possibilities that have surfaced here offer a documentable refutation of the sole assassin theory. As in all such explorations touching on the Kennedy assassination, the trail goes cold as it approaches Dallas. But that does not mean that there was not a conspiracy. There is simply no assurance that conspiracies, when they exist, must inevitably come to light. Many secrets prove not all that hard to keep.

Just consider the numbers of people who knew about the CIA's secret war against Cuba in the early 1960s — about the Agency's mammoth station in Miami with its 400 case officers, its 2,000 Cuban agents, its navy and small air force, its aerials, safe houses, and its paramilitary operations against Cuba. Certainly thousands of people had a rather general knowledge of that massive campaign. And yet it was not until last year that the American public even learned that President Kennedy had gone on to wage a covert Cuban war after the Bay of Pigs. Similarly, nine years ago, Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson reported the CIA's assassination plotting with the Mafia. But no one paid any attention.

It is a well known psychological phenomenon that you can't see what your imagination is not prepared to accept. In a recent interview, Sen. Howard Baker (R-Tenn.) reflected on his experience over the past few years in exploring Watergate and the world of U.S. intelligence: "The great fear that I have is that I'll wake up 30 years from now, and it will all suddenly fall into place, and I'll realize what a damn fool I was."

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Mr. CORNWELL. It is an article written by Mr. Crile.

Mr. ALEMAN. Correct.

Mr. CORNWELL. Do you know Mr. Crile?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. I would like to direct your attention to the paragraph on the second page of the article, about halfway or three-quarters of the way down the middle column on the page, beginning, "Aleman says that Trafficante spent most of the evening philosophizing," and then it goes on. I would ask if you would read that paragraph to yourself, just read it to yourself.

Mr. ALEMAN. I can't read it to me because I can't find it very well.

Mr. CORNWELL. You can't find that paragraph?

Mr. ALEMAN. No, no, I can see it.

Mr. CORNWELL. It is the second column from the left, about two-thirds of the way down.

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. Just read it to yourself.

Let me ask you——

Mr. ALEMAN. The letters are too small. Will you please read it to me?

Mr. CORNWELL. Have you seen that article before?

Mr. ALEMAN. I seen the article but the letters are very small.

Mr. CORNWELL. Let me ask you, you said you know Mr. Crile. Did he interview you on the same subjects that we have asked you about here today?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. Over what period of time?

Mr. ALEMAN. Many days. Many days.

Mr. CORNWELL. Prior to publishing the article, did he call you and advise you that he was going to do so, to print the matters that you had provided to him?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes; he said he was going to publish under Washington Post an article.

Mr. CORNWELL. Now, would you have had any reason to make a statement to Mr. Crile which was not accurate? Would you have had any motive or reason for making such a statement?

Mr. ALEMAN. One of the things that I couldn't answer was the visit of Santos Trafficante.

Mr. CORNWELL. Excuse me, what was the answer to that question, if you wouldn't mind?

Mr. ALEMAN. I couldn't answer why Mr. Santos Trafficante came to me to go to Dominican Republic, while at that time we had a conversation with some American businessmen that had properties in Cuba, and those American businessmen said they were going to try and they wanted me to do something against the Government of Castro, and then later on, these people said that they were going to give me a loan on a condominium project that they wanted to give me the loan and at the same time, this loan was going to be financed by, and that is why, the only reason why I went to talk to Trafficante because later on the thing about the Dominican Republic.

Mr. CORNWELL. Yes; those type of things, of course, are set forth in Mr. Crile's article, as you recall?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes; we discussed many things on Crile's article. I can tell you one thing. Trying to remember after 15 years all these things that occur is very difficult. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. CORNWELL. I understand.

But, let me ask you if I might, to go back to the earlier question, would there have been any reason for you to make any statements to Mr. Crile which were not accurate? Would you have had any reason for doing that?

Mr. ALEMAN. Well, the context of a newspaper changes. You are talking to a newspaperman and he is asking questions and he will ask questions in such a way that when I saw the article, many things, you know, I was trying to recall.

Mr. CORNWELL. OK.

Mr. ALEMAN. I was trying to recall a few things, I was trying to recall one time that he said, how many times have you talked to the FBI about these meetings between Santos Trafficante and the Dominican Republic, and I said, well, I told the FBI the following things.

Mr. CORNWELL. So you are suggesting that perhaps the material in the article may not be exactly correct, that it might be somewhat taken out of context, or is that the suggestion?

Mr. ALEMAN. It is not a matter of taken out of context, sir, it is a matter that when you are trying to recall. He said, we want to sit down and recall everything that happened, and I was trying to recall the many opportunities that I went to the FBI, to inform, about many things that were happening during those meetings.

Mr. CORNWELL. What I really want to find out is what the best memory you have on the subject is. OK, so let's start with the article.

Is the article an accurate reflection of what you stated to Mr. Crile?

Mr. ALEMAN. Some of the things I say are out of context.

Mr. CORNWELL. They are out of context?

Mr. ALEMAN. In some way, I mean.

Mr. CORNWELL. OK. You know Mr. Crile, correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. Is it your basic impression that he printed or at least attempted to print the material accurately based on what you said to him?

Mr. ALEMAN. He might have, but they didn't come—then when I start thinking, and trying to remember, and trying to remember everything, it wasn't in context.

Mr. CORNWELL. OK. Let me then show you what has been marked for identification as JFK exhibit F-601. May we have this exhibit admitted into evidence, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. FITHIAN. Without objection, so ordered.

[The above-referred to JFK exhibit F-601 follows:]

Excerpts of Interview ofJOSE ALEMAN, Jr.

By HSCA Staff Investigator Gaeton Fonzi

March 12, 1977

...Aleman said in more than one way that Trafficante did specifically tell him that Kennedy is "going to get hit". He also specifically confirmed the quote that Crile printed in the Washington Post and this point: "Aleman says that he argued that Kennedy would get reelected, and Trafficante replied, 'No, Jose, he is going to be hit'".

Aleman said that Trafficante told him this as part of a long conversation that lasted from sometime during the day until late at night in a room at the Scott Bryan Hotel. He was vague as to the actual date of the conversation, but Crile puts it close to his meeting of Trafficante in September, 1962. Aleman says Trafficante was rambling on in a philosophical way about democracy and socialism and communism. He also said that Trafficante brought up Jimmy Hoffa's name and said that Hoffa would never forgive the Kennedys for what they did to him. Aleman said he got the impression that Trafficante was hinting that Hoffa was going to make the hit, not him, and that Kennedy would never make it to the election because of Hoffa. This, says Aleman, was the one aspect of the conversation with Trafficante that Crile did not properly put into perspective in his piece, otherwise the piece was very accurate.

Since the conversation with Trafficante took place over such a long part of the day, Aleman says there were many people in and out of the room during the course of it. However, he believes that at the time that Trafficante was talking of Kennedy, there were two others present besides himself and Trafficante: George Nobregas and "Macho" Gener, the latter being Trafficante's top man in his and the Mafia's relationship with Cubans...

JFK EXHIBIT F-601

Mr. CORNWELL. Mr. Aleman, that is an excerpt from a report of an investigator of ours, Gaeton Fonzi, dated March 12, 1977, and I would like to specifically direct your attention to the first paragraph which reads as follows:

"Aleman said in more than one way that Trafficante did specifically tell him that Kennedy is "going to get hit." He also specifically confirmed the quote that Crile printed in the Washington Post on this point:

"Aleman says that he argued that Kennedy would get reelected and Trafficante replied, 'no, Jose he is going to be hit'."

Let me ask you, did you meet with Mr. Fonzi on that occasion?

Mr. ALEMAN. I met with Mr. Fonzi on that occasion. Now, after the first article, when I talked all those things about trying to

remember, I had the doubt that Mr. Trafficante was in some way trying to get Cubela from Cuba, he was trying to get other people, and during that time, when that happened, Mr. Cubela, after I talked to him many times to do something against the regime of Castro, he didn't do anything, and in some way he was trying to bring this man, and that is why I brought to the point that these things were happening and it was very important to pay attention of the possibility of Castro being mixed with Santos Trafficante because in Miami everybody talks that the Bolita is being paid, used to be repaid to the G-2 agents by Santos Trafficante and G-2 agents in Cuba used to be, I mean in Miami used to be paid that way, and I wanted for them to pay attention to this. That is the main reason I brought all these.

Mr. CORNWELL. What we would like to attempt to do first is to determine, to the best of your memory, what the words were that Trafficante used in this conversation, and the interview report which we have just placed into evidence indicates that you did specifically confirmed that, to the best of your memory, those were the exact words, when you were interviewed in March 1977. Is that report accurate?

Mr. ALEMAN. The report, I, again, will tell you, that I was trying to recollect things from a long period of time and I was talking about Castro maybe being involved with Cubela, with Papina Ronjo, in a lot of things.

Mr. CORNWELL. I understand that part. Specifically with respect to the first paragraph where it states that you specifically confirmed that with respect to Kennedy, Trafficante stated, "No, Jose, he is going to be hit," is that an accurate—

Mr. ALEMAN. Because if this man was in Cuba, arrested, Santos Trafficante, then Garcia Banjo, Cubela and all these people tried to get him out of jail and he had connections with the Castro government, there is no doubt that you have to pay attention to all this. That's the main reason why I am bringing this to the committee because no doubt that at that very moment, Santos Trafficante, I believe, has a lot of connections with the regime of Fidel Castro. There's no doubt about that in my mind.

Mr. FITHIAN. If the Chair could interrupt—

Mr. ALEMAN. Even after some time I heard the opinion of a Communist talking that he didn't have nothing whatsoever.

Mr. FITHIAN. Will the witness suspend for just 1 minute?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. FITHIAN. The Chair is informed, Mr. Aleman, that there is an important vote on the floor and all members wanted to hear what you had to say. So I am going to ask for a 10-minute recess. Prior to that, however, the security service, the marshals, have asked that all members of the audience and the press remain seated and in place at this time until the witness is escorted from the room. We would ask then that the witness and the marshals do that at this time and then we will declare the recess.

[Mr. Aleman left the room with the marshals.]

Mr. FITHIAN. The committee will recess for 10 minutes.

[A brief recess was taken.]

Mr. PREYER [presiding]. The committee will come to order.

Let me remind everyone in the hearing room that the U.S. marshal service has asked that all of you remain seated when the witness is brought into the hearing room and when he leaves the hearing room. We will ask that the witness be brought in at this time, and we will ask everyone in the hearing room to remain seated.

I understand that it may take about a minute for the witness to be brought in.

[Mr. Aleman was escorted into the hearing room.]

Mr. PREYER. Would you have your seat, Mr. Aleman. Mr. Cornwell is recognized.

Mr. CORNWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Aleman.

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. Returning to the subject matter that we were discussing with you before the break.

Mr. ALEMAN. I beg your pardon?

Mr. CORNWELL. I say, returning to the same subject matter.

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. Do you have any reason to believe that the interview report of Mr. Fonzi is inaccurate?

Mr. ALEMAN. When you try to recollect for 15 years something, I am trying to—it is impossible to—the wording is impossible to reconstruct.

Mr. CORNWELL. I meant to ask you though, do you have any reason to believe that Mr. Fonzi did not accurately reflect in his report what you said to him? Did he accurately write it down?

Mr. ALEMAN. It wasn't Mr. Fonzi, the one that wrote the article; it was Mr. Crile.

Mr. CORNWELL. Yes, sir, but the last exhibit was prepared by our investigator Mr. Fonzi.

Mr. ALEMAN. OK.

Mr. CORNWELL. Did Mr. Fonzi accurately write that—

Mr. ALEMAN. I have to read it again in order to—

Mr. CORNWELL. May we show him the exhibit one more time. This is JFK exhibit F-601.

Mr. ALEMAN. This is taken out of the article of the Washington Post.

Mr. CORNWELL. Yes, sir, in effect, it asks you if the article is accurate, if you did say the things that are reported in the article.

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes, that's the reason why I asked for protection for coming over here because at the time I was, later on after all things had happened in the United States, very much worried. I bring this to the attention of this committee that I had a puzzle and I couldn't understand what was it. That's the main reason I brought this to the committee.

Mr. CORNWELL. Simply for the record, Mr. Chairman, let me ask that JFK exhibit F-603 be entered into the record.

Mr. PREYER. Without objection, JFK exhibit F-603 is admitted into the record at this point.

MEMORANDUM

000936

To: Bob Tanenbaum

From: Andy Purdy

Date: March 14, 1977

Re: Synopsis of 3/10/77 trip (with Cliff Fenton) to Miami

Santos Trafficante

Summary: Subpoena personally served on subject by Cliff Fenton in presence of Sgt. Powers (Miami Dept. of Public Safety, Organized Crime Bureau) and myself. After mutual identification S.T. asked us to place the subpoenas on a little bench just outside the front door. He said he was accepting the subpoena. We walked to the street and observed S.T. come out the front door and pick up the materials and return with them to his house.

Aleman

Summary: Aleman confirms reports that S.T. personally told him that President Kennedy was "...going to be hit." Aleman indicates that S.T. made clear to him (implicitly) that he was not guessing about the killing; rather he was giving the impression that he knew Kennedy was going to be killed. Aleman did not believe S.T. was personally involved in whatever plan he seemed to know about.

Aleman is ready and willing to testify before the Select Committee at any time. He requests that we do not tell S.T. or his associates about his cooperation with our investigation.

Santos Trafficante - information in police file

(DELETED)

Aleman - 3/12/77 interview synopsis

Gaeton Fonzi took detailed notes of the conversation between Aleman, Cliff Fenton, Gaeton, and myself. This is simply a synopsis of what occurred. Gaeton is preparing a detailed report.

Aleman was asked initially about a statement he reportedly heard made by S.T. to the effect that Kennedy was going to be assassinated. Aleman explicitly confirmed the version of the conversation as reported by George Crile in the Washington Post in May of 1976. He said the relevant conversation occurred during one of a number of extended conversations he had with S.T. He is not sure when the reported conversation occurred but he is certain that it did. He said that he believes others were present, including: S.T., himself, Nobregas, and Marco Antony Hirigoyen (the addresses of the latter two he is trying to obtain for us). His recollection of the conversation was as follows:

S.T. (trying to make Aleman realize that he was not saying Kennedy would be defeated in the 1964 election, rather that he would not make it to the election): "... you don't understand me. Kennedy's not going to make it to the election. He is going to get hit."

Earlier in his first attempt to describe the circumstances leading up to, and the substance of the comment, Aleman said that S.T. talked of the many problems in the country and of Kennedy's role in causing problems generally and in specifically causing problems for certain individuals. S.T. reportedly said that alot of people weren't going to forget the problems Kennedy had caused them, including Hoffa. Gaeton, Cliff, and I are in agreement that Aleman made no attempt to even infer that the Hoffa reference was in any way connected to the statement that Kennedy was going to be hit.

However, when asked to restate the substance of the conversation and indicate the link if any to Hoffa, Aleman said he was given the distinct impression that Hoffa was to be principally involved in the elimination of Kennedy. Aleman says he never talked to S.T. or Hoffa subsequent to this conversation or subsequent to the assassination on this subject. Aleman says he had a bet with Nobregas : concerning whether or not Kennedy would be assassinated (Nobregas betting "yes") but never collected his winnings or even discussed the bet with Nobregas since then.

(DELETED)

The relevant conversation came about when Nobregas introduced Aleman to S.T. reportedly because Banco (a distant cousin of Aleman) had helped get someone out of a Cuban jail. S.T. said he wanted to help Aleman get out of his financial difficulties in return. He offered to arrange a loan from the Teamsters.

S.T. wanted to arrange an introduction with Orlando Bosch. Aleman made this proposed introduction appear unrelated to S.T.'s offer of help in arranging a Teamsters loan. At first he gave us the impression that he took some action in arranging the introduction which was accomplished by Niles. After persistent questioning Aleman finally said that he did nothing to arrange the introduction. He explained the situation this way: Nobregas was trying to help out Aleman viz a viz S.T. by letting S.T. believe Aleman helped arrange the introduction. The interesting thing is, according to Aleman, (and contradicting the Post account) he never received a dime from the Teamsters or anyone else.

Aleman attempted to explain why Nobregas and S.T. would have contact with him, much less offer him assistance, in view of the fact that Aleman had testified for the State in the Rothman trial in Chicago. Aleman said he explicitly told S.T. of the fact of his adverse testimony. He said S.T. laughed out loud and said not to worry about it, that it didn't matter at all.

(DELETED)

Mr. CORNWELL. And may we show a copy of it to the witness, please?

Mr. Aleman, on the front page of the exhibit there is a paragraph which is titled "Summary" and reads as follows:

Aleman confirms reports that Santos Trafficante personally told him that President Kennedy was going to be hit. Aleman indicates that Santos Trafficante made clear to him implicitly that he was not guessing about the killing. Rather, he was giving the impression that he knew Kennedy was going to be killed.

Mr. ALEMAN. No way. No way, whatsoever. You can be reassured, that I always in my life fought for democracy.

Mr. CORNWELL. I don't think you understood the paragraph

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes, but——

Mr. CORNWELL. We understand——

Mr. ALEMAN. Rather than he was giving the impression that he knew Kennedy was going to be killed.

Mr. CORNWELL. That's what Santos Trafficante——

Mr. ALEMAN. That he was not guessing about the killing.

Mr. CORNWELL. That Trafficante was——

Mr. ALEMAN. Aleman confirms the report that Santos personally told him that President Kennedy was going to be hit.

Mr. CORNWELL. Yes, sir. In other words, that's a recitation of what Trafficante——

Mr. ALEMAN. Aleman indicates that Santos Trafficante made clear to him implicitly that he was not guessing about the killing.

Mr. CORNWELL. He, meaning Trafficante, was not guessing, and the second part again is not a reference to you, it is a reference that you stated that he, meaning Trafficante, was giving the impression——

Mr. ALEMAN. Let me tell to this committee the following thing: By no way possible you can think that after all the suffering in Cuba and all the struggle to put a democratic country, and after all the struggle we've been fighting against Castro and after all the problems that I can see that has come to our country, I, if, in any way, I would have thought that the context at that time was that something was going to happen in that respect, I would have immediately advised the proper authorities about it.

Mr. CORNWELL. And didn't you do so?

Mr. ALEMAN. I talked in some way to members of the FBI about what was going on in the conversation, and I told them that something wrong was in some way, the wording that Hoffa and these—I went to the FBI and I informed something about that type of conversation. Like I previously had been informing the FBI about the meetings with Santos Trafficante.

Mr. CORNWELL. And when Trafficante and——

Mr. ALEMAN. Because when all these things were happening, I was informing the FBI about that.

Mr. CORNWELL. And I believe you previously told me that, is this accurate, that you did specifically tell the FBI about the comments of Trafficante on this occasion?

Mr. ALEMAN. We talked in some way, and whatever is about this thing in the FBI files must be the exact thing because now I am trying to recollect things that happened 15 years ago. You must understand that.

Mr. CORNWELL. What we want to do is——

Mr. ALEMAN. So after so many years, trying to recollect what went on, and that I had in some way a worry, I said what happened here, what transpired here, this is why I was bringing this.

Mr. CORNWELL. The comments that were made to you by Trafficante worried you, is that correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. After all the years that have passed by after seeing all the things, it worried me.

Mr. CORNWELL. In fact, immediately after the assassination, the FBI came to you and asked you again about the previous comments you had overheard, didn't they?

Mr. ALEMAN. Whatever transpired during that period of time, I informed the FBI about it.

Mr. CORNWELL. They came to you after the assassination and asked you again to tell in more detail the nature of the comments; is that correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. They asked something in that concern.

Mr. CORNWELL. In the previous reports of your recollections of this event, as in your testimony today, the phrase has occurred that "Kennedy will be hit." Today you offered, for the first time, an explanation that that might have been a reference to the fact he will be hit—

Mr. ALEMAN. No, no, no, no, because when that happened, I had informed the FBI about it. So later on they told me, Jose, he was a loner, you must not be concerned about anything, no problem whatsoever.

Mr. CORNWELL. The FBI said, don't worry about these comments, Lee Harvey Oswald was a loner.

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes; after the Warren Committee.

Mr. CORNWELL. You offered the explanation, though, earlier in your testimony today that the phrase, "he's going to be hit," might have been understood by you to mean hit with a number of votes?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. That explanation appears in no prior report of your statements that we have been able to find, and I would like to, in that vein, direct your attention to yesterday.

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. You arrived at the airport from Miami, is that correct?

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. My staff has reported that when they picked you up, took you to the hotel—

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. CORNWELL. You expressed alarm or concern that there was no protection provided for you.

Mr. ALEMAN. Surely. I mean this article have been for a long period of time. Undoubtedly, Santos Trafficante have seen it. I think he came to the committee some time. Didn't he come to the committee? I am asking you that question.

Mr. CORNWELL. They won't let me answer that question. I'm sorry. But at any rate, go ahead. I didn't mean to interrupt.

Mr. ALEMAN. In reference to this. So all this time, I have been very much worried, I am very much concerned about my safety. After I brought this Washington Post, and that was about 2 years and 3 months ago, and I have been worried. I sold my business, I

been in my home because I mean Santos Trafficante can try to do anything at any moment. The DGI in Cuba tried to do something to me and when I was called to come over here, I was subpoenaed to come over here, I was very much worried that I didn't have the protection, and I still believe that the DGI and Santos Trafficante could try to do something to me. There's no doubt about that.

The article was there. I wanted a reaction. Let's see what the reaction has been.

Mr. CORNWELL. I have no further questions. Thank you.

Mr. ALEMAN. The reaction, you can see in the letter of Fidel Castro, in the tapes that he brought to this committee, in the days of suffering of Fidel Castro that he has been a few days very much concerned and talking all the time about that he hasn't done anything whatsoever against the President of the United States. And I don't believe it. There is some connection between Santos Trafficante and the Cuban Government. There's no doubt about that. I came very brave here to this committee to talk that I had been concerned about this and you should pay attention, as patiently I have been with you people, and react.

Mr. CORNWELL. Thank you. I have no further questions.

Mr. ALEMAN. Thank you.

Mr. PREYER. The Chair recognizes Mr. Edgar for such time as he may consume.

Mr. EDGAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Aleman, I noticed this morning you are accompanied by marshals.

Mr. ALEMAN. Yes.

Mr. EDGAR. Would you indicate to the committee at whose request the marshal service has been provided?

Mr. ALEMAN. My request.

Mr. EDGAR. Mr. Chairman, I had a number of questions that I wanted to pose to this particular witness, and I have gone over many of them last evening and have several pages of questions that I would like to pursue with the witness, by in light of the drastic change in his testimony which has been at least somewhat apparent this morning and somewhat related to his feelings of fear, I think that there would be little good served to ask those specific questions at this time. And so I will yield back the balance of my time and ask those questions at a later date.

Mr. PREYER. Are there any further questions from members of the panel? Mr. Cornwell, any further questions from you?

Mr. CORNWELL. No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. PREYER. Mr. Aleman, under the committee rules, every witness is entitled to take 5 minutes at the end of his testimony and the questioning to make any statement that he may care to make by way of clarifying his testimony or explaining it further or just making any statement that you care to make. If there is anything further you wish to say about this matter at this time, the Chair will recognize you for 5 minutes.

Mr. ALEMAN. Thank you, sir. I don't want to make no statement. That's all.

Mr. PREYER. Thank you, Mr. Aleman.

At this time, the committee will excuse Mr. Aleman. Let me again caution everyone in the hearing room to remain seated as Mr. Aleman is escorted from the hearing room.

Mr. Aleman, I would like to say to you, from the committee's knowledge of your background and despite anything you may have said here today, the committee has respect for your background and the bravery, the bravery you have shown in the past. We appreciate you being here with us today.

Mr. ALEMAN. Thank you.

Mr. PREYER. If there is no—the Chair recognizes Mr. Blakey.

Mr. BLAKEY. Mr. Chairman, it would be appropriate at this time to indicate for the record that the Cuban Government made available to the committee a list of American gambling figures that were held for possible deportation by the Cuban Government at about the time that Mr. McWillie indicated that they were. And I would ask that that be incorporated in the record as JFK F-410.

Mr. PREYER. Without objection, it is entered into the record at this point.

[JFK exhibit F-410 was received in the record and follows:]

JFK EXHIBIT F-410

STATEMENT OF THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT

Jake Lansky was in Cuba from May 22, 1956.

Dino Vicente Cellini lived in Cuba from 1947. He was detained at Tresconia Camp in 1959. According to data obtained in those years he has or had a sister working as a typist in the White House who solicited the aid of Senator George Smathers of Florida to get Cellini out of Cuba.

From public sources we learned that George Smathers informed the Cellini family that he had spoken to Narcotics Commissioner Anslinger who told him that his office had no derogatory information on Cellini.

In June 1959, according to our files, the Cuban Government received a letter from the North American Consulate in Havana which expressed that there were arrest warrants for Jake Lansky and Dino Cellini in the U.S. Both were freed. Both left Cuba subsequently but the exact departure date is not known.

Santo Trafficante left Tresconia in August 1959. We know he left Cuba a few days after that. Unfortunately, we have found no documents with his exact date of departure.

Lucien Rievard was devoted to drug trafficking. The Cuban government does not know when he entered or departed Cuba.

Guiseppe di Georgio — The Cuban Government knows that he appeared in Havana in June 1958 using a passport with the name Pierre Canavese. We do not know what date he left Cuba.

Charles Tourine, Jr., was known as Charles del Monico and Charles White. He was closely associated to his father, Charles Tourine, aka Charles White and Charles (the Blade). He entered Cuba on February 20, 1958. The Cuban Government does not know when he left Cuba. He was

involved in gambling and drug trafficking.

In the cases of Charles Tourine, Jr., and Lucien Rievard, both were thrown out of Cuba in 1959. The Cuban Government could not determine the exact dates of departure.

Joseph Merola — The Cuban government does not know when he entered or left Cuba. During Batista's dictatorship he was closely associated to Roberto Fernandez Miranda (who was the brother-in-law of Batista) in a machine installation business throughout Cuba.

Henry Saavedra entered Cuba on February 10, 1957. He was freed the same day as Santo Trafficante. The Cuban Government does not know when he left Cuba.

Babe Baron -- The Cuban Government has no records on this individual. Further investigation is in progress.

Charles del Monico is Charles Tourine, Jr. In our files we have no record that Charles Tourine, Sr., was ever in Cuba.

Mr. BLAKEY. I would also note, Mr. Chairman, as you are fully aware of, when the committee was in Havana on August 26, 1978, the Cuban Government made available to the committee, ironically in the Hotel Rivera, an individual who was involved in setting up and operating the Trescornia camp. His testimony was taken at that time by the committee staff and yourself. It would be appropriate to enter that in the record at this time as well.

Mr. PREYER. Without objection, his statement will be admitted into the record.

Mr. BLAKEY. JFK F-311.

Mr. PREYER. JFK F-311. It is ordered admitted into the record. [JFK exhibit F-311 was admitted into the record and follows:]

JFK EXHIBIT F-311

KENNEDY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS

Name Jose Verdacia Date Aug. 26, 1978 Time 3:15 p
Address Hotel Rivera Place Hotel
Havana, Cuba

Interview:

Blakey: Let me indicate for the record that it is August 26th and it is 3:30 p.m. and the place is the Hotel Rivera in Havana, Cuba. The people present from the American delegation are: Congressman Richard Preyer, G. Robert Blakey, and Edwin Lopez. Would you identify for the record those from the Cuban delegation?

Cortez: Senen Buergo from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Felipe Villa, official from the Minister of Interior, Ricardo Escartin from Foreign Service Juanita Vera, Interpreter, Aramis Gutierrez, official on the Minister of Interior.

Blakey: We have then your permission to record this conversation?

Verdacia: Yes you do.

Blakey: Would you state for the record your full name?

Verdacia: Jose Verdacia Verdecia

Interviewer Signature _____

Typed Signature G. Robert Blakey, Edwin Lopez

Date transcribed Sept. 27, 1978

By: CS Form #4-1

Interview: Jose Verdacia

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Blakey: Would you state your date and place of birth.

Verdacia: I was born in Mancinilla Oriental Province on
July 20, 1914.

Blakey: Are you presently employed?

Verdacia: Yes I am.

Blakey: Where?

Verdacia: In the Customs - Havana.

Blakey: Let me direct your attention to 1959. Were you
employed then?

Verdacia: Yes I did.

Blakey: Where?

Verdacia: In the Immigration Camp at Trescornia.

Blakey: What was your position there?

Verdacia: I was a Captain of the Police, the Chief of the
Camp.

Blakey: Would you describe for us what Trescornia looked like?

Verdacia: Trescornia Camp is located in Casa Blanca, a
neighborhood in Havana facing the bay--Havana Bay.
The camp is constituted by pavillions. There the
passangers, for one reason or the other stayed
here and their boats left, they would be taken to
that camp. Those passangers would go to that camp
until the Navy companies would demand them or would
book them in another boat.

Blakey: How large was the camp physically?

Verdacia: About one and one-half square kilometers.

Blakey: How many sections did it have in it?

Verdacia: The camp was divided into eight large pavillions, each devoted to the crew members. Four smaller pavillions--out of this the first one was devoted to the passengers who for any reason -- any problem with a visa, for instance or maybe because they had come without the due documentation--while the problem was solved they were taken to the camp and stayed there. One or two days, that depending on the solution of the problem that had taken them there.

Blakey: How many people would have been in each section?

Verdacia: At that time we had approximately 40 crew members because at that time we had twenty-one crew members of the Peruvian boat which had some problems in the Cuban waters and it was drawn to the Bay so that-- and the crew was there at the camp waiting for the boats problem to be solved. The rest of the crew members were occasional people that remained after their boat had left - because they just leave the boat and then the boat leaves without them but they stayed there for a shorter period of time. The passengers were also occasional. Sometimes a month would go by without having even one passenger. This happened mainly with European passengers

who needed all other requirements in order to be able to enter the country. Because I remember that there was a treaty with France that the French did not need a visa to come into the country. That's why the passengers were very few. Now in the midst of 1959 we had quite an amount of people who were taken to the camp. Those people we did have knowledge that they were leaving Cuba temporarily and that they were people who were in charge of the casinos, gambling casinos. Those people I don't remember exactly the amount of them that we had nor the names of them. It is very likely that I wouldn't recognize their face any longer, it was such a long time ago that you can imagine. I do remember some by their names because they have been quite--their names have been quite known later.

Blakey: How many would there have been, fifteen, twenty?

Verdacia: I don't think there was that many.

Blakey: If I were to give you some names do you think that you might be able to recall whether this--that individual was in Trescornia?

Verdacia: Well, I would be very grateful because that way I could remember.

Blakey: Would you recall a man named Jake Lanskey?

Verdacia: Yes I do.

Interview: Jose Verdacia

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Blakey: Was he in the prison?

Verdacia: Not in that prison because it was not a prison.

Blakey: In that camp, I'm sorry.

Verdacia: The camp was under the Minister of State of Cuba. There no prisoners were taken. There the people that were under those circumstances, I said before would be taken. Crew members whose boat would have left or passengers that would not be fitting the requirements in due time so they would spend there some days til their problems were solved. And these people were taken there I think, that in order to have their problems solved too before they left. There were no prisoners there and we were not the kind of police that takes care of public order, but just we were policemen that took care of the order inside the camp.

Blakey: Do you recall a man named Charles Tourine?

Verdacia: Yes I do.

Blakey: Do you recall a man named Lucien Ricuard?

Verdacia: It sounds familiar to me too.

Blakey: Do you recall a man named Dina Cellini?

Verdacia: No.

Blakey: Do you recall a man named Henry Civela?

Verdaica: No.

Interview: Jose Verdacia

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Blakey: Do you recall a man named Loran Hall?

Verdacia: No I don't

Lopez: Eugene Hall?

Verdacia: No.

Blakey: Let me show you a book that's called Photo Identification book and direct your attention to a photograph on the first three pages and see if you can recall any of those.

Verdacia: I tell you honestly that it was such a long time ago that I wouldn't be able to identify him and like that.

Blakey: I understand but I have to ask the questions any way. Let me direct your attention to photograph No. 6. Does that individual look familiar?

Verdacia: No it doesn't. I don't remember having anyone there with those -- I don't remember the name.

Lopez: Sideburns.

Verdacia: Sideburns?

Blakey: Let me ask you-- this next individual, I do not have his first name but his last name would be Merola.

Lopez: Joe.

Blakey: Joe Merola.

Verdacia: I don't remember. I don't remember having seen anyone like that there.

Interview: Jose Verdacia

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Blakey: Do you recall -- and then again I don't have the first name -- Civello.

Verdacia: No.

Blakey: Do you recall a Giuseppe di Giorgio?

Verdacia: No.

Blakey: Do you recall a man named Charles Delmonico?

Verdacia: Yes I do, I do remember him.

Blakey: Do you recall a man named Wilson Hudson?
John Wilson Hudson?

Verdacia: No, I don't.

Blakey: He would have been an English journalist.

Verdacia: I remember an English journalist who stayed there for some days. He had been deported from Argentina. I remember that he used to tell me stories of his staying in Argentina. That he had problems there with Peron because he used to make funny stories about Rita Peron, Peron's wife because there was soap by the name of Rita. And he told me stories also about one of his cronics which was issued in one of his British papers that was around Queen Elizabeth. He said that he had written that Queen Elizabeth could handle 2,000 men. I remember the stories that he used to tell me. I don't have any idea of him . . . I don't have any recollection of him being linked to these other people. I don't remember whether he stayed there coincided with

the stay of these other people. I don't know his name but I do remember the man.

Blakey: Were these other individuals all in the same area or sections?

Verdacia: Yes they were.

Blakey: Could Mr. Hudson have been in an adjoining section?

Verdacia: No. All of them were taken to the same pavillion. The first one facing the office. There was where the passengers were taken and on that occasion these men were there.

Blakey: What areas would have adjoined the ones where these other individuals would be that the British journalist could have been in? My problem is that I don't have a mental picture of what the camp looks like so I don't understand how the individuals were housed.

Verdacia: Let's assume that this is the camp.

The entrance to the camp would be this way.

Blakey: Perhaps I could ask you to draw a map.

Verdacia: Yes I can.

Tape turned off.

Interpreter: It's on.

Verdacia: This is the entrance to Casa Blanca street. It's the same highway which comes around here. It is a bridge and that was the entrance into the camp.

There we had a policeman at the entrance.

Blakey: Was the bridge over water?

Verdacia: No. Another highway went under it.

Blakey: Would you put an arrow on the map indicating which direction was north?

Thank you. Would you explain to us how the various individuals were housed in the various villas?

Verdacia: This is the pavillion which was devoted to passengers. This pavillion had individual rooms-- where the hall and then into their rooms on both sides. The bathrooms were in this part. All these pavillions had a cellar and then here in the cellar they had a cafeteria. These are the stair case to go up the pavillions and down on the cellars where the cafeteria is. There the passengers were taken and on that occasion these gentlemen that you mentioned were taken to this place.

Blakey: All of the individuals, Cellini and the others were taken to the pavillion for passengers?

Verdacia: Yes they were.

Blakey: Do you recall the individual from Argentina?

Verdacia: Yes.

Blakey: Which pavillion was he found in?

Interview: Jose Verdacia

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Verdacia: In that same pavillion.

Blakey: But you cannot remember whether he was there at the same time? or before or after?

Verdacia: I don't remember. I don't remember whether he was there before or after them.

Blakey: Would you sign you name and date on the lower left hand side of this map?

Interpreter: Do you want his name or his signature?

Blakey: It's doesn't matter. Thank you.
There was one additional name I wanted to give you. Do you recall if Santo Trafficante was in this pavillion?

Verdacia: Yes he was.

Blakey: Let me show you a copy of a photograph provided to us today by your government and ask you if you if this is the individual who you knew as Santo Trafficante.

Verdacia: Honestly, I can't tell you that I remember his face. The name I remember perfectly well, but the face I can't place it.

Blakey: Let me show you a copy of Life magazine dated Sept. 1, 1967, page 21 and show you the photograph by Life "Trafficante Florida" and ask you if that refreshes your recollection.

Verdacia: No I cannot identify the face. I cannot tell you with certainty. I can tell you that the name is perfectly clear. I am absolutely sure that he was

Interview: Jose Verdacia

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there, but the face I can't recognize.

Blakey: Can you recall the circumstances under which Mr. Trafficante and the other individuals whose names you remember came to be housed in the pavillion for passengers?

Verdacia: Yes I do remember that. On that occasion many people were taken there. People that I was told they were the operators of the gambling casinos. But all things I cannot tell you with certainty because I did not have participation in them. I can just tell you that I was the head of police there responsible for the order within the camp. Those people were taken there in the same conditions as any other were taken there and we had to take care of them - Keeping them there til the immigration law determined that they could leave. I cannot tell you exactly either the dates that they spent there, whether it was a month or over a month, but it was along that time. But I knew that this people were individuals in charge of gambling - of gambling house and casinos here.

Blakey: Were they free to come and go in the camp?

Verdacia: No not to enter and go out. The time they spent there they had to stay in the camp until they were given permission to leave.

Interview: Jose Verdacia

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Blakey: Could they receive mail?

Verdacia: Yes they did receive correspondence, visits.

Blakey: Did they have access to a telephone?

Verdacia: Yes they did. Yes, the crew members and the passengers, all of them had the access to the telephone.

Blakey: How were they fed?

Verdacia: Their food was taken from the hotels to the camp.

Blakey: Did any of the individuals there have a private chef?

Verdacia: No they did not. The food was taken to them from hotels in a car. I knew the food came from the hotels, I cannot tell you from what hotel.

Blakey: Was the food brought to them by virtue of your activity or did they order their own food?

Verdacia: The camp had a standing room for those who wanted to go and have lunch and dinner there. Yes. ~~h~~ This means that those who wanted to have dinner or lunch of the place of the dining room of the camp they could but those who received the food from the hotels it was either because they had sent for

it before--previous arrangement with the hotel or something like that, but not because they can't have arrangements.

Blakey: The camp did not supply food to the people being held there, is that correct?

Verdacia: Yes. The camp supplied the food for them but in the dining room there. They had a dining room.

Blakey: Were the people in the camp permitted to have personal belongings?

Verdacia: Yes they were.

Blakey: Did they have their watches with them?

Verdacia: Yes they had.

Blakey: Rings?

Verdacia: No these kind of people like them--like the ones you mentioned and the passengers-- by the crew people they were searched for a kind of knives or things like that that could be used as weapons.

Blakey: During the period that Mr. Trafficante was there, did he ever seek his release in connection with his daughter's marriage?

Verdacia: I don't know that because I didn't have any authority upon that.

Blakey: Are you familiar with the circumstances that led to Mr. Trafficante's release?

Verdacia: No I don't they were not of my competence.

Interview: Jose Verdacia

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Blakey: Do you recall about when he was released?

Verdacia: I cannot tell you with accuracy about the date. It could have been in August but I cannot tell you the date exactly.

Blakey: You indicated that the passengers and the gambling detainees were permitted to have visitors?

Verdacia: Yes.

Blakey: Is the name Lewis McWillie familiar to you?

Verdacia: No.

Blakey: Is the name Jack Rubinstein familiar? Or Jack Ruby?

Verdacia: No.

Blakey: Let me direct your attention photograph No. 60 in the Photograph Indent. book.

Verdacia: I can't tell you. I cannot take that face back to that time.

Blakey: Do you recall whether Santo Trafficante had visitors?

Verdacia: If I tell you who received visits there I would be lying. The visitors came. They talked with one, two, three -- any one of them. Sometimes they talked together, sometimes they talked just separately. But as they could receive visits we had no reason to interfere with that.

Blakey: Was there a visitors log book kept?

Verdacia: No we did not. Only those who came out to the camp like the crew members, for instance, were searched for weapons, nothing else.

Blakey: Were all of the gambling detainees released at about the same time?

Verdacia: Yes they were.

Blakey: Did you learn what lead to their release?

Verdacia: No I did not.

Blakey: I have no further questions, do you?

Preyer: I wasn't clear, how long was the gambling detainees there approximately?

Verdacia: Approximately a month.

Preyer: Did Trafficante cause any difficulty or make requests that were unusual or do anything that particularly called your attention to him?

Verdacia: No he did not.

Preyer: One other question-- On the British journalist who visited Argentina, you indicated that you didn't think he had met with the gambling detainees and I wasn't clear whether that was because he was not there at the same time or because he was in a different section of the building.

Verdacia: I meant that I cannot tell you with accuracy that he stayed at the same time that the other people were there--that the ones you mentioned. I don't

even know what was the reason for this man being taken into the camp. If it was because of this paper or something like that, I don't know. The direction and administration of immigration was in charge of this problem. I had nothing to do with that.

Preyer: You told us that this was not a prison.

Verdacia: Of course not.

Preyer: Was there any kind of security?

Verdacia: We had no security personnel but rather policeman. We had three post, one at the entrance at the gate, another one at another place and one behind the pavillion in which the crew members were located because the crew members were the ones that would try mostly to leave the camp unseen -- and then there was a sergeant in charge of these post. There was a boulevard there and they could walk along the gardens and the boulevard in the days and talk and do anything.

Preyer: Was there a fence around the entire...

Verdacia: Yes there was a fence.

Preyer: I have no further questions.

Blakey: I have no other questions at this time and for the record let me indicate that it 4:15. Would you object if I took your photograph to perserve it for our records in connection with your testimony?

Verdacia: I have no objections.

Interview: Jose Verdacia

Interpreter: He doesn't want his picture taken.

Blakey: Let me thank him for coming and speaking with us and sharing with us your memory. I am sure it has been very difficult to go back that far but we appreciate your--the helpful way in which you have clarified what the camp looked like and who was held there and the very circumstances surrounding these matters.

Mr. BLAKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. PREYER. The committee will adjourn until 2 o'clock this afternoon.

[Whereupon, at 12:25 p.m. the Select Committee on Assassinations recessed, to reconvene at 2 p.m. the same day.]

AFTERNOON SESSION

Mr. PREYER [now presiding]. The committee will come to order.

I regret that the chairman of the committee has been called before the House/Senate Foreign Operations Conference Committee at 2 o'clock today. The chairman was to do the questioning of the next witness. He anticipates that this conference, his appearance there will not take longer than an hour, so that at this time, the committee will stand in recess until 3:30 this afternoon when I hope he will be here and we will be able to resume.

The committee stands in recess until 3:30 this afternoon.

[A recess was taken until 3:30 p.m.]

Mr. PREYER [3:44 p.m.]. We are getting word, which we think we will get momentarily, as to Mr. Stokes availability and we will let you know as soon as we learn something.

Mr. PREYER [4:30 p.m.]. The chairman has finished his activities with the conference committee so that as soon as this pending vote on the floor is dealt with, we will resume. I think that will be in about 10 or 15 minutes. We will go into session then.

Mr. PREYER [5:10 p.m.]. The committee will come to order.

The Chair recognizes Chairman Stokes.

Chairman STOKES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I think it appropriate in light of the fact that at the time we adjourned this morning, the chair announced that the committee would again meet at 2 p.m. this afternoon. In addition to duties and responsibilities I have on this committee, I happen to be a member of the Appropriations Committee of the House, and a House/Senate conference started at 2 p.m. this afternoon and at the request of the President, relating to an item he was particularly concerned about in that appropriations bill, I was asked to be

there to be present in order to contribute to that House/Senate conference.

I was in that House/Senate conference from 2 this afternoon until 5 p.m. this afternoon at which time I immediately came back to this hearing room. We were then ready to recommence the hearings and we have just been advised that the witness, who has a physical condition, has advised the committee that he would prefer not to be called this evening, because he has waited all day to be called as a witness, and because of the physical condition, does not feel that he can at this time come before the committee and has requested that we have the hearing first thing tomorrow morning, and he be called at that time.

Accordingly, the committee feels this request should be granted and, Mr. Chairman, it would be appropriate for you to adjourn this meeting then until the time set for tomorrow morning.

Mr. PREYER. The committee will stand adjourned until 8:30 tomorrow morning.

[Whereupon, at 5:13 p.m., the committee was adjourned, to reconvene at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 28, 1978.]