

HSCA Volume V at 301
Testimony of Jose Aleman

notes of Aleman's testimony

- 301 permits cameras and other recording devices to be operated (**we may want to request these contemporaneous recordings of his testimony**)
- 301-302 Born Havana. Father was Minister of Education under President Grau. Remained in Cuba until 1947. Then came to Miami.
- 302 Student at Miami University. Then, resided in Cuba until 1960.
- 302 Was active in efforts to overthrow Batista during the period in Cuba until 1960. Fought against the dictatorship/totalitarian govt of Batista. Helped formed underground activities in Havana. Was one of the leaders of the 1957 attempt on the Presidential Palace.
- 302 Then, started trying to overthrow Castro. Eventually, became so dangerous that could not stay in Cuba. Moved to Miami and cont'd to organize and work against Castro.
- 302 1963: Living in Miami in the Scott Bryan Hotel, which he owned and managed.
- 302 Met Trafficante sometime in 1963.
- 303 **George Nobregas** introduced Trafficante and Aleman. Aleman reluctant to meet Trafficante because he had to testify against Trafficante's "people" (Sammy Mannarino and Norman Rothman) in a 1960 Chicago grand jury involving criminal charges. Trafficante's people were later convicted. Aleman says he was threatened.
- 303 **Nobregas** was in all activities against Batista regime and against Castro.
- 303 Aleman ultimately had various meetings w/Trafficante during June and July 1963. One meeting at Junior's Restaurant. Another meeting at the Scott Bryan. There may have been another meeting, but he does not know where.
- 303-304 J.J. Vila (City of Miami Director of Public Relations) had a message for Aleman from President Bosch of the Dominican Republic. Bosch was interested in bringing investors into the D.R. Aleman understood that Trafficante may have been interested in investing in the Dominican Republic. Trafficante wanted to talk to Aleman about introducing him to Bosch. Bosch knew Aleman's father.
- 304 Aleman still working on overthrowing Castro, so wanted to meet with Trafficante about it.
- 304 At the meeting, Trafficante suggested that he could help Aleman with Aleman's condo project in the D.R. by securing a Teamster's loan for the project.
- 304 At a meeting between Aleman and Trafficante at the Scott Bryan Hotel in a guest room, Aleman recalls that Trafficante talked about President Kennedy. Others present included **Macho Gener** and **George Nobregas**. (Gener came and left the room at various times. Nobregas "was separating like he didn't want to participate in the conversation.")
- 305 Aleman's conversation with Trafficante lasted 3-4 hours. It was a general conversation, not wholly related to business.

305 Trafficante said that Hoffa had not yet been able to secure Aleman's Teamsters' Union loan because Hoffa was having problems w/the Kennedys.

305 Trafficante was "very much" upset that the Kennedys were bothering Hoffa, a hard-working, blue collar individual. Trafficante felt sympathy for Hoffa.

305 Trafficante told Aleman Kennedy would not be reelected.

305 Aleman disagreed. He replied that Kennedy had the support of a lot of Democrats and that things looked good for reelection.

305 Trafficante told Aleman that Aleman did not understand. JFK would not be reelected because JFK was to be hit.

305 Aleman (in his testimony to HSCA - cf. Aleman's prior statements to HSCA) says that he did not know what Trafficante meant by "hit".

306 Aleman has never heard anyone else use the term "hit" before. (Cf., Aleman's prior statements to HSCA).

306 Even in his dealings with Norman Rothman or Sam Mannarino (mobsters) or in his involvement in anti-Castro and anti-Batista operations, Aleman has never heard the term "hit" before.

306 Aleman says he interpreted Trafficante's statement as a "story" to cover why Trafficante was not quickly providing the loan.

306 Aleman did not ask Trafficante to explain what he meant by "he is going to be hit".

306 Aleman now says that he interpreted Trafficante's statement to maybe mean that JFK would be "hit" by a lot of Republican votes or something like that.

307 Aleman complains that the conversation occurred 15 years ago and he cannot remember the exact words that Trafficante used.

308-312 JFK exhibit F-602 introduced. (5/16/76 *Washington Post* article "The Mafia, The CIA, and Castro" by Crile.)

312 Aleman knows Crile. Crile interviewed Aleman for many days regarding Aleman's conversation with Trafficante. Crile informed Aleman about the article.

313 Aleman complains it is difficult to remember a 15 year old conversation.

313 Aleman says that Crile's article takes some of the things that he said to Crile out of context in some way (but Aleman is obviously is not entirely comfortable making such a statement.)

313 Crile might have at least attempted to accurately print what Aleman told him. But, now when Aleman tries to remember everything, he says it wasn't all in context.

314 JFK exhibit F-601 introduced. (Excerpts of interview of Jose Aleman, Jr. by HSCA Staff Investigator Gaeton Fonzi dated 3/12/77)

314 Fonzi's interview notes: "Aleman said in more than one way that Trafficante did specifically tell him that Kennedy is 'going to get hit'. He also specifically confirmed the quote that Crile printed in the *Washington Post* on this point: 'Aleman says that he

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

314 Aleman admits that he met w/Gaeton Fonzi.

315 Aleman totally evades Cornwell's questions trying to pin him down on what he heard Trafficante say and what he told Fonzi and Crile.

316 Aleman complains that it is impossible to reconstruct the wording of a 15 year old conversation.

316 Evades Cornwell's question as to whether Fonzi's report is accurate.

316-321 JFK exhibit F-603 introduced. (Memo from Andy Purdy to Bob Tannenbaum dated 3/14/77). Exhibit reads, "Summary: Aleman confirms reports that Santos Trafficante personally told him that President Kennedy was going to be hit. Aleman indicates that Santos Trafficante made clear to him implicitly that he was not guessing about the killing. Rather, he was giving the impression that he knew Kennedy was going to be killed."

321 Aleman seems (?) to get all confused about the substance of the memo. Misinterprets it to say that he is being implicated.

321 Says that if he had truly believed that JFK was to be killed, he would have immediately advised the proper authorities.

321 **Did talk to some members of the FBI about conversation with Trafficante.** Says that whatever is in the FBI files "must be the exact thing", but that he is having a hard time reconstructing the 15 year old conversation now.

322 Trafficante's comments worried Aleman at the time.

322 The FBI came to Aleman after the assassination and asked him more about his conversation with Trafficante.

322 **After the Warren Commission, the FBI told Aleman that JFK was assassinated by a lone assassin and that he should not worry about Trafficante.**

322 Reaffirms that in his HSCA testimony, he thinks that Trafficante might have just meant that JFK would be "hit" by a number of Republican votes. Admits that this explanation appears in no prior report of his statements.

322-323 Came to Washington from Miami. Concerned about his protection. Believes Trafficante has seen the *Washington Post* article by now. Concerned that Trafficante will try to harm him. Believes that the DGI and Trafficante might still try to do something to him. **We should see if the intelligence community has any information about threats the DGI or mob made about Aleman.**

323 Believes there is some connection b/t Trafficante and the Cuban government.

323 Aleman admits that he is accompanied by Marshals at his request.