

INVESTIGATION OF THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1978

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

The committee met at 8:45 a.m., pursuant to recess, in room 345, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Richardson Preyer, presiding.

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

Also present: G. Robert Blakey, chief counsel; G. Cornwell, deputy chief counsel; Elizabeth Berning, chief clerk; and I. Charles Mathews, special counsel.

Mr. PREYER. The committee will come to order. The Chair recognizes Mr. Blakey.

Mr. BLAKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What the committee witnessed here yesterday is more typical of organized crime investigations than we had thought perhaps the testimony would be. Skillful interrogation has, in fact, elicited only meager amounts of information, and we have seen manifested in a witness that fear that is all too often characteristic of people called to testify in matters touching on organized crime. A fear that, frankly must be recognized as justified. Indeed, I would note that in the organized crime and racketeering section in the U.S. Department of Justice between 1961 and 1965, in which I served, more than 25 informants were lost in organized crime cases, killed by those who would prevent their testimony from being made public.

But it is necessary, nevertheless, to continue the exploration and illustration of the committee's work. In that context, it would be appropriate at this time to call Santos Trafficante.

Mr. Chairman, I understand Mr. Trafficante has requested that there be no radio, TV, photographs, or recordings made of him at any time during his testimony. Consequently, it would be appropriate consistent with the rules of this committee and the House to enter an order to that effect.

Mr. PREYER. The witness, having requested that he not be subjected to radio, television, or photographic coverage, the committee directs that all lenses be covered and that all microphones used for coverage be turned off at this time.

The committee calls Santos Trafficante.

Mr. Trafficante, will you stand and be sworn.

Do you solemnly swear the testimony you will give this committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I do.

TESTIMONY OF SANTOS TRAFFICANTE

Mr. PREYER. Thank you.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Chairman, I am Henry Gonzalez. I don't know if the committee has been advised, we are exercising our rights under rule No. 6 of the House Rules.

Mr. PREYER. Yes, Mr. Gonzalez. The Chair will recognize Mr. Stokes for questioning, and I believe the matters you mentioned will be brought out in due course.

Chairman STOKES. For the record, will the witness please state his full name.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Santos Trafficante.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, where are you currently living?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. 740 Northeast, 155th Street, North Miami.

Chairman STOKES. Will you tell us when and where you were born?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. At this time, I want to exercise my privilege and my constitutional right to take the Fifth amendment.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Chairman, I request that you have the clerk show the witness JFK exhibit No. F-411, an order of Judge Gasch conferring immunity upon the witness and compelling his testimony.

Mr. PREYER. Yes; Mr. Trafficante, the committee has determined earlier that it desires to immunize your testimony, and the clerk is directed at this time to show the witness a certified copy of the immunity order of Judge Gasch, and it is ordered inserted into the record at this point, JFK F-411.

[The Immunity Order, JFK F-411 follows:]

JFK EXHIBIT F-411

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FILED

SEP 20 1978

JAMES F. DAVEY, Clk

In the Matter of the Application of)
)
 UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES)
 SELECT COMMITTEE ON ASSASSINATIONS)

Misc. No. 78-287

ORDER
 CONFERRING IMMUNITY UPON AND
 COMPELLING TESTIMONY FROM SANTO TRAFFICANTE

The United States House of Representatives Select Committee on Assassinations having made written application, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Sections 6002 and 6005, for an order conferring immunity upon Santo Trafficante and compelling him to testify and provide other information before the Select Committee on Assassinations, and the court finding that all procedures specified by §6005 have been duly followed, it is hereby, this 20th day of September 1978,

ORDERED, that Santo Trafficante in accordance with the provisions of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 6002 and 6005, shall not be excused from testifying or providing other information before the Select Committee on Assassinations on the grounds that the testimony or other information sought may tend to incriminate him.

ORDERED FURTHER, that Santo Trafficante appear when subpoenaed by said Committee and testify and provide such other information that is sought with respect to matters under inquiry by said Committee.

AND IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that no testimony or other information compelled under this order (or any information directly or indirectly derived from such testimony or other information) may be used against Santo Trafficante in any criminal case, except a prosecution for perjury, giving a false statement or otherwise failing to comply with this ORDER.

William E. French
United States District Judge

Dated:

Sept 20 1978

A TRUE COPY

JAMES F. DAVEY, Clerk

By

Leah A. Patterson
Deputy Clerk

Mr. PREYER. I believe, Mr. Trafficante, and Mr. Gonzalez, that you have seen a copy of this order at an earlier date.

Mr. GONZALEZ. That's correct, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. PREYER. In light of the immunity order, the committee directs you to answer the question, Mr. Trafficante.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Chairman, prior to answering any of the questions propounded, we would like to have the declaration made by counsel for the committee on behalf of the committee whether or not any of the questions that will be propounded to Mr. Trafficante are derived from either legal or illegal monitoring of Mr. Trafficante at any time in the past, and we would exercise that right and make that request under title 18, section 3504.

Mr. PREYER. The Chair will state, Mr. Gonzalez, that no question you will be asked in this hearing today is based on any electronic surveillance, as to which you have standing to object.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, I would like, prior to commencement of questioning, I believe it was either yesterday or the day before I submitted a document from a doctor which I would most respectfully ask that it be incorporated as part of the record and each of the committee members take consideration and do take consideration of the contents therein in the conducting of the hearing at this time.

Mr. PREYER. Mr. Gonzalez, each member of the committee has received a copy of this letter and has read it and, without objection, a copy of the letter will be made a part of the record at this point.

[The referred to document furnished for the record follows:]

November 23, 1977

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

In re: Mr. Santo Trafficante
Watson Clinic #179243

The above-mentioned patient has been under my care since 1969. He has had chronic hypertensive vascular disease. His first evidence of organic heart disease was in August, 1974, when he had the onset in another country of pulmonary edema. The electrocardiogram changed and showed evidence of anterior wall ischemia. It was felt that he had had a myocardial infarction at that time. He has had chronically elevated cholesterol and triglycerides, as well as temporary elevations of uric acid which have been controlled by medication. He has also had a polyp removed from his colon which was benign but required abdominal surgery in 1971. He had a retinal detachment in 1974 and has rather severe and disabling osteoarthritis of the lumbosacral spine.

Currently, he is suffering from angina pectoris on either exposure to tension or to exertion. He was evaluated in the clinic by Dr. Alan Brenner, Cardiologist, who agreed with his management program which consists of Aldomet 500 mg. b.i.d., Inderal 40 mg. q.i.d., Col-Benemid - one tablet twice daily, potassium supplements, Hydro-Diuril 50 mg. daily, and Apresoline 10 mg. t.i.d. He recommended the addition of Isordil and he now receives 5 mg. sublingually q.i.d. For his arthritis, he has been given Tolectin, two tablets t.i.d.

In essence, Mr. Trafficante is an ill man and has significant cardiovascular disease, making him at great risk for a recurrence of myocardial infarction. His angina is brought on by stressful events, either physical or emotional.

It would seem unwise for him to be exposed to prolonged emotional or physical stress. For this reason, it would be better if his current legal difficulties could be handled by deposition rather than having to undergo the more stressful personal appearances.

John V. Verner, Jr., M.D.

sr(w30)73

JFK-412

ACCREDITED AMERICAN GROUP HEALTH

JFK EXHIBIT F-412

Mr. DEVINE. Reserving the right to object, does the Chair make the reference to the letter from a clinic dated September 1977?

Mr. GONZALEZ. No, sir, it is November 23, 1977.

Mr. DEVINE. 1977. That is the one. I withdraw my reservation, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Chairman, pursuant to the subpoena that Mr. Trafficante is here responding to of this committee, pursuant to the order of the Federal district judge here in this area and we at this time are prepared to continue the questioning.

Mr. PREYER. Thank you, Mr. Gonzalez. Before we continue with the questioning, the Chair would like to read to the witness a statement of the scope of the hearing which appears as the mandate of this committee in H. Res. 222.

The select committee or a subcommittee thereof is authorized and directed to conduct a full and complete investigation and study of the circumstances surrounding the assassination and death of President John F. Kennedy and the assassination and death of Martin Luther King, and of any other persons the select committee shall determine might be related to either death in order to ascertain (1) whether the existing laws of the United States, including but not limited to laws relating to the safety and protection of the President of the United States, assassinations of the President of the United States, deprivation of civil rights and conspiracies related thereto, as well as the investigatory jurisdiction and capability of agencies and departments of the U.S. Government are adequate either in their provisions or in the manner of their enforcement and, (2) whether there was full disclosure and sharing of information and evidence among agencies and departments of the U.S. Government during the course of all prior investigations into those deaths, and whether any evidence or information which was not in the possession of any agency or department of the U.S. Government investigating either death would have been of assistance to that agency or department, and why such information was not provided to or collected by the appropriate agency or department and shall make recommendations to the House, if the select committee deems it appropriate for the amendment of existing legislation or the enactment of new legislation.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Stokes to begin the questioning. Proceed with the questioning at this time.

Chairman STOKES. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Trafficante, I believe at the point you interjected your motion, I had asked you to tell us when and where you were born.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Tampa, Fla., November 15, 1914.

Chairman STOKES. What is your current occupation?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I am retired.

Chairman STOKES. During the period 1957 and 1958, where were you living?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. In Havana, Cuba.

Chairman STOKES. Could you tell us when you moved to Cuba?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Around 1953 or 1954, in the latter part of 1953 or 1954.

Chairman STOKES. Now, during 1959, did you travel between the United States and Cuba?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't think I did. Maybe. In the latter part of 1959, I might have.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us what business or employment you had while you were in Cuba?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I was in the gambling business and nightclub casino business, which was legal at that time in Cuba.

Chairman STOKES. Being in the business, did you own several pieces of casinos in Cuba?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I had some interests in some casinos.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us how many?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, maybe three or four.

Chairman STOKES. Did you have an interest in the Sans Souci?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. How about the Tropicana?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. Capri?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. Which were the others you had an interest in?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Deauville, the Commodore.

Chairman STOKES. In order to operate your casinos in 1957-58, did you have to pay money to Cuban officials to maintain the operation of your casinos?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. We had to pay a license of \$25,000 a year and we had to give 50 percent of the take of the slot machines.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, do you know a Rafael Gener while you were in Cuba?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I didn't get the name.

Chairman STOKES. Gener, Rafael Gener.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. How do you spell it?

Chairman STOKES. I believe it is spelled G-e-n-e-r, but pronounced Gener.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. P-e-, you said.

Chairman STOKES. G, as in George. G-e-n-e-r, but is pronounced Gener.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Gener, Macho Gener; yes, I knew a Gener by that name.

Chairman STOKES. Did you meet him while in Cuba?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I met him after the event of Fidel Castro. He had been in exile before.

Chairman STOKES. This would be after the revolution?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, did you know a Mr. Joseph Stassi?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. How did you come to know him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He was connected with me for a while in the Sans Souci.

Chairman STOKES. What was his relationship to you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He was a partner in the Sans Souci.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us in late 1958, what was the result of the activities of Castro? How did it affect the tourist and gambling business there in Havana?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. You are talking about 1958 before Castro came in?

Chairman STOKES. Before he came in, yes.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. It wasn't too good. Every other day they had bombs and stuff like that. It was nothing.

Chairman STOKES. What effect did it have on the gambling business? How did it affect your business?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Very bad.

Chairman STOKES. In what respect?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Because every day there were bombs put in different spots and the first thing you know, even if there were a

couple bombs, before the night was over, there were 200, supposedly, rumors, stuff flying around and people would stay home.

Chairman STOKES. I suppose that this then caused the casino operators a great deal of concern, did it not?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I suppose so.

Chairman STOKES. And was there fear on the part of the operators that if Castro came to power that he would confiscate these businesses?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. Was there anticipated at all that he might come to power at that time?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Nobody ever dreamt that he would come to power at that time.

Chairman STOKES. Did you or any of the other casino operators take any steps to protect your businesses in the event that he would come to power?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No. There was no question about him taking to power. They used to—in the papers when you would read about him, you would read like he was some kind of a bandit.

Chairman STOKES. Did you meet Fidel or Raoul Castro prior to January 1, 1959?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. When Fidel Castro took over, how soon did he order the casinos to be closed?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, even before he reached Havana, because he didn't come down from the mountain until after Batista had left, and he had a walkathon, you would call it, from the mountains to Havana, and they kept interviewing him and he kept saying the casinos would close, statements to that effect, the casinos close without even being notified officially to close. Everything was in a turmoil. There was people all over the streets, breaking into homes, there was complete enmity and the only thing at that time was to try and stay alive.

Chairman STOKES. What was his attitude toward casino owners and operators?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, he did a lot of talking in those days. I doubt if he knew what the hell he was talking about, but he used to do a lot of talking against the Marines, the United States and this and that. So nobody knew where you stood with him.

Chairman STOKES. About that time, did you have any reason to contact Mr. Gener, whom we have referred to earlier, the gentleman we referred to earlier?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I think Mr. Gener contacted me, if my recollection is right. In fact, I think it was looking to take over the apartment that I used to live, because he thought it was a matter of time before I would have to leave Cuba.

Chairman STOKES. After—

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. That's how I got to meet him. I met him in my own apartment, that in case, he said, if you leave, I would like to have this apartment. So, I say, OK.

Chairman STOKES. After Castro came to power, did you continue to operate your business as usual?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, everything was closed but after 2, maybe 3 months, or 4 months or 5 months, I don't remember when, he

ordered all the casinos to open up again and when I said order, he ordered it. You either had to open up or lose—or go to jail.

Chairman STOKES. And what did you do?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well I stayed away from the Sans Souci, which was a lemon. So I stood around there to see what would happen, mostly to see he closed the door there. What he did was, he made the casinos open and he obligated all the casinos owners to pay the backpay of all these months that these people had not worked, and as soon as they got the backpay, then he will find a reason to close them, some of them, the ones he considered that were in the middle district of the city or the poor district of the city.

Chairman STOKES. This would have meant then that anyone who reopened would have to pay those employees about 3 months wages; is that right?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. About 3 or 4 months wages, yeah.

Chairman STOKES. Did a time come when you were detained or imprisoned there in Cuba?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. And can you tell us when that was?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I cannot tell you the exact date, but the thing was that I was detained, I was being—how would you call it [conferred with counsel]—I got news that Cuban officials were looking for me to put me in jail because one of the things was that I was a Batista collaborator. They raided my apartment, they were looking for money, they tore up all the furniture, they used to come and get me at nighttime, take me out in the woods, trying to tell where I had my money, this and that, until I finally went into hiding. And they kept on and nobody knew what was going on.

I mean, these were a bunch of, most of them were 15, 16, 17, years old. They had weapons, it was a bad time to be around there.

Chairman STOKES. Now, do the dates June 8 to August 18, 1959, sound about the time that you were imprisoned?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, no, I was imprisoned on June the 21st. I was there because one of my daughters got married on that day, and I had been in jail before. I had been in jail, I would say, at least a month or two. They let me out that day to go to the wedding because the thing was that these people thought—when they finally arrested me, they thought that I was being, that I was wanted in the United States for all kinds of charges—narcotics, there were this and that and when they check it out, they found out nobody wanted me in the States. So then they had me in Trescornia which was immigration center, and they didn't know there for a while what to do with me. And I think that the reason they later did not deport me was because the United States wanted for them to deport me. So they figure, well, they said, this guy cannot be because at that time everybody to them was a spy, was this, was that.

Chairman STOKES. So it wasn't actually like a prison, was it?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No; it was not. We had it pretty good.

Mr. PREYER. You had it pretty good?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. We had it pretty good. We had our own food coming in and everything. It was like a big camp, like a big concentration camp. We had our own room. It wasn't too bad.

Chairman STOKES. And can you give us some idea about how many persons were being detained there at that time?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, they had two sides to this thing. They had, most of this thing, a lot of these people entered Cuba with no papers, especially sailors and people with no means of support. They would put them on one side and people that they thought had means of support that were not public charges, they would put them on the other side.

I think at one time in our compound, you would call it, I think, we got to be about seven or eight.

Chairman STOKES. Were those other seven or eight also casino owners and operators?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Most of them were workers or casino owners.

Chairman STOKES. Did you know most of them?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us who they were?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, for a time there, I would say for a day or two there was Mr. Dino Cellini, Mr. Jake Lansky, and myself, a fellow by the name of Chuck White, Guiseppe DiGeorge, and that is about it.

Chairman STOKES. Now, had you known all of these people before you went to the compound with them?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes sir. I found most of them there. Then in a few days Mr. Lansky and Mr. Cellini, they were taken out and they were freed, in other words, they weren't deported or nothing.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, did you contact anyone to assist you in getting out of the detention center?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I had a lot of people come and see me trying to help me to get out, and the attorney that I had was a fellow by the name of Mr. Bango, and I think Mr. Gener was interested in getting me out and a lot of other people that were in the casino business, native people, like Mr. Fox and Mr. Petere and Mr. Alfredo Gonzalez and Mr. Raoul Gonzalez. We had a good relationship and they all tried their best to get me out.

Chairman STOKES. At the time you were released, were any of the other casino operators or owners released with you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Most of them had been released except this fellow Guiseppe DiGeorge, who was deported to Italy. He was held there for deportation to Italy because he was an Italian citizen.

Chairman STOKES. In order to effect your release, did you have to pay any money?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No sir.

Chairman STOKES. Did Raoul Castro have anything to do with your release?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I think he helped in my release.

Chairman STOKES. At least you have heard that he did?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, no, I had a friend of mine by the name of Raoul Gonzalez, who used to run the Hilton Hotel, where Raoul Castro used to go very frequently, and he talked to him one day about me, and the fellow says, well, I understand he is in the drug business, and this fellow told him, if he is in the drug business then you get me and shoot me against the wall because I can vouch for him.

He says, well, you wait a while, I see what I can do about it. And eventually, after a month or two, I was released.

Chairman STOKES. And after you were released, Mr. Trafficante, how long did you remain in Havana?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I remained in Havana until, I am not sure now, I had a case, I had a trial coming up in Jacksonville, Fla., on a tax matter, so I came in for that trial, I believe it was the latter part of 1959, the month of October or November, I don't remember when. It lasted about 8 weeks. I was acquitted. Then I spent the holidays, I think in Florida, then I went back to Havana.

Chairman STOKES. When you returned to Havana what was your feeling about the climate there in terms of the economy and your investment in the casino operations?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Very bad. I knew sooner or later I would have to get out of there.

Chairman STOKES. After your release from prison, did you ever meet Raoul or Fidel Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I met Raoul Castro one time at the Hilton Hotel. I happened to be there, in fact, and the same Raoul Gonzalez, he has told me if you want to thank him, he is upstairs, in some kind of a place, some kind of a room there, like a public bar or something, and so I went up there and he was going down the stairs, so this fellow called to him and made him stop, and I went there and I thanked him, and he said well, just behave and don't give nothing to nobody, don't let nobody shake you down or nothing like that, and just behave and you will be all right here, you don't have to leave, you don't have to go no place.

Chairman STOKES. This was Raoul you are talking about?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Raoul.

Fidel Castro, I used to see him practically every night in front of the Hilton where he used to come in about 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, and the first thing you know there were—he liked to talk to the people in the streets. First thing you know there were 400 or 500 people at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning and he would be talking all night long and I used to watch him, too, with the rest of the people. I never did talk to him, though.

Chairman STOKES. You never did talk with him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No. And the only one that talked to him was, while I was in jail, was my wife, who wanted to get permission for me to go and see my daughter, if he would let me out of jail to give my daughter away. She was supposed to be married.

Chairman STOKES. And he granted that request?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. And he did. He granted the request with a lot of protection and a lot of bodyguards, thinking I would run away, or something, I don't know.

Chairman STOKES. After you got out of Trescornia, did you reopen your casino business?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, I didn't reopen. I stayed away from the Sans Souci completely. The only thing that the Commodore was still open and I had an interest in the Commodore and the Deauville, he kept it open until all the workers were paid and then he closed that, so anyhow, the thing was that the dollar started getting stronger and the Cuban peso started getting weaker, and it was cheap to live there and I knew people there and I felt comfort-

able there, as long as I didn't see nothing out of the way, but the further, the more time passed, I could see that I had to leave there, there was nothing there for me, there was going to be trouble there.

Everybody was getting arrested and nobody was safe, so around the middle of 1960 I made out I was coming to the States for just a visit and I never went back.

Chairman STOKES. Well, you had quite a bit of money invested in your operations there, didn't you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No; I wouldn't say I had too much money invested.

Chairman STOKES. Did you do anything in terms of getting your money out and getting it back to the States?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, because at that time most of the money that I had there was Cuban money and at the time that I left it was worth about 10 to 1.

Chairman STOKES. That is 10——

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Ten pesos to \$1.

Chairman STOKES. To \$1. So you were suffering quite a loss then?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I wouldn't say I did. I was young, I had a good time, and that was it. I chucked it off to experience.

Chairman STOKES. Are you familiar with what the other casino operators did in terms of trying to get their investments out?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, I am not.

Chairman STOKES. Now, after you returned to the States the last time you referred to, when you left in the middle of 1960?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, I think around the middle of 1960.

Chairman STOKES. Then, of course, you never went back?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No sir.

Chairman STOKES. Now, you just said that in terms of your investment you didn't feel that it was too much. Can you give us some idea what you feel your loss was?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, I can't give you no idea.

Chairman STOKES. Was it a little bit of money or a lot of money?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, it wasn't no little bit and it wasn't too much either.

Chairman STOKES. Well, are we talking about thousands of dollars or millions of dollars?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. You are talking about thousands.

Chairman STOKES. Well, when you consider all four of the places in which you had an interest, would you say that collectively your investment could have been over a million dollars?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. If I told you, Mr. Trafficante, that Mr. Ricardo Escartene, who is the current Cuban Consul and First Secretary in Washington, told the committee that their records indicate, for example, that the net profit of the Riviera Hotel was \$25 million in 1958, would you say that was a true statement?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I couldn't tell you because I didn't have nothing to do with the Riviera Hotel.

Chairman STOKES. When you left Cuba, where did you next live?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I lived in Miami.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, when was the first time you were ever approached by any individual who was affiliated with or working for the Central Intelligence Agency?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. It was around either the latter part of 1960, or first part of 1961.

Chairman STOKES. And can you tell us who was the person who first contacted you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Mr. John Roselli.

Chairman STOKES. And where did he approach you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I think we were in the Fontainebleau Hotel.

Chairman STOKES. And can you give us the date?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. Can you approximate the time?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I told you it was either the latter part of 1960 or first part of 1961.

Chairman STOKES. Did you know Mr. Roselli before that date?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, I had met him.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us how you knew him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, at this moment I don't remember how I met him but I knew him.

Chairman STOKES. And how long had you known him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I would say about 15 years, 15-16 years.

Chairman STOKES. Now, had Mr. Roselli ever had any business interests in Cuba?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. Over the period of time that you had known him, how often had you and he come into contact?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Very few.

Chairman STOKES. Now, did he tell you how he came to be affiliated with the CIA?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. This first meeting was just between the two of you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, the first time, yes.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us the substance of the conversation you had with him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, he told me that CIA and the United States Government was involved in eliminating Castro. And if I would happen, and if Mr. Gener, if Mr. Macho Gener, if I knew about him, knew what kind of man he was. I told him I think he was a good man, he was against Castro anyhow, and that is about it.

Then he introduced me to Mr. Maheu, and then Mr. Giancana came into the picture.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. who?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Giancana. Mr. Roselli wanted me to be more or less an interpreter in the situation because he couldn't speak Spanish and I can speak Spanish fluently.

Chairman STOKES. How long after the first meeting you had with Roselli did the second meeting occur with Maheu and then Giancana?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. They were all staying at the Fontainebleau Hotel. It was a matter of days.

Chairman STOKES. What was your reaction to killing President Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, at that time I think that it was a good thing because he had established a communistic base 90 miles from the United States and being that the Government of the United States wanted it done, I go along with it, the same thing as a war, I figure it was like a war.

Chairman STOKES. Now, obviously Mr. Roselli, in order to approach you and discuss this with you, trusted you, right?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. All in all, can you give us some idea about how many meetings took place between the group?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Not too many, because just like I tell you, they used me to be an interpreter and then we met Mr. Gener, then I took him to a place where they met some Cubans who were very active, supposedly leaders of the American-backed factions who were in charge of trying to eliminate Castro through revolution or any other way that they could, and I think I assisted a couple of times and that is the only thing I can say about that.

Chairman STOKES. Well, since you were going to be the interpreter it would be necessary for you to be present at all of the meetings in order to interpret the conversations, right?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, but after a couple of meetings they found out that they could get along without me, I guess, and they told me they didn't need my services anymore, and that was the last that I, when they told me that I backed off, I wasn't going to—

Chairman STOKES. Now, what was the total time span that you were involved in the discussions about killing Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I can, I cannot, I couldn't be truthful with you. I couldn't, I would say it would be a matter of about a month or month and a half or two months. We are going back a long time now. I used to see Maheu, I used to see Mr. Roselli, I used to see Giancana at the Fontainebleau, but there was no discussion. I might meet him at a bar or the lounge and have a drink or something like that, but there would be no more discussions about the Castro thing.

Chairman STOKES. When you would have these meetings about assassinating Castro, would you have discussions about other things, too?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Not that I remember.

Chairman STOKES. Was Sam Giancana in the Miami area all the time that these meetings were taking place?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, he was, he was there.

Chairman STOKES. And what was—

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He might leave, I guess, and come back, or something, but I think he was there most of the time.

Chairman STOKES. What was your connection with Sam Giancana?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I happened to know Mr. Giancana. There was no connection at all.

Chairman STOKES. How long had you known him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Oh, I would say about 10 or 15 years, too.

Chairman STOKES. Was he fully aware of the plot to assassinate Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. And exactly how did he become aware of it?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't know. I don't know how he became aware, unless—I think it was through Mr. Roselli that brought him in.

Chairman STOKES. And do you know what his role was supposed to be in the assassination?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, I don't.

Chairman STOKES. Do you know if Giancana had directed Roselli to contact you in regard to this operation?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't know. Maybe he did. It could be possible.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us why Roselli approached you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, I guess he knew I had been in Cuba, he figured I had, I knew people there, he thought I could be of help, I spoke the language, he didn't, he had to deal with Cuban people. I thought he figured he could trust me.

Chairman STOKES. When he came to you and talked about the CIA, what did he say to you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, I can't tell the exact words what he said to me but more or less he was working for him and Mr. Maheu were with the CIA and that they were working for the CIA and that the United States Government wanted this thing done. That is what he said to me.

Chairman STOKES. Did he say what his role or capacity was with the CIA?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He made me understand he was an agent of the CIA.

Chairman STOKES. Now, what was your total involvement to be in the assassination plot?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. My total involvement was to be the interpreter between Mr. Roselli, Mr. Maheu, and these Cuban people that I took them to. Mr. Gener suggested that we see, and that I remember driving them there maybe a couple of times.

Chairman STOKES. Driving them where?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. To the home of this Cuban leader that was supposed to be backed by the American Government in the attempt to get rid of Castro.

Chairman STOKES. And what was Mr. Gener's role to be?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, he made the introduction to everybody with this gentleman.

Chairman STOKES. Who brought Gener into the operation?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. How was that?

Chairman STOKES. Who brought Gener into the operation?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Roselli asked me about him and evidently he had heard about Gener. I couldn't tell you who brought him in but I told him he was all right, I thought he was all right anyhow.

Chairman STOKES. Well, in light of the fact that you knew Gener in Cuba, where you had business operations, and you have told us that Roselli had no business operations in Cuba—

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. That is right.

Chairman STOKES. How would Roselli come to know Gener?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, the only reason, the only way I can figure out is that Gener was very active in the campaign against

Castro and Roselli was looking for people that were active in the campaign against Castro, and some kind of way he heard about them or they got together some kind of way.

Chairman STOKES. But the person who would have more knowledge about Gener and others who were involved would be you, isn't that true?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't see why I should have been the only one. He asked me about him before he talked to him, I think.

Chairman STOKES. OK.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. And CIA probably knew about Gener and had some connection with Gener and asked me something. I am telling you the truth of what I know about it and how he came about and how it came about, I don't know how, but it came about.

Chairman STOKES. At any rate, you told him Gener was okay?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. That is right.

Chairman STOKES. Now, I want to make reference to a person whom we will refer to in conversation as "Y". You know whom I am talking about, don't you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. The reason we are using this is because this person's name has not been declassified.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. You understand that.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. Prior to any questions on this point, I want to state this: the Church Committee in their report, page 80, described this particular person as quote "A leading figure in the Cuban exile movement."

Now, when did you first meet "Y", Mr. Trafficante?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I met him through Mr. Gener when I took Maheu and Mr. Roselli. I drove the car.

Chairman STOKES. You had not met him previously?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I had not met him previously. Maybe I had seen him in Cuba but I had never met him or talked to him.

Chairman STOKES. Who brought Mr. "Y" into the plot?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Gener.

Chairman STOKES. What was Mr. "Y's" role to be?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He was one of the leaders of the American backed faction of the movement against Castro in the United States. He was one of the top leaders.

Chairman STOKES. Did Mr. "Y" speak both Spanish and English?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I doubt it, no. He spoke Spanish because I was there, I interpreted for him, especially the first time.

Chairman STOKES. He was one of the persons for whom you interpreted?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right. He was the only person who I interpreted.

Chairman STOKES. Now, did Mr. "Y" ever ask you for assistance in financing anti-Castro activities?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No. I haven't seen Mr. "Y" since a couple of times, I think it was. I don't think it was more than two times, could have been three, but I doubt it. I haven't seen him since then.

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever ask Mr. "Y" if he would be interested in participating in this?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. How was that?

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever ask Mr. "Y" if he would be willing to participate in this plot?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever tell Mr. "Y" that you knew people who would pay money to do away with Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever offer Mr. "Y" assistance of any type in conjunction with any anti-Castro activities that he was engaged in?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever discuss with Mr. "Y" who would run the gambling businesses in Cuba in the event that Castro was overturned?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. Now, it is your statement that at all times your sole function was to interpret for this group?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Is that correct?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, I want to read a portion of a declassified CIA Inspector General's report—1967. I am reading at pages 29 and 31 of that document:

* * * Roselli told [support chief] that Trafficante knew of a man high up in the Cuban exile movement who might do the job. He identified him as [Mr. "Y"].

The report then goes on to say this:

Comment: Reports from the FBI suggest how Trafficante may have known of ["Y"]. On 21 December 1960, Bureau forwarded to the Agency a memorandum reporting that efforts were being made by U.S. racketeers to finance anti-Castro activities in hopes of securing gambling, prostitution, and dope monopolies in Cuba in the event Castro was overthrown.

A report of January 18, 1961, also associated "Y" with these schemes.

The 1967 Inspector General's report continues:

Trafficante approached ["Y"] and told him that he had clients who wanted to do away with Castro and that they would pay big money for the job. "Y" is reported to have been very receptive since it would mean that he would be able to buy his own ships, arms and communications equipment.

Mr. Trafficante, having heard what the Inspector General of the CIA had to say about your involvement, is your answer still the same?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Absolutely the same.

Chairman STOKES. When you were asked to interpret for these persons who were plotting, what method was discussed of how they were going to eliminate Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Any way, where they took a cannon, pills, tanks, airplanes, anything.

Chairman STOKES. Was there discussion about poison pills?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. There was discussion of pills; yes, sir. I am telling you any kind of way that was possible to get rid of him. There was not only one way, of the pills, any kind of way, pills included.

Chairman STOKES. Let me confine my question at this point to the pills. Who proposed the pills?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I know I didn't.

Chairman STOKES. My question was who did?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't know if it was Maheu or Roselli.

Chairman STOKES. And were the pills ever given to anyone?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I think they were but I don't recall me being present when they were.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us when and where the pills were given to someone?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't recall me being present when the pills were given.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us who was to administer the pills to Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. The pills to Castro was supposed to be administered by Mr. "X".

Chairman STOKES. Was any money discussed in conjunction with this?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. There was never no money discussed for none of these activities in no way, shape or form in my presence.

Chairman STOKES. You mentioned all the different ways that would be utilized to get rid of Castro. Did anyone ever supply any of the arms or ammunition or the tanks or the airplanes to them for that purpose?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I think I heard later, after this Bay of Pigs, they still kept on sending arms and boats and explosives and stuff like that, but I am not sure, I just heard that from Mr. Roselli. Later on, years later.

Chairman STOKES. Now, I want to make reference to Mr. "X" for reasons that his name is also not declassified. You know whom I am talking about?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. Now, I want to also make reference to the fact, before I pose any questions, that the Church Committee in their interim report at page 80, described this person as a Cuban "official close to Castro, who may have received kickbacks from the gambling interests."

Now, you do know Mr. "X"?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I think I have spoke to Mr. "X", met him one time in Havana.

Chairman STOKES. And what was your relationship to him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I never did give him any money.

Chairman STOKES. Well, what relationship did you have after you met him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I didn't have no relationship with him. The relationship was through Mr. Gener.

Chairman STOKES. What was Mr. "X's" involvement in these plots?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, I think he was going to take care of the pills.

Chairman STOKES. To take care of the pills?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. Do you know if Mr. "X" spoke both Spanish and English?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, I don't. I know he is a professor so it is possible that he spoke but Mr. "X" in this particular time was still in Cuba though, he wasn't in the United States.

Chairman STOKES. OK. You knew Mr. "X" from the time you spent in Cuba, is that right?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I met him one time.

Chairman STOKES. I see.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I didn't give him no money either.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, did you ever handle or carry poison pills to be used in the assassination of Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir, absolutely not.

Chairman STOKES. Did Roselli ever give you the poison pills?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Again, I want to read to you from the CIA Inspector General's report of 1967, pages 24 and 25:

(Comment: The gangsters may have had some influence on the choice of a means of assassination. [Support Chief] says that in his very early discussions with the gangsters or more precisely Maheu's discussions with them, consideration was given to possible ways of accomplishing the mission. Apparently the Agency had first thought in terms of a typical gangland-style killing in which Castro would be gunned down. Giancana was flatly opposed to the use of firearms. He said that no one could be recruited to do the job because the chance of survival and escape would be negligible. Giancana stated a preference for a lethal pill that could be put into Castro's food or drink. Trafficante "Joe, the courier," was in touch with a disaffected Cuba official with access to Castro and presumably of a sort that would enable him to surreptitiously poison Castro * * * The gangsters said ["X"] had once been in a position to receive kickbacks from the gambling interests, has since lost that source of income and needed the money.)

Having heard what the Inspector General has said about this operation, would you in any way change your testimony?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Reading further from the same report, Mr. Trafficante, at page 27, late February-March 1961, "Roselli passed the pills to Trafficante. Roselli reported to [Support Chief] that the pills had been delivered [to 'X'] in Cuba. ['X'] is understood to have kept the pills for a couple of weeks before returning them. According to the gangsters, ['X'] got cold feet."

Having heard this portion of the Inspector General's report, would you at this point change your testimony?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I did not give any pills to "X". I did not give any money to "X", I didn't see "X" any more since after I seen him in Cuba that one time, and I didn't receive no pills from Roselli, and I don't know what else to say about that.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, did you at any time receive any money for your participation in this situation?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. How was that, sir?

Chairman STOKES. Did you at any time receive any money from anyone for your participation in the assassination—

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Not a penny, no way, shape or form.

Chairman STOKES. Tell us what your reason was for agreeing to act as interpreter in this situation.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, I thought I was helping the U.S. Government. That's what my reason was. And as far as the gambling and monopolies of this and that and all that trash about dope and prostitution, that's not true. If things were straightened out in Cuba, I would liked to have gone back there. If I could gamble, I

would gamble; if I couldn't gamble, I wouldn't gamble. But the reason was that I thought that it was not right for the Communists to have a base 90 miles from the United States. The same reason when the First and the Second World War, they call you to go to the draft board and sign up, I went and signed up. That's the reason. And we all like to make money.

Chairman STOKES. I don't quite understand.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I mean, we all like to make money in case there was a thing I was doing it for money, for this and for that, about going back to Cuba and gamble and have casinos or cabarets, stuff like that.

Chairman STOKES. In 1967, 1971, 1976, and 1977, those 4 years, columnist Jack Anderson wrote about the CIA-Mafia plots and the possibility that Castro decided to kill President Kennedy in retaliation. Mr. Anderson even contends in those articles that the same persons involved in the CIA-Mafia attempts on Castro's life were recruited by Castro to kill President Kennedy.

The September 7, 1976 issue of the Washington Post contains one of Mr. Anderson's articles entitled, "Behind John F. Kennedy's Murder," which fully explains Mr. Anderson's position. I ask, Mr. Chairman, that at this point this article be marked as JFK exhibit F-409 and that it be entered into the record at this point.

Mr. PREYER. Without objection, the exhibit marked F-409 is ordered into the record at this point.

[JFK F-409 was marked and entered into the record and follows:]

September 7, 1976

THE WASHINGTON POST Tuesday, September 7, 1976 C19

Jack Anderson and Les Whitten**Behind John F. Kennedy's Murder**

Mafia mobster John Roselli may have taken the secret of the John F. Kennedy assassination with him to his death. He was brutally murdered a few weeks ago, his backed-up body stuffed into an oil drum and dumped into Miami's Biscayne Bay.

Before he died, Roselli hinted to associates that he knew who had arranged President Kennedy's murder. It was the same conspirators, he suggested, whom he had recruited earlier to kill Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

By Roselli's cryptic account, Castro learned the identity of the underworld contacts in Havana who had been trying to knock him off. He believed, not altogether without basis, that President Kennedy was behind the plot.

The Cuban leader, at the supreme irony, decided to turn the tables and use the same crowd to arrange Kennedy's assassination, according to Roselli's scenario. To save their skins, the plotters lined up Lee Harvey Oswald to pull the trigger.

Roselli could never be pinned down on names or details. It was also difficult to assess whether he knew what he was talking about or whether he merely described what he thought might have happened. Certainly there is no real evidence to support Roselli's story. But there are enough curious circumstances to justify telling it. Here are the fascinating highlights.

The ruggedly handsome Roselli, a flamboyant mobster with underworld contacts in Havana, was recruited by the Central Intelligence Agency in 1950 to assassinate Castro. He had no authority, however, over the underworld elements in Havana.

They were under the loose control of Florida's Mafia chieftain, Santos Trafficante. His gambling enterprises in Havana had been closed down by Castro after the 1959 revolution. In fact, Trafficante had been indicted for a period in a Cuban jail, an indignity that didn't endear Castro to him.

After Trafficante made it back to his Florida haunts, he left part of his organization behind in Havana. Some of his henchmen even managed to develop contacts in Castro's inner circle. These were the people Roselli wanted to use to knock off Castro.

But Roselli didn't leave the Mafia inside the Mafia to make the necessary arrangements with Trafficante. So Roselli called in his patron, the Chicago godfather Sam "Momo" Giancana, to deal with Trafficante.

As Roselli's associates tell it, he persuaded Giancana that it would be to their advantage to win the good will of the CIA. Convinced, Giancana flew down to Florida to make the preliminary arrangements.

Once Giancana and Trafficante set it up, Roselli used the Havana underworld to plot Castro's demise. At first, they tried to plant poison pills, supplied by the CIA, in Castro's food. The pills would have made it appear that he died of natural causes. When this failed, snipers were dispatched to a Havana rooftop. They were caught.

The word reached Roselli that some of the plotters had been tortured and that Castro had learned about the whole operation.

The CIA called off the Roselli operation in March, 1963, but recruited a Castro associate, Rolando Cubela, to murder Castro.

In an impromptu, three-hour interview with Associated Press reporter Daniel Harker, Castro indicated that he knew about the attempts on his life and warned that U.S. leaders also might not be safe. That was Sept. 7, 1963.

According to Roselli, Castro enlisted the same underworld elements whom he had caught plotting against him. They supposedly were Cubans from the old Trafficante organization. Working with Cuban intelligence, they allegedly lined up an ex-Marine sharpshooter, Lee Harvey Oswald, who had been active in the pro-Castro movement.

According to Roselli's version, Oswald may have shot Kennedy or may have acted as a decoy, while others ambushed him from closer range. When Oswald was picked up, Roselli suggested, the underworld conspirators feared he would crack and disclose information that might lead to them. This almost certainly would have brought a massive U.S. crackdown on the Mafia.

So Jack Ruby was ordered to eliminate Oswald, making it appear as an act of reprisal against the President's killer. At least this is how Roselli explained the tragedy in Dallas.

Several key CIA officials believed that Castro was behind the Kennedy assassination.

It has also been established that Jack Ruby, indeed, had been in Cuba and had connections in the Havana underworld. One CIA cable, dated Nov. 28, 1963, reported that "an American gangster type named Ruby" had visited Trafficante in his Cuban prison.

JFK EXHIBIT F-409

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, I want to read to you just two portions of the article I have just referred to, after which I will ask for your comment.

According to Mr. Anderson and Mr. Whitten in this article, it says:

Before he died, Roselli hinted to associates that he knew who had arranged President Kennedy's murder. It was the same conspirators, he suggested, whom he had recruited earlier to kill Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

By Roselli's cryptic account, Castro learned the identity of the underworld contacts in Havana who had been trying to knock him off. He believed, not altogether without basis, that President Kennedy was behind the plot.

Then over in another section, it says:

According to Roselli, Castro enlisted the same underworld elements whom he had caught plotting against him. They supposedly were Cubans from the old Trafficante organization. Working with Cuban intelligence, they allegedly lined up an ex-Marine sharpshooter, Lee Harvey Oswald, who had been active in the pro-Castro movement.

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So Jack Ruby was ordered to eliminate Oswald, making it appear as an act of reprisal against the President's killer. At least this is how Roselli explained the tragedy in Dallas.

Mr. Trafficante, do you have any knowledge of that?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No knowledge whatsoever.

Chairman STOKES. Do you have any information concerning any retaliatory action by Mr. Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Do you have any knowledge concerning how this information could have been given to this columnist, Mr. Anderson?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Did you and Mr. Roselli ever discuss any retaliatory action by Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us when was the last time you had seen Mr. Roselli prior to his death?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I would say 2, 3 weeks before his death.

Chairman STOKES. And where was that?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. In Fort Lauderdale.

Chairman STOKES. Was anyone else present?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. His sister and my wife.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us what you discussed?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Nothing. We met for and—that's it. I don't remember what we discussed. We didn't discuss nothing about Castro, that's for sure.

Chairman STOKES. I believe you told us that you had known Sam Giancana for a long period of time.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I would say 10, 15 years. I had never had nothing to do with Sam Giancana; no business relation or either with Mr. Roselli. I never had no business relation with them either.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Giancana, prior to his death, when was the last time you had seen him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I would say 12, 13 years, I didn't see him for 12 or 13 years. I hadn't seen Mr. Roselli, I think, I seen him once from 1961 till the time that he moved to Florida with his sister, which was about 2 years before he got killed. I just seen him one time during that time.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, you have told us here today that your motivation for participating in the assassination of President Castro was your patriotism, your love for this country and your concerns about communism being 90 miles from our shores, is that correct?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. Were you at all motivated by the events which had taken place in Havana which caused you to lose your business interests?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No. I have been a gambler all my life, and I'm used to taking chances, and it is a matter of time, it is not a matter of—it was forgotten. I doubt very much if it would have been the same again after Batista was gone.

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever inform any other people of the plot against Castro besides those who were involved in the actual plot?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Not that I remember. I don't think I did.

Chairman STOKES. What is your knowledge as to whether Castro learned about the plot?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. My knowledge about Castro learned about the plot?

Chairman STOKES. Yes, whether he learned about it.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I can't answer you that. I would be guessing. I don't know.

Chairman STOKES. Now, at any other times, were you either directly or indirectly involved in assisting any anti-Castro groups in their activities against Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, I wasn't.

Chairman STOKES. Now, you have told us that you do know Mr. Bango, he was your attorney?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right?

Chairman STOKES. And how long a period of time was he your attorney?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, he was for short period of time. While I was in jail, while I was in Trescornia in Havana. His brother, his brother is still—I don't know if Mr. Bango is still alive, by the way, but his brother is Minister of Sports in Cuba under Castro today and that's a very important job under the Communist system. You know, he is in charge of the sports and the youth and the whole bit.

Chairman STOKES. Did Mr. Bango ever represent you at any other time?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Do you have any knowledge of Mr. Bango traveling to Madrid, Spain, during the 1960's?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right, I went to visit him in Spain during the 1960's.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us about when in the sixties it was?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. What part?

Chairman STOKES. What part of the 1960's?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Around 1966 or 1967.

Chairman STOKES. Was this in Madrid?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Madrid, yeah.

Chairman STOKES. And what was your purpose of going there?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, he had a purpose of—he had a fighter, some kind of a fighter that he was interested in promoting. And then I felt like going to Madrid, and I just went over there.

Chairman STOKES. How long did you stay there?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I stayed there 10 days. When I got there, I got met by the—I left from Miami—when I got there I got met by the Spanish Secret Service or some kind of a service, and they had 12 people a day under surveillance. I was constantly under surveillance from the minute I got there until the minute I left. They would park even in front of my door in the hotel. So there was the trip to Spain.

Chairman STOKES. I see.

Mr. Trafficante, do you know the person AMLASH, a Cuban official involved in the CIA operation also called AMLASH which was designed to kill Castro?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. We refer to this individual also as AMLASH. During what years did you know AMLASH?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, I actually met him after the revolution in Cuba because he was, he had killed somebody there, some big official of the Batista government so he went to the mountains. And I met him after the revolution. When he come in, he was made a commandante or general, whatever you want to call it.

Chairman STOKES. And after you met him, was a relationship established between the two of you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, just a hello and goodbye, and that's it.

Chairman STOKES. Did he ever represent your interests or assist you in any manner?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Do you know whether Castro was aware of the AMLASH plot prior to President Kennedy's death?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Do you know if AMLASH knew Mr. Bango?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I'm sure he did.

Chairman STOKES. And do you know the nature of their relationship?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us whether or not you know whether AMLASH traveled to Madrid, Spain in either 1964, 1965, or 1966?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, what I'm going to tell you now is what I read and, you know, its been coming out, so I don't know that he traveled there or nothing. I found out later he had.

Chairman STOKES. Do you know for what purpose he went there?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. What's that?

Chairman STOKES. Do you know for what purpose he went there to Madrid?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He was some kind of a diplomat. He was of stature enough to be able to travel to Madrid and Paris and all those places. In my opinion, he was not a Communist. I never believed that he was a Communist. I always believed sooner or later he would react against Castro. But as far as me having any knowledge or contact with him or my personal knowledge knowing he used to travel back and forth, maybe Bango must have mentioned it to me or something like that, but I never did see him in Paris, in Madrid or anyplace.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, after January 1, 1962, and prior to November 22, 1963, did you have contacts with any Cuban official concerning any business dealings?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. 1962 to 1963?

Chairman STOKES. Yes, sir, from January 1962 to November of 1963.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Not that I remember. Cuban officials in Cuba, you mean?

Chairman STOKES. Right, with Cuban officials in Cuba.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. The answer is no, sir; right?

Mr. Trafficante, Mr. Aleman stated that you paid Castro's G-2 agents in the Miami area. Have you ever given any aid or assistance to individuals you know or suspected were working for Fidel Castro after January 1, 1962, and prior to November 22, 1963?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Absolutely not; never.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Aleman also stated to this committee that he has "no doubt" that there is affiliation between the Castro government and yourself.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. There's no affiliation whatsoever between Castro government and myself. There never has been.

Chairman STOKES. Now, let us return for a moment to your detention in Trescornia. I understand you to say your wife has visited you there. Did any other persons visit you there?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, a lot of people visited me there, people that I knew in Cuba.

Chairman STOKES. These would be friends of yours in Cuba who visited with you during that time?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. Were most of them people that had some involvement with you in the gambling operations?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. When people visited with you, can you tell us about that visiting room, would there be other people in that same room, other visitors visiting detainees?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Let me tell you, Mr. Stokes, this was like a camp. There was no—it was a minimum security place. They would let anybody come in. They would let anybody stay with us until 12 o'clock at night. We would cook, we would have food brought in, we would eat, we would drink and there would be, sometimes, the guards would come and sit down with us and eat. Some meals it was like one big happy family.

Chairman STOKES. It sounds like a resort area.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. It was. I really had a rest then, if you want to know the truth. I enjoyed it. It was the highest point in the whole Havana area. You could see the whole city. It was cool, too, in the evening.

Chairman STOKES. Do you know a Mr. Meyer Panitz?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Who?

Chairman STOKES. Meyer Panitz, P-a-n-i-t-z.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Is that P-a-n-, Mr. Chairman?

Chairman STOKES. Yes, Mr. Gonzalez, P-a-n-i-t-z. First name, Meyer, M-e-y-e-r.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir, it don't ring a bell.

Chairman STOKES. You did know Pedro and Martin Fox?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Pedro Fox, yes, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Do you know whether the Fox brothers or any of the other operators tried to get their money out of Cuba during this period of time?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. All I know is that Mr. Martin Fox, who was the owner of the Tropicana and one of the richest men in Cuba, he died in the United States in the 1960's, I think, and he died completely broke. And Pedro Fox was working as a waiter and maitre d' in all the restaurants and hotels around Miami.

Chairman STOKES. If, during this period of time, any of these operators were able to get their money out of Cuba, are you aware of how they did it?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir. You see—can I explain something?

Chairman STOKES. Certainly, go ahead.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. You see, everybody that was in business in Cuba Castro started with the very, very rich and he knocked them out of the box so everybody would say, well, maybe he won't touch me. Then he started with the next in line. Meanwhile they still trying to do business and eventually he did it in a real way, then he would invite all the tourist agents and he was going to make a big tourists campaign to bring the people from all over the world to Cuba. He was going to do this, he was going to do that. The next time—meanwhile, the employees of these places would be taking over that business and they would run the business. And if you had a little money in the cage, you couldn't even go near the cage to get the money because they would report you right away.

So everybody got fooled to a certain point. Because if you remember, he didn't declare he was a Communist until about 1962, 1963, some time like that—1961 or 1962. So there wasn't too many people that got the money out, unless they had it out.

Chairman STOKES. I see. Thank you.

Mr. Trafficante, did you know, while you were in Trescornia, a Britisher named John Wilson Hutson, who was detained along with you?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Let me tell you what used to happen. I vaguely remember some guy there that was kind of a little bit of a screwball. I don't know if it's him or not. Because there used to be all kinds of people they would bring into there; people that would have difficulty with the traveling papers. In other words, they would get at the airport, then they didn't have a ticket to leave the country. So they would get them and bring them over there until they got the problems straightened out and continuously we would have different people coming in and out and staying for a few days and then leaving; coming, staying. So it could be possible that he was there, but if I was to see him now, I wouldn't remember none of these people.

Chairman STOKES. Then if I understand you properly, you don't remember this precise individual, but it is possible—

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right; it's possible that he was there.

Chairman STOKES. Do you know a Lewis McWillie?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, sir, I seen him around Havana a lot.

Chairman STOKES. Can you recall when you first met him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He was working at the Tropicana for Martin Fox.

Chairman STOKES. Did you have any personal business dealings with Lewis McWillie?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Never had no personal business dealings.

Chairman STOKES. Have you ever had occasion to talk with him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Ever since Cuba, I think I seen him one time in Vegas at his home. Somebody took me there, say I want to meet somebody from Havana that you know just for a few minutes.

Chairman STOKES. During the period that you were detained at Trescornia, do you recall seeing Lewis McWillie visiting out there?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't recall it, but he might have come. He might have.

Chairman STOKES. So if he was there visiting someone, you don't recall it?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. That's right, I don't recall it. It is possible that he did, but I don't recall it.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, did you ever know a Jack Ruby?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir, I never remember meeting Jack Ruby.

Chairman STOKES. Never remember meeting him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No.

Chairman STOKES. Are you aware it has been alleged that Jack Ruby visited with you while you were at Trescornia; have you heard that?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I've heard that but I don't remember him visiting me either. There was no reason for this man to visit me. I have never seen this man before. I have never been to Dallas; I never had no contact with him. I don't see why he was going to come and visit me.

Chairman STOKES. Were you aware of any of the activities of a Jack Ruby?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. When you first met McWillie, can you tell us where that was?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I met him around Cuba someplace.

Chairman STOKES. I am sorry.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I met him around Cuba in a casino someplace.

Chairman STOKES. Did he ever visit you in your home, or did you ever visit him in his home?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir, the only time I think was one time in Vegas, like I told you I was there for a day or two in the 1960's. He was already working over there. And—

Chairman STOKES. In Vegas?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yeah, in Vegas. A fellow said he had already married a Cuban girl, or something like that. I seen him there just for a few minutes. That was the only time that I remember seeing him since the Cuban days.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, I want to ask you a question that is very important to this committee, and that is, did you have any foreknowledge of the assassination of President Kennedy?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Absolutely not; no way.

Chairman STOKES. Had you ever known or had you ever heard the name Lee Harvey Oswald prior to the day President Kennedy was assassinated?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Never had in my life.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, I want to move into another area now of questioning. So that we put it in its proper context, I want to refer to an article in Parade magazine dated January 21, 1962, called The untold story: our Government's crackdown on organized crime, written by Jack Anderson and I just want to read two portions of the first page of what is a three-page article. The first paragraph starts out saying, "Organized crime is under attack. For the first time, the full forces of the Federal Government have been thrown into the battle against it." And then it goes on to make

further reference to organized crime and at page 2, it has the top 10 and in 10th position is Santos Trafficante.

Now, Mr. Trafficante, were you acquainted with the Justice Department's program during the 1960's of physical surveillance against particular individuals?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I was so acquainted with it that they lived with me for about 15 years.

Chairman STOKES. That they lived with you for about 15 years?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. I suppose when you say that, you mean the term literally; is that right?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right. Night and day.

Chairman STOKES. What type of surveillance were you under, do you know?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. All kinds, from the neighbors, from the hilltop, from the trees, from the cars, everything, any kind you could think of.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, do you know Carlos Marcello?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, sir.

Chairman STOKES. Tell us how you know him.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I know Carlos Marcello about 30 years. I met him in New Orleans. My father had an operation there, and I met him through my father, at the clinic, used to be the barracks in those days.

Chairman STOKES. So over that period of time that you knew him, what was your personal relationship with him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Just friendship. No business, never had no business dealings with him; no way, shape or form. I see him once in a while when I go to New Orleans. He's come to Miami, I think, once to appear before a grand jury. I seen him there.

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever have occasion to discuss with Mr. Marcello the physical surveillance situation?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I probably have.

Chairman STOKES. Now, when I use the term "intense physical surveillance," you know what I mean by that?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I know exactly what you mean.

Chairman STOKES. That's the situation you described where they lived with you day and night?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. Now, can you tell us why they had you under surveillance?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't know, I guess they hoped to find out this empire I am supposed to have, all these businesses that I am supposed to have; all that big thing I am supposed to be.

Chairman STOKES. That is your understanding, that's your full understanding?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. That's my understanding of it, yeah.

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever have any discussion with anyone on how this surveillance could be stopped?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No. I don't think I did. I'm sure that it couldn't be stopped, and I doubt it could be stopped.

Chairman STOKES. I'm sorry, was that your full answer?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. What was that?

Chairman STOKES. Was that your full answer?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yeah, I don't think it can be stopped.

Chairman STOKES. Did you ever have any discussions with Mr. Marcello regarding President Kennedy or Attorney General Robert Kennedy?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I probably had it with him about Robert Kennedy.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us what that conversation was?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. The conversation was that Bobby Kennedy had him deported illegally, put him on a plane with some marshals and dumped him in Guatemala. That was the conversation.

Chairman STOKES. And by him, you are referring to Mr. Marcello?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Mr. Marcello, right.

Chairman STOKES. Obviously then from what he said to you, he was pretty upset about that?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, I would be too, what happened to him would happen to me.

Chairman STOKES. And is this what you said to him when the two of you talked about it?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. And you felt that Robert Kennedy had mistreated him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I think so, I still think he mistreated him.

Chairman STOKES. Are you aware of any threats that Mr. Marcello made against President Kennedy or Attorney General Kennedy?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. How was that, Mr. Stokes?

Chairman STOKES. As a result of these conversations you had with Mr. Marcello, the fact that he was upset.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. You were upset about it. Are you aware of any threats made by Mr. Marcello against either President Kennedy or Attorney General Kennedy?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir; no, no chance, no way.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Trafficante, do you know a man by the name of Jose Aleman?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, I met Mr. Aleman, I think it was two or three times, perhaps.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us when you first met him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, I met him. I don't remember what year it was. It was in the early sixties.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us where you first met him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I met him at his—I think he had an apartment house or condominium or hotel or something.

Chairman STOKES. And how did you happen to be at his home?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I met him through Macho Gener.

Chairman STOKES. Mr. Gener took you there?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes.

Chairman STOKES. And can you tell us the purpose of his taking you there?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. This fellow was in a financial bind. Mr. Aleman was having trouble financially. He wanted to raise some money because he was having trouble with his stepmother or some-

thing. So Macho liked Mr. Aleman. That's the reason that he took me there.

Chairman STOKES. Can you tell us how much money Mr. Aleman needed?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, we never got to the point because when I got there, I found out—I don't even think he owned the property. I think the property belonged to his stepmother. It was like a clouded title in a property.

Chairman STOKES. Well, was it Mr. Aleman wanted you to arrange a loan for him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He thought maybe I could arrange a loan for him, yeah.

Chairman STOKES. From whom were you going to arrange the loan?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Well, at that particular time I was, my attorney, Mr. Frank Gargano, was an attorney for Jimmy Hoffa, and I thought maybe I could talk to him. I thought I could talk to my attorney to see if he could help Mr. Aleman.

Chairman STOKES. And this would be a loan then from the Teamsters?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right.

Chairman STOKES. And had you ever arranged loans for other people through the Teamsters?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. You don't recall—is this your testimony—you don't recall the amount that Aleman asked for?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, I don't.

Chairman STOKES. How many meetings took place between you and Mr. Aleman regarding this loan?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I would say the question of the loan was decided the first time I met him, but then I went there, I think I met him another couple of times. I don't remember meeting him in any restaurant like he testified yesterday. Maybe it could be, though, I am not saying. It could be but I don't—

Chairman STOKES. Is it your best recollection then that you probably met with him about three times?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Two or three times.

Chairman STOKES. And Mr. Gener was present for the first meeting. Would he have been present for the other two meetings?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Mr. Gener was present at all the times that I spoke with Mr. Aleman. To the best of my recollection he was present.

Chairman STOKES. And was anyone else present on those occasions?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. There was another gentleman present, I can't—

Chairman STOKES. Do you know his name?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No. Well, I will tell you, his nickname was "Coco." That is how—this was a friend of Mr. Bango, this Coco. No, no, Darci, I read in the paper was supposed to be.

Chairman STOKES. How about George Nobregas, was he present?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. George?

Chairman STOKES. N-o-b-r-e-g-a-s? Nobregas?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Maybe that is him. Maybe that is the same guy. It was a dark complexioned guy.

Chairman STOKES. How about Angelo Bruno, was he ever present?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. He was present one time, yes.

Chairman STOKES. So that the record is clear, would you name everybody that you can recall being present?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. That is about it. I don't think there was anybody else.

Chairman STOKES. OK. Just for the record, you name each of the persons you say were present.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Macho Gener, this fellow Coco, I think, Nobregas, whatever it is, Aleman, and Angelo Bruno, I think, was present one time.

Chairman STOKES. And on each occasion was the purpose of the meeting to discuss Aleman's loan?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir.

Chairman STOKES. What was the purpose?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. The next time, one of the purposes I seen him after the loan, because like I told you, I think the matter of the loan, I think it was decided the first time I met him. Then he mentioned something about having some political influence in the Dominican Republic. So Mr. Bruno had talked to me that he was interested in getting some milk from the Dominican Republic, so I took him over there to meet Mr. Aleman so maybe they could get together. Mr. Aleman could facilitate this thing of the milk, to get an export license to export milk from the Dominican Republic.

Chairman STOKES. Wasn't Aleman already in trouble financially?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Yes, but that has nothing to do with it. He could have made maybe some money with Mr. Bruno if he could get him the export license. To the best of my recollection now that is the way I think it was.

Chairman STOKES. Was this the export deal that had something to do with milk?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Milk.

Chairman STOKES. Was there anything else you discussed at that time?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. As far as the Kennedy situation, I want to tell you something now, Mr. Stokes. I am sure as I am sitting here that all the discussion I had with Mr. Aleman, that I never made the statement that Kennedy was going to get hit, because all the discussion I made with Mr. Aleman, as sure as I am sitting here, I spoke to him in Spanish. No reason for me to talk to him in English because I can speak Spanish fluently and he speaks Spanish, that is his language. There was no reason for me to tell him in English that Kennedy is going to get hit. I deny that I made that statement.

Chairman STOKES. When did you first become aware that he had made the statement?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. When it was first published in some newspaper, the Post or the Times, 2 or 3 years ago.

Chairman STOKES. Were you aware of the fact that he had also told the FBI about it much earlier than that?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I read it in the same article, I think, that he was an FBI informant at that time.

Chairman STOKES. Are you aware of the fact that he said that he had had a very involved discussion with you about politics? Did you ever discuss politics?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't remember having that discussion with him by himself, like he claims, like I read it in the paper.

Chairman STOKES. When we take the statement that he attributes to you, when he says that you said he is not going to be reelected, and then when he says you said, "No, Jose, he is going to be hit." How could he in any way misstate a statement like that from anything else you have said to him?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Because, first of all, like I told you, I was speaking to him in Spanish, and in Spanish there was no way I could say Kennedy is going to get hit. I didn't say that. I might have told him he wasn't going to get reelected.

Chairman STOKES. What were you basing that on?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I could have told him that he was not going to get reelected, not that Kennedy was going to get hit.

Chairman STOKES. How did you know Kennedy was not going to get reelected?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I thought he wouldn't.

Chairman STOKES. What had he done at that time that would cause him not to be reelected?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. At this particular time, first of all, there was the Cuban question where they had the trouble with the Bay of Pigs and all that, and they established the Cuban bases, and, if you recall, there was a lot people criticizing it.

Chairman STOKES. Well, then——

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. That is the best way that I can say it, if I even told him that.

Chairman STOKES. From what you have said here today, then, in all probability you did say to him no, Jose, he is not going to be reelected. Did you say that?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I might have told him that but I didn't tell him that Kennedy was going to get hit. See, I still tell you that I spoke to Aleman in Spanish. There was no reason for me to speak to him in English because I doubt if 15 years ago he could speak better English than he does today. There was no reason for me——

Chairman STOKES. We can't hear you.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. There was no reason for me to speak to him in English with his broken English, when I can speak fluent Spanish, and he can speak fluent Spanish, and Gener, who was there all the time, couldn't understand English. The other guy, I doubt if he could understand English, too, Nobregas, whatever his name was, at that particular time.

Chairman STOKES. Do you recall ever talking to Mr. Aleman about the problem Jimmy Hoffa was having with Attorney General Robert Kennedy?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I don't remember nothing about the discussion. I couldn't swear to nothing that I talked about him, about Jimmy Hoffa. One thing I know for definite is I didn't tell him Kennedy was going to get hit, or that he interpreted it that way. That is not right and that is not the truth. That is all I can say.

Chairman STOKES. When you first learned that he had said this about you, did you contact anybody about it?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir. I didn't pay no importance to it at that particular time. I never thought I would be here answering that question today or be here for the assassination of Kennedy, as far as that goes.

Chairman STOKES. I am sorry, I didn't hear.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. I never thought at that time that I would be here today being questioned about the assassination of Kennedy.

Chairman STOKES. Then, so I can summarize your testimony at this point, you did know Mr. Aleman, you did have meetings with Mr. Aleman, you probably discussed President Kennedy and his reelection or his inability to be reelected, but you did not make the statement he will be hit?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Right. I am sure I didn't. I am positive I didn't. There was no reason for me to say that.

Chairman STOKES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions.

Mr. PREYER. If you will pardon us for a moment, I would like to confer with the members here.

There are no further questions from the panel. Under the House rules, Mr. Trafficante, a witness at the conclusion of the questioning is entitled to make a statement for 5 minutes to explain his testimony or to clarify it or to make any sort of statement he may choose to make. At this time, do you care to say anything further to the committee?

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. No, sir, your Honor, nothing.

Mr. PREYER. Very well, the committee will excuse the witness at this time.

Let me caution everyone in the hearing room to remain seated until the witness leaves the hearing room.

You are excused, Mr. Trafficante.

Mr. TRAFFICANTE. Thank you.

Mr. PREYER. Thank you for being here.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, the exhibit.

[Document handed to the clerk by Mr. Gonzalez.]

Mr. GONZALEZ. This is the certified copy of the order.

Mr. PREYER. We will have that immunity order which has previously been inserted in the record.

The committee will take a brief 3-minute in-place recess at this time. We will resume very quickly. The committee stands in recess.

[A short recess was taken.]

Chairman STOKES [now presiding]. The committee will come to order.

The Chair recognizes Professor Blakey.

Mr. BLAKEY. Mr. Chairman, the testimony of Santos Trafficante concludes that part of the presentation by the staff to the committee of the basic outlines of the committee's investigation into the possibility of organized crime connection to the assassination of President Kennedy. As all can see from the testimony introduced, the question remains, was organized crime involved in a plot to assassinate President Kennedy? Did it have the motive, opportunity, and means to do so?