

IV. Anti-Castro Cuban Involvement.

In early August 1963, while he was still living in New Orleans, Oswald approached Mr. Carlos Bringuier, a man who is active in anti-Castro activities in that city and who was a lawyer in Cuba prior to Castro's overthrow of the Batista regime, and volunteered his services in the training of anti-Castro guerrillas. Oswald claimed that he had received guerrilla-type training in the Marine Corps and offered to pass on his expertise to Bringuier's group. Bringuier was of course interested in the offer and accepted Oswald's display of interest in a friendly manner. However, very shortly thereafter a member of Bringuier's organization observed Oswald passing out Fair Play For Cuba Committee literature, told Bringuier, and as a result there was a minor riot on the streets of New Orleans. The altercation led to the arrest of Oswald, Bringuier and Bringuier's friend, and Oswald was ultimately convicted and fined \$10.00. Soon thereafter, in the middle of August, Bringuier sent one of his men to Oswald's home, the address of which he had observed on some of the Fair Play literature, under orders to pose as a pro-Castro Cuban interested in working for Oswald. Oswald received Bringuier's plant courteously and discussed Cuban politics with him in the evening on his Oswald's porch, but Marina has testified that after the conversation Oswald told her that he strongly suspected that the man who had come was an anti-Castro Cuban pretending that he was pro-Castro. Consequently, both Bringuier and Oswald failed in their attempts to infiltrate the other's organization.

Later, the two men were to meet and debate each other on Radio Station WDSU in New Orleans. Bringuier has also testified to the Commission

that a bartender acquaintance of his observed Oswald in the "Havana Bar" in New Orleans in the company of a Mexican for whom the FBI was allegedly searching because of his communist activities and that the FBI was duly informed of these facts. No trace of this information is in the FBI files, however.

Mrs. Silvia Odio of Dallas, Texas, a 26-year old refugee from the Castro regime whose parents are still in a Cuban prison on the orders of Fidel Castro told a representative of the FBI shortly after the assassination that in late September or early October 1963 two anti-Castro Cuban leaders from out of town came to her home in the company of a third man to ask her help in raising funds for their cause. She turned down their request, as she has turned down all similar requests, because she feared retaliation by Castro against her parents. Mrs. Odio has furnished the following facts about the two Cuban leaders:

One of them referred to himself as "Leopoldo," the other was probably "Rogelio Cisneros," and both of them were from Puerto Rico or Miami. She also gave the FBI their physical descriptions. The third man accompanying them, who said very little, she first told the FBI was introduced to her as "Leon Oswald." Now she is saying it was simply "Leon." When Mrs. Odio first spoke to representatives of the FBI, the physical description she gave of "Leon Oswald" roughly fitted Lee Harvey Oswald. She is now reported to be saying the "Leon Oswald" had a mustache or at least was unshave, and that he had a dark, Cuban-type complexion. According to her first story, "Leopoldo" called her back a few days later to say that "they" (presumably he and the other Cuban leader) had checked back on "Leon Oswald" in New Orleans and were told that he was "loco,"

and they were therefore dropping him. "Leopoldo" is also reported to have said "Leon" would do anything, saying that Leon had "laughed at" the Cubans, claiming they had "no guts." "It would be easy to kill Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs," he allegedly told Leopoldo.

Mrs. Odio is reported to have suffered a severe psychological reaction at her place of employment when she first saw Lee Harvey Oswald's picture on television after the assassination, presumably because she was struck by the fear that her own group was somehow involved in the killing of the President

On November 1, 1963 Lee Harvey Oswald mailed a letter to the Communist Party in New York City. Among other things he mentioned that he had attended a meeting in Dallas on October 23, 1963 of a group headed by General Walker; investigation has led to the conclusion that this must have been an anti-Castro meeting.

With the sole exception of Mrs. Odio -- and even she is now apparently changing her story -- every member of the Dallas anti-Castro Cuban community who has been questioned on Lee Harvey Oswald denies ever having observed him or having had any contacts with him whatever prior to the assassination. Nor has any member of that community come forward to volunteer any information as to contacts with Oswald. However, Mrs. Odio has been checked out thoroughly through her psychiatrist and friends, and, with one exception -- a layman who speculates that she may have subconscious tendencies to over-dramatize or exaggerate -- the evidence is unanimously favorable, both as to her character and reliability and as to her intelligence.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

-110-

when she first observed Oswald on television after the assassination. Moreover, some of the details of Mrs. Odio's story, as it was first related to the FBI after the assassination -- unfortunately, in a rather brief interview -- check with what we now know about Oswald. For example: he was described as quiet and reticent, an impression Oswald usually gave; "Leopoldo" later told Mrs. Odio they had checked back on him in New Orleans, which is where Oswald in fact had come from; Leopoldo said he was told by New Orleans that "Leon" was "loco," a term Carlos Bringuier may very well have used to describe him; and most importantly, of course, the name "Leon Oswald" is so close to "Lee Oswald" as to raise the strongest suspicions. Even if it was only "Leon," there is a similarity. We contemplate taking Mrs. Odio's deposition at the earliest opportunity, in an effort to follow this lead.

The evidence here could lead to an anti-Castro Cuban involvement in the assassination on some sort of basis as this: Oswald could have become known to the Cubans as being strongly pro-Castro. He made no secret of his sympathies, and so the anti-Castro Cubans must have realized that the law-enforcement authorities were also aware of Oswald's feelings and that therefore, if he got into trouble, the public would also learn of them. The anti-Cuban group may even have believed the fiction

Reference copy, JFK Collection: HSCA (RG 233)

~~TOP SECRET~~

Oswald tried to create that he had organized some sort of large active Fair Play For Cuba group in New Orleans. Second, someone in the anti-Castro organization might have been keen enough to sense that Oswald had a penchant for violence that might easily be aroused. This was evident, for example, when he laughed at the Cubans and told them it would be easy to kill Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs. On these facts, it is possible that some sort of deception was used to encourage Oswald to kill the President when he came to Dallas. Perhaps "double agents" were even used to persuade Oswald that pro-Castro Cubans would help in the assassination or in the get-away afterwards. The motive on this would of course be the expectation that after the President was killed Oswald would be caught or at least his identity ascertained, the law-enforcement authorities and the public would then blame the assassination on the Castro government, and the call for its forceful overthrow would be irresistible. A "second Bay of Pigs Invasion" would begin, this time, hopefully, to end successfully.

The foregoing is probably only a wild speculation, but the facts that we already know are certainly sufficient to warrant additional investigation.

Reference copy, JFK Collection: HSCA (RG 233)

DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 11652, Sec 562(e)
By MAJ, NARS Date 3/1/75