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His sense of the practical seems to have been deficient. For example, he always fashioned himself a potential leader and resented the fact that circumstances compelled him to do menial work. Yet he never took the necessary steps to complete his high school education and obtain a diploma, so that he might be hired for a better job and utilize the normal skills possessed by a high school graduate. Likewise, he never made any serious attempts to acquire any kind of post-high school education. He made one or two tries at setting himself up as a Russian interpreter or translator but apparently never pursued the matter very far. So far as we know he never earned a penny in either capacity. For several weeks in the late summer of 1963 he occupied himself with an elaborate scheme for hijacking an airplane to Cuba, and at one time he was trying to work Marina and the baby into the plan as well. Some time during 1963 he told Marina he would one day be the "Premier" of Cuba and became angry when she chided him for such an impractical ambition.

In sum, we believe that Oswald did not have any subtleness of mind, that he lacked a good understanding of human nature and that he had an unstable and neurotic character. We do not believe that such a man could have lived out a "legend" so successfully that the combined resources of the Commission, the Secret Service, CIA and the FBI could not have uncovered major discrepancies in it.

III. Involvement by Cuba.

Our Suspicion that the Cuban government might have been involved in the assassination is based upon four facts. First, Lee Harvey Oswald publicly identified himself with the Fair Play For Cuba Committee and was an avowed admirer of the Castro government. Second, shortly before the

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assassination, between September 26 and October 3, 1963, he travelled to Mexico City and while there made frequent contact with the Cuban Consulate. Third, the Cuban government had ample reason to dislike and distrust the government of the United States and the late President in particular. Fourth, the Commission itself and the various Federal investigatory agencies which have assisted it in its work have received many letters and been approached by several persons who claim to have seen or heard acts which directly or indirectly link the assassination to the Castro government. We will touch upon all but the third of these four factors in this section of the memorandum. The antipathy of the Cuban government needs no elaboration.

Oswald's Fair Play for Cuba Committee activities and his contacts with Mr. Vincent T. Lee, the former head of that Committee, have been thoroughly investigated. The results of these investigations are that Oswald's so-called "organizational activities" on behalf of the Committee in and around New Orleans were almost entirely a fiction, which he himself created. He carried a card which showed him to be a member of the New Orleans chapter of the Fair Play For Cuba Committee, the President of which was "A. J. Hidell." No such man as "A. J. Hidell" has been located nor is there any evidence that he exists. Marina testifies that the name was made up by her husband and that he probably chose it because it rhymed with his hero, "Fidel" (Castro). The little bit of correspondence between Oswald and the national headquarters for the Fair Play For Cuba Committee in New York City, headed by Vincent T. Lee, discloses that Oswald applied for membership, was welcomed, later informed Lee that he

intended to create an active organization in New Orleans and asked for advice in doing so, Lee replied with cautious encouragement, pointing out the difficulties, Oswald wrote another letter saying he was going to go ahead anyway, and that was about all. We have no evidence that any money ever went from New York or anywhere else to Oswald for his use in these activities nor was any representative of national headquarters or any place else ever sent down to guide him. Further, he apparently never created an organization and was never even given a charter authorizing him to do so.

Marina testifies that much of Oswald's Fair Play For Cuba Committee activities, at least late in the summer of 1963, seemed to have been performed with the intent of proving to the Cuban government that he Oswald was "a friend of Cuba," in the belief that he would thereby further his chances of reaching that country and being accepted by it. In other words, Lee Oswald was probably trying to reenact the defection to and acceptance by Russia which he had so successfully accomplished in 1959, only this time shifting the scene of action to Cuba.

The trip to Mexico is not so easily disposed of. Oswald departed New Orleans, in great secrecy, probably about noon on September 25 and perhaps a day earlier, and he crossed the Mexican border at Nuevo Laredo on September 26. His bus arrived in Mexico City at about 10:00 a. m. on September 27. We have rather firm information that he set out immediately on a series of visits to the Soviet and Cuban Embassies in that city, spending almost his entire first 2 days at one or another of these two places or in making arrangements to visit one or the other.

(One arrangement he made, for example, was to have passport photographs taken, for use in his application for a Cuban visa.) By late Saturday afternoon, September 28, however, he had pretty much hit a blank wall at both embassies.

The Cuban Embassy had even more firmly informed him that he could not get an "in-transit" visa to visit Cuba unless he could first show them a visa to visit Russia, so he was left with very little to do with either Embassy

At the Cuban Embassy he even got into a fight with the Consul, Eusebio Asque, because he insisted so strongly that as a "friend of Cuba's," he ought to be given a visa. So from Sunday through Wednesday morning, October 2, when he left Mexico City on a bus bound for the United States, apparently about all he did -- or all that we know about what he did -- was to make his travel arrangements, see the sights of the city and

Our evidence that the events set out in the foregoing paragraph occurred is solid. It is obtained from several sources, the most important being the direct testimony of Senora Silvia Duran, the Mexican clerk at the Cuban Embassy who dealt with Oswald,

The question is not whether

these events occurred, but whether they were perhaps only a cover-up for other, more sinister activities going on at the same time. This is where the various rumors and claims of conspiracy come into consideration.

Some of them will be considered in detail later, but at this point it is enough to say that they almost all boil down to some sort of allegation that the Cubans passed money to Oswald while he was in Mexico City, as payment for assassinating the President. We have been informed by the Central Intelligence Agency that rumors focusing around a large amount of money having been handed to Oswald while he was in Mexico City (the most commonly mentioned sum was \$5,000) were current in Mexico City almost immediately after the assassination. The fact that these rumors were current should be kept in mind in assessing the information which follows.

In order that the Commission may directly assess some of the important bits of evidence bearing upon Oswald's contacts with the Cuban and Russian Embassies, we have attached hereto two documents.



We have also recopied the essentials of the statement made by Silvia Duran, the Mexican employee of the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City who dealt with Oswald, when she was questioned by the Mexican police shortly after the assassination.

Her statement, as forwarded to us by the Mexican government, is as follows:

Reference copy, JFK Collection: HSCA (RG 233)

"That as the speaker has already stated, she has been a sympathizer of socialism and Marxist doctrine for several years, having studied philosophy and existentialism, and particularly she has sympathized since its inception and sympathizes with the Cuban Revolution. That approximately three months ago she began to occupy the position of Secretary to the Cuban Consul in this city, Mr. EUSEBIO ASCUE... having had under her responsibility the administrative operation and preparing the visas which are issued, as well as handling the applications for such visas which invariably are sent to the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Government of Cuba, for its approval, ... That the speaker does not belong to any political party and never has attended manifestations or meetings, nor has she given lectures or speeches, which her husband has done, since he has written several articles for the newspaper 'El Dia' (The Day) (pro-communist Spanish language newspaper published in Mexico City); that she has never been arrested for any reason, not even on the occasion of the visit to Mexico of Mr. JOHN F. KENNEDY, which caused her a great deal of personal satisfaction because of the benefits which it would represent to the country...

"...its having been only that night that they/she and her husband read in the extra (edition) the news relating thereto, and subsequently on the radio at her residence she heard the name of LEE HARVEY OSWALD, which caused her to remember that this name refers to a North American who in the last days of September or the first days of the month of October of the present year appeared at the Cuban Consulate and applied for a visa to Cuba in transit to Russia and based his application on his presentation of his passport in which it was recorded that he had been living in the latter country for a period of three years, his work permit from that same country written in the Russian language and letters in the same language, as well as proof of his being married to a woman of Russian nationality and being the apparent Director in the city of New Orleans of the organization called 'Fair Play for Cuba' with the desire that he should be accepted as a 'friend' of the Cuban Revolution, as a result of which the speaker, in compliance with her duties, received all of his data and filled out the appropriate application, and he left to return in the afternoon, this time with his photographs, and the speaker, recognizing that she exceeded her duties, semiofficially called the

"Russian Consulate by telephone because of her interest in facilitating the handling of the Russian visa for LEE HARVEY OSWALD, but from there they answered her that the operation would require approximately four months, which annoyed the applicant, since as he affirmed he was in a great hurry to obtain the visas which would permit him to travel to Russia, insisting that he was entitled to them because of his background and his partisanship and personal activities in favor of the Cuban movement, the declarant's not being able to specify because she does not remember whether or not he said that he was a member of the Communist Party, but that his wife, of Russian nationality, was at that time in the city of New York from where she would follow him, although his place of origin was the aforementioned city of New Orleans; that as soon as OSWALD understood that it was not possible to give him a Cuban visa without his previously obtaining a Russian one, because the former was for transit, he became highly agitated and angry, as a result of which the speaker called Consul ASCUE, who, at that time, was in his private office in company of his ultimate replacement, MIRAVAL, but came out and began to argue in English with OSWALD in a very angry manner and ASCUE concluded by saying to him that, 'As far as he was concerned, he would not give him a visa,' and that 'A person like him, in place of aiding the Cuban Revolution, was doing it harm,' its being noted that in their discussion they had been referring to the Russian socialist revolution and not the Cuban, its being stated by OSWALD that he had two reasons to request the visa with urgency, which were, one, that his permit to be in Mexico was expiring and the other that he had urgent necessity of reaching Russia; that in spite of the argument the speaker handed to OSWALD a piece of paper similar to that which she writes at this time in which she recorded her name, 'SILVIA DURAN,' and the telephone number of the Consulate, which is '11-28-47,' and, at any rate, she initiated the handling of his visa application by sending it to the Cuban Ministry of (Foreign) Affairs, from which a reply was received in the normal manner some fifteen to thirty days later approving the issuance of a visa, but conditioning it on his previously obtaining the Russian (one), although she does not recall whether OSWALD subsequently called her or not on the telephone for the Consulate which she had given him; that all of the conversation which the speaker had with OSWALD, as well as that of Consul

"ASCUE with him, was in the English language since he did not speak any Spanish, and that upon seeing his photograph which appears in today's newspapers, specifically in the newspaper 'El Dia,' she immediately recognized and identified it as being the same person that she has been referring to as LEE HARVEY OSWALD. . ."

It should be noted that Senora Duran testified that Oswald made formal application for a visa, that he furnished her with photographs taken of himself in Mexico City, that she filled out the visa application on the basis of documents Oswald had in his possession, and that authorization to issue a visa, conditional upon his first obtaining a Russian visa, was in fact obtained by her office sometime late in October. We have forwarded a request to the Cuban government to document Senora Duran's claims. If the Cuban government does furnish us with documents purporting to fulfill Senora Duran's claims, we have excellent means at our disposal for authenticating them. For example, Oswald's handwriting and his photographs are two obvious methods of authentication. In addition, we have what we believe are some of the documents he had in his possession when he was in Mexico City, presumably the documents from which Senora Duran took the information to fill out his visa application, so this too should constitute an excellent method of authentication.

For about a month and one-half prior to the assassination Lee Harvey Oswald had a room of his own in a rooming house at 1026 North Beckley Street in Dallas. He ordinarily stayed there during the week and visited Marina on weekends at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Paine in Irving, Texas, where she was staying with the children. The resident manager of the rooming house at North Beckley Street, Mrs. Earline Roberts, has testified to representatives of the FBI that on one or two occasions Oswald ended

telephone conversations with the word, "Adios." Mrs. Roberts' statements on this subject infer that these conversations were carried on in some foreign language described by her as "German or Russian." From this it in turn can be inferred that the conversations alluded to were with Marina, because they would have been in Russian, and we have other evidence, which is quite firm, that he telephoned Marina almost every night. If this is the case, then the fact that he signed off with the word "Adios" has no particular significance. When Marina testified to the Commission she said that she does remember her husband occasionally using that term. If, however, the word "Adios" was used during an English-language conversation, we have, perhaps, an important unexplained piece of evidence. Mrs. Roberts is scheduled to be questioned on this point.

The top local officials of both the CIA and the FBI in Mexico stated to representatives of the Commission during their visit to that city in April 1964 that, in their professional opinion, there was no conspiracy involving Lee Harvey Oswald or the assassination which had contacts in Mexico. Both men based their opinions upon their belief that if there had been any such conspiracy, although they might not by this time have been able to solve it, their sources of information and investigatory capabilities were sufficiently good so that they would at least have received some firm indication or "hard" evidence of its existence. The absence of any such evidence has convinced them that Lee Harvey Oswald's trip to Mexico was in all probability nothing more than it purported to be: an unsuccessful attempt to reach Cuba.

Unfortunately, however, although the means of investigation at our disposal in Mexico have in our opinion been stretched to the utmost, there still remain gaps in our knowledge of what Oswald did while he was there. Essentially, for Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, September 29 through October 2, we can fill in only about five or six hours of his time, plus whatever time he slept. The final answer to the meaning of the Mexican trip, therefore, will probably never be given.

Finally, before ending our discussion of possible Cuban involvement, we would like to set forth in summary fashion some of the rumors and allegations of Cuban conspiracies which have come to our attention. In our opinion, only two are sufficiently serious to merit a detailed statement. These are summarized below. The other rumors are very briefly summarized, and references to the basic FBI or CIA sources dealing with them are given, in an appendix hereto.

1. Statement of Pedro Gutierrez Valencia.

On December 2, 1963 Senor Pedro Gutierrez Valencia wrote a letter to President Johnson, in Spanish, in which he stated that in the course of his duties as a credit investigator for a large department store in Mexico City he was in the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City on September 30, 1963 or October 1, 1963 for the purpose of conducting an investigation of one of its employees. The letter went on to say that as he was leaving the embassy he overheard a heated discussion in English between two men, one a Cuban and the other an American, in which he could understand only the words, "Castro," "Cuba," and "Kennedy." The Cuban was counting out

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American dollars, which he eventually passed to the American, and both men stepped into an automobile which, from the fact that the Cuban opened the door with a key extracted from his own pocket and himself got into the driver's seat, Gutierrez concluded belonged to the Cuban. Gutierrez' suspicions were aroused, so he doubled back around the corner to get into his own automobile to follow the two men. However, by the time he was able to do this they had driven off and he lost sight of them. After the assassination, from observing pictures in the Mexico City newspapers of Lee Harvey Oswald, Gutierrez claimed that he recognized the American as being Oswald.

The FBI in Mexico City has taken the primary responsibility for investigating this situation. Senor Gutierrez has been thoroughly checked, and all the evidence points to his being sincere, trustworthy and disinterested. He has favorably impressed all the FBI men who have worked with him, and he has devoted much time to trying to help our investigation of what he saw and has never asked for any kind of compensation. The representatives of the FBI are convinced that he is sincere. However, his identification of the American he allegedly saw as Lee Harvey Oswald has not stood up well under intensive analysis. All the usual methods for confirming an identification have been gone through, detailed physical description, identification of photographs of Oswald's from among photographs of other men, description of the manner in which he saw what he claims to have seen, etc. It now appears that Gutierrez saw the "American" distinctly only from the rear and once, very fleetingly, face-to-face. He never observed him in profile. What happened was this:

Reference copy, JFK Collection: HSCA (RG 233)

Gutierrez came around a corner of a wall and bumped into the Cuban who was talking with the American, thereby seeing them both for a split second face-to-face. He apologized, the Cuban graciously accepted the apology, and all three men immediately continued walking in their respective directions. When he overheard their conversation, however, which must have been resumed almost instantaneously, Gutierrez turned around to get another look. Thus, he got a good look only of the backs of both men. Likewise, when he followed them to their automobile, he saw them only from a distance and again only their backs. The conclusion of the FBI representatives assigned to this case is that Gutierrez probably did see money being passed to a man who appeared to be an American, but that whether that man was Lee Harvey Oswald is by no means certain.

From reviewing his work schedule, which he says he rigorously adhered to, Gutierrez is able to fix the time at which he must have seen the Cuban and the American as 10:50 a.m. on October 1, give or take a very few minutes.

The Cuban and Russian
Consulates in Mexico City are located very close to one another, only

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about two blocks apart. It therefore seems unlikely that if Oswald had been at the Cuban Embassy he would have telephoned the Russian Embassy rather than walked over there, especially since by this time he was familiar with the personnel. However, it is also possible that he believed that he could get through to speak to the Consul if he telephoned, whereas if he showed up in person he might be rebuffed by the receptionist or the guard who by that time may have been able to recognize him and under orders to keep him out.

The CIA and FBI representatives with whom we have discussed this investigation point out that although they by no means rule out the accuracy of Gutierrez' observations for this reason alone, it is unlikely that money would be passed for a sinister purpose in such an open manner as was allegedly observed by Gutierrez. First, it is unlikely that an agent would be paid off right at the embassy or the consulate. Second, even if he were, the payoff would more probably be carried out in the privacy of a room. Nevertheless, investigation is continuing.

Unfortunately, Gutierrez' description of the automobile allegedly driven by the Cuban, a light tan Renault, happens to be a very popular make and color in Mexico City.

The present owner cannot be ascertained, however, because the registration of the automobile (as is common in Mexico) has been maintained under the name of the original owner, who owned it several years ago, in order to avoid the payment of transfer taxes. Efforts to trace the automobile from

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owner to owner, beginning with the first, have been unsuccessful.

2. Statement of Gilberto Alvarado Ugarte.

On November 26, 1963, Gilberto Alvarado Ugarte, a 23-year-old Nicaraguan secret agent, at the time seeking to penetrate the Castro forces in Cuba by going to Cuba from Mexico to receive guerrilla training on the island, came to the American Embassy in Mexico City and declared that he had witnessed Lee Harvey Oswald receiving a payoff to kill the President in the Cuban Embassy on September 18. Alvarado said that Oswald was given \$6,500, \$5,000 as compensation and \$1,500 for expenses. Alvarado recited that at noon on the 18th of September he went to the Cuban Consulate to turn some passport photographs over to the Consul, Eusebio Ascue, to be used in the fabrication of false travel documents so that he could leave Mexico for Cuba. He sat in the waiting room and saw a group of approximately eight persons enter the Consulate and go into Ascue's office and noticed that someone other than Ascue was sitting at Ascue's desk. He then asked a Cuban Consulate employee where the bathroom was, was told, and proceeded out of the waiting room in the given direction. While standing by the bathroom door, he said, he saw a group of three persons conversing in a patio a few feet away. One was a tall, thin Negro with reddish hair

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Reference copy, JFK Collection: HSCA (Rg 233)

obviously dyed who spoke rapidly, with a Cuban accent, and who spoke some English. The second person was a Canadian with blonde hair, and the third person was Lee Harvey Oswald. Alvarado said that he did not know Oswald at the time, but recognized him after the assassination from photographs in Mexico City newspapers. Oswald was supposed to have been wearing a black sport coat, a buttoned-up shirt with collar tabs but no necktie, and clear eyeglasses. A tall Cuban joined the group momentarily and passed some currency to the negro. The negro then allegedly said to Oswald in English, "I want to kill the man." Oswald replied, "You're not man enough, I can do it." The negro then said in Spanish, "I can't go with you, I have a lot to do." Oswald replied, "People are waiting for me back there." The negro then gave Oswald \$6,500 in large-denomination American bills, saying, "This isn't much." He also supposedly gave him about 200 Mexican pesos. Alvarado also filled in other details which are not material here.

Alvarado said that towards the end of September he telephoned the American Embassy in Mexico City several times in an attempt to report his belief that someone important in the United States was to be killed. He used a fictitious name to protect his identity, and told the person who answered the telephone that he did not want a visa but that he wished to speak to "a person of confidence" about "a political matter." He said he finally got through to a man who said he would call him back, and he, therefore, left his telephone number. The man never called back. Alvarado allegedly repeatedly called the Embassy and was finally told to quit wasting its time. Alvarado said that the next time he talked to the Embassy was after the assassination, when he recognized Oswald's picture in a newspaper.

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The comment made on Alvarado by the CIA field man on November 26 was, "He is young, quiet, very serious person, who speaks with conviction, knows enough English to understand conversation."

Alvarado was, of course, immediately subjected to intensive interrogation and investigation.

Apparently he was indeed on his way to Cuba and had had dealings with the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City in connection with preparation of false travel documents. Whether he was doing this as a soldier of fortune, out of conviction for the Castroite cause or to place himself in a position where he would later be able to command a higher price from the Nicaraguan and other anti-Communist intelligence agencies for his information, we do not know.)

Both the Mexican and American authorities continued to interrogate and cross-check Alvarado's story. On November 30 the CIA was informed that Alvarado had admitted in writing that his whole story about Oswald was false. He said that he had not seen Oswald at all, and that he had not seen anybody paid money in the Cuban Embassy. He also admitted that he never tried to telephone the American Embassy

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about the matter and that his first contact was in person on November 26 when, as we now know, he spoke to an Embassy security officer. He still maintained that he did in fact repeatedly visit the Cuban Embassy, however, as related above. The Mexican authorities stated that they were inclined to believe the last part of the story. Alvarado said that the motive in telling the fabrication was to help get himself admitted to the United States so that he could there participate in action against Fidel Castro. He said he hated Castro and hoped that the story he made up would be believed and would cause the United States to "take action" against Castro. In the meantime, American intelligence agencies in Mexico had checked back with Washington and learned that on the 17th and 19th of September information we had indicated that Oswald was in New Orleans. Although still theoretically possible, this of course made it unlikely that he was in Mexico City on the 18th.

Still later, American authorities reinterrogated Alvarado. Alvarado at first claimed that he had been pressured into retracting his statement by the Mexican police and that the retraction, rather than his statement, was false. He said that he did, in fact, see the things he claimed to have seen. American interrogation of him continued, and part of it was carried on in connection with a polygraph machine. When told that the polygraph indicated that he was probably lying, Alvarado said words to the effect, "I know such machines are accurate, and, therefore, I suppose I must be mistaken." He then added that he was uncertain as to the date when he saw someone "who looked like Oswald" at the Cuban Embassy, and perhaps

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it was on a Tuesday, September 17, rather than September 18. (Alvarado did not know it at the time, but the 17th would make it even more unlikely than the 18th. On September 17 Oswald appeared at the Louisiana State Unemployment Commission in New Orleans and also cashed a check from the Texas Employment Commission at the Winn-Dixie Store Number 1425 in New Orleans.) On the basis of the polygraph results and the qualified retractions made by Alvarado when he saw the results, and on the basis of discrepancies which appeared in his story, the CIA in Mexico City concluded that in all probability he was lying, and that the reasons for lying were probably sincere. No further investigation of the Alvarado incident was carried on subsequent to the foregoing.