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D OSCAR CONTRERAS

On March 16, 1967, the American Embassy received a cable from B.J. Rygle, the American Consul in Tangier, which reported that he had met a reporter whom he had met a reporter whom allegedly had met Lee Harvey Oswald in Mexico City in 1963. [American Embassy training Telegram # A-42 from American Consul, Tangier, 3/16/67, CIA # 560; Wx-7241, Entry # 570, p 110, CIA # 737] [The reporter had stated he had been advised him not to report the story. (bid) The reporter advised the American Consul he wanted to retain his story because he feared losing his job. (bid)]

The reporter claimed that he had only known to have had a fleeting contact with Oswald, the reporter claimed to know only about Lee Harvey Oswald's desire to travel to Cuba and the Embassy's unwillingness to grant him a visa. (bid) When B.J. Rygle asked the reporter for permission to cable the story to the American Embassy, the declined stating that he feared losing his job. (bid) The reporter explained that Subsequent to the assassination, he had told his editor who had advised him not to report the story. The reporter granted B.J. Rygle permission to cable the story to the American Embassy when Rygle promised that it would be handled with the greatest confidence. (bid) Rygle wrote that he thought the reporter was genuinely concerned about his job. (bid)

See May 11, 1967 for a letter from B.J. Rygle to the State Department, ^{dated} additional details of the reporter's story were provided. [Letter to Wesley D. Bowles, Chief of Mexican political affairs, Office of Mexican affairs, Department of State from B.J. Rygle, American Consul, Tangier, 5/11/67; Wx-7241 entry # 597, p 114, CIA # 741] The reporter alleged that he and some fellow students had met Lee Harvey Oswald as they entered the concrete at the Escuela de Filosofia (School of Philosophy) at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. (bid) Oswald told the group that he had gone to the National Autonomous University

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of Mexico looking for pro-Castro students who might help him. Oswald claimed that he was from California and was a member of a protest group in New Orleans. [ibid] Oswald remained with the students the rest of that day and evening, as well as the following day. [ibid] The reporter described Oswald as a strange and introverted individual who spoke very little Spanish. [ibid]

On [redacted], the State Department forwarded a copy of Ragle's letter to the Central Intelligence Agency, on [redacted]. [The Committee could not determine when the State Dept. forwarded the letter.] On June 14, 1967, CIA Headquarters received a copy of Ragle's letter to Brooks. [redacted] CIA Headquarters informed the Mexico City Station about Ragle's informant. [redacted] Dispatch from the Director to Mexico City, 6/14/67, HMMW 15557; Wx-7241 entry # 616, p. 117, CIA # 744] The CIA Headquarters considered Ragle's report "the first piece of substantive info about Oswald's position in Mexico" since the assassination. [ibid] Consequently, they ^{HQS} called that though they understood the source's reluctance to become involved "the fact remains that this info cannot continue to be withheld or concealed." [ibid] Headquarters instructed the Mexico City Station to get the identity of the source from Ragle. In addition, Headquarters asked the Mexico City Station to bear in mind the allegation that Oswald was a homosexual. [ibid] The final sentence of the dispatch; "It is our hope that the facts obtained through these interviews will help to confirm that several of Garrison's allegations about involvement of anti-Castro Cubans, CIA, etc. are false," explained the Central Intelligence Agency's motives for pursuing the story.

On June 29, 1967, the Mexico City Station cabled Headquarters that a station officer had gone to Tampico where he had interviewed Ragle's source, Oscar Contreras. [Cable from Mexico City to the Director, Mex 195 6/29/67; Wx-7241 entry # 622, p. 118, CIA # 745] The cable reported that Contreras was a reporter for C1506 (a newspaper, The Sun) in Tampico; was circa 30 years old; married with three children; studied law at the National Autonomous University of Mexico from 1960 to 1964; belonged to a pro-Castro Cuban group at UNAM; was persecuted by the Mexican police for this affiliation and moved to ^(UNAM) Tampico to escape the persecution.

The same day, the chief & station informed the agent & customer
Waco City + the Doctor, 9/5/67, Wx-1991, Lnx-221, Eng 227, P-119, CIA #94.
[Call 320, some of the lesson activities and the 3rd [Call 320
July 1967, the man of station called that it's purpose
is to help the 3rd should the stay. (C-61) In the following day,
however, that the 3rd should the stay. (C-61) In the following day,
DIA 16823, Wx-7241, Eng 626, P-119, CIA #746] He told
the man how pleasant it is. (Call from the Doctor + Waco City, 7/4/67)
that customer does what he wants to the point now though
on July 4, 1967, he began calling the man of station

(C-61) +
[Call 320, some of the lesson activities and the 3rd should the stay. (C-61)
the man how pleasant it is. (Call from the Doctor + Waco City, 7/4/67)
that customer does what he wants to the point now though
on July 4, 1967, he began calling the man of station

[Call 320, some of the lesson activities and the 3rd should the stay. (C-61)
the man how pleasant it is. (Call from the Doctor + Waco City, 7/4/67)
that customer does what he wants to the point now though
on July 4, 1967, he began calling the man of station

(P-91) [Call 320, some of the lesson activities and the 3rd should the stay. (C-61)
the man how pleasant it is. (Call from the Doctor + Waco City, 7/4/67)
that customer does what he wants to the point now though
on July 4, 1967, he began calling the man of station

[Call 320, some of the lesson activities and the 3rd should the stay. (C-61)
the man how pleasant it is. (Call from the Doctor + Waco City, 7/4/67)
that customer does what he wants to the point now though
on July 4, 1967, he began calling the man of station

P-118, CIA #745

story, but asked him not to take any action without previously consulting the Mexico City Station. [Memo to Legat, 7/5/67 from chief of Station; Wx-7241, entry 628, p. 119, CIA # 746]

[^{Beijing IC} ^{Information} ^{delimiting the results}
On July 10, 1967 ["TIB" wrote a memo on ^{Dom. Culture} ^{Review}
8c [^{Modern} government file review
and attached a ^{Excerpt} ^{of} ^{Conte's} file. [Memo from

[TKB] re Oscar Contreras, 7/10/67; Wx-7241, Entry # 634, p. 120, CIA # 747]

According to the memo, ^{a lone} ^{Conte} ^{only} ^{agreed} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ^{UNATH} ^{law}
school records, Oscar Contreras Estayne, DOB 2/14/39 in Ciudad
^{(b)(6)}
Victoria, Tamaulipas. The memo also reported that a newspaper
article appearing in "Excelsior" listed ^{an} ^{on} Oscar Contreras as a
signer of a protest for the Blasphemy Educational Renaissance which had been
^{(b)(6)}
formed mid-1961. [The leaders of the group were Victor Manuel Barcelo, Carlos
Avila, Hugo Carlos Aranda, Antonio Tenorio Adams, Jose Guzman Jimenez, Carlos
Oteyza Rojiza, Daniel Nolera, Bruno Balvey, Humberto Hernandez, Oscar Gonzalez,
Pascual Hidalgo Gómez, Pedro Saenz Cepeda, Alberto Areiza, Jose Stuart Pineda, Juan
Salina, Martin Rojas Sosa, Vicente Villanueva, Rubelio Fernandez
Dorado & Jesus Ochoa]. The memo speculated that Contreras probably
signed the protest as a front man to protect the real leaders of the
group. (b)(6).

the Mexico City station ^{Headquarters}
the Mexico City called the information to HQs the following
day June 11/67. [Dispatch from Mexico City to Director, HUMA 32497,
7/11/67; Wx-7241, Entry # 635, p. 121, CIA # 748)

~~There is no further information in the Oswald "P" file concerning Contreras. The CIA never opened a 201 file on him.~~

~~It is apparent from the file review that the Central Intelligence Agency was originally interested in the ^{ethnic} ^{Contreras} allegation because it felt that Contreras might be helpful in proving Mrs. Tolson's District Attorney to be ^{untrue}. It notes at the time was conducting an investigation of the assassination allegations about involvement of anti-Castro Cubans and CIA agents. When,~~

E. Cubana Airlines

2nd
of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
Governmental Operations

In Book I of the final report on [the performance of the intelligence agencies in the investigation of the John F. Kennedy Assassination] the CIA is criticized for its apparent failure to fully pursue leads surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy and then to fully report to the Warren Commission the results of the investigation they did undertake.

One such lead discussed was a reported five-hour delay (6:00 P.M. EST to 11:00 P.M. EST) of a Cubana flight from Mexico City to Havana the evening of President Kennedy's assassination, November 22, 1963. [The Investigation of the Assassination of John F. Kennedy: Performance of the Intelligence Agencies, Book I, Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations, 4/23/76, p. 30, Senate Report No. 94-755]. The most intriguing aspect of the SSC account involved the alleged delay of a Cubana flight to await the arrival at 10:30 PM EST of a private twin-engined aircraft. The aircraft disposed of an unidentified passenger who boarded the Cubana aircraft without customs clearance and traveled to Havana in the pilot's cabin. [ibid. p. 30]

The House Select Committee on Assassinations examined the documents connected to that lead to determine whether the facts which were known by the CIA about the "alleged" ^{flight} delay warranted further investigation and what investigation was undertaken; b) whether any of that information was reported to the Warren Commission; and c) whether the known facts suggested any involvement in the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

A chronology of the activity of the CIA on this lead argues the information noted in the possession of the agency

To be done at CIA

The source of that lead was an [Stalin defector, Mario Matus] who allegedly was on the same flight. []

Analyses

In the ~~CSA~~ 1977 Inspector General report, the CIA attempted to refute several "macumacis" in the Senate Select Committee report regarding the "alleged" Cuban Airlines flight. That was apparently the only follow-up by the Agency on the lead after the Senate report appeared.

The Inspector General's report corrected the statement in the Senate report that the "Central Intelligence Agency had no information indicating that a following investigation was conducted to determine the identity of the passenger and had no further information on the passenger, and no explanation for why a following investigation was not conducted" [Investigation of the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy: Performance of the Intelligence Agencies, Book II, Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations, 4/23/76, p 30 Senate Report No 94-755] The Inspector General report explained that the Mexican authorities were asked about the reported flight delay, although there was no recorded response. [1977 CIA I & G Report, TAB B, p 11] In addition, the Inspector General report stated that the Central Intelligence Agency conducted regular surveillance of Cuban flights, filing cable reports to Headquarters [ibid p 11] There was one [unintelligible] CIA surveillance team [LIFIRE] that observed arrivals and departures of Cuban flights, reporting any unusual [and involving persons of flight manifest] [ibid p 11] [The Mexican government had its own surveillance team at the airport which provided the CIA with photographs of passengers and copies of passenger lists of individuals travelling to Cuba. (ibid p 11)] In addition, [telephone tap operations (LICOVO) against the Cuban Embassy provided transcripts of conversations between the Cuban Airlines office and the Mexican Airport Control Office. (ibid p 11)]

The [SICNOV] transcripts

The [LIENVOY] transcripts record a series of discussions about the status of the November 22, 1963 Cuban flight-- when it arrived and when it departed.

The transcripts show that the flight arrived at the airport at 1620 hours. (All times used will be Mexico City time to avoid confusion) Mexico City time. (HSCA

Staff Review of November 22, 1963 [LIENVOY] transcripts)

Prior to the arrival of the aircraft, one person stated that the aircraft was due at 1630 hours and "it will go" at 1730, suggesting a quick turnaround that would have reduced unloading and loading time, as well as servicing to a relatively short period.

(ibid) However, the key report on the departure of the aircraft was a statement at 2040 hours that the aircraft had departed for Cuba five minutes earlier, i.e., 2035 hours. (ibid)

Based on the above, [which was the only record that existed in the CIA files on the arrival and departure times of the Cuban flight] [Neither the Mexican surveillance team nor (the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities, Book II, Senate Intelligence Report No. 94-785) the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities, Book II, Senate Intelligence Report No. 94-785] the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with respect to Intelligence Activities, Book II, Senate Intelligence Report No. 94-785 concluded that there were major differences between the manner the Senate Select Committee reported the alleged delayed Cuban flight and the known facts. The Cuban flight was on the ground in Mexico City for a total of four hours and about ten minutes. It was not delayed five hours as reported in Book II [The Assassination of President John F. Kennedy, Performance of the Intelligence Agencies, Book II, Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations, 4/23/76, p. 30 Senate Intelligence Report No. 94-785]. The Cuban flight departed at 2035 hours Mexico City time, 55 minutes ahead of the alleged arrival at 2130 of a private flight with a secret passenger. (ibid p. 30) The 2035 departure differed with the Senate Intelligence Committee Report that the Cuban flight departed at 2200 hours (ibid p. 31).

In addition, the [] staff concluded that in view of the surveillance
earlier of the Mexican Agent [by both the CIA + Mexican government,]
it was doubtful that the alleged activity involving the small
non-military aircraft and passenger would have gone unnoticed
or unreported had it occurred. (b) []
1974 CIA IC Report, TAB B, p.12

Promulgated, the disingenuous points made by the Inspector
General are meant to explain the fact that the CIA did not
take more aggressive investigative steps to ascertain whether
there might have been some connection between the delayed
flight and the assassination of John F. Kennedy. In that
regard, the 1977 Inspector General report explains that the
Agency had carried the lead as far as it was able by
reviewing the [LIFIRE / GARRY] Operations records [the Mexican
surveillance file of the
[CIA surveillance team] [Tab B] However, in the agent's 1977 Report, p.82] While the CIA's lack
of access to further information about the allegedly delayed flight +
unidentified passenger may ~~not~~ be the case, that fact does not
absolve either the failure of the CIA to take more seriously the
suspicions of the source, and most importantly, to report whatever
information it had to the Warren Commission. The ~~attempt~~ of the
Inspector General ~~to belittle~~ to delineate the value of the information provided
on the unidentified passenger ~~do~~ not diminish the apparent negligence of
the agency in seriously ~~ignoring~~ ^{above} passing the information as it was received. The
CIA is not to be faulted for the strength of its intelligence gathering,
but rather for the judgment which kept that intelligence from the
Warren Commission [which was ^{the WC} entitled to pass on the strength of
such ~~kind~~ kind of information]

Despite what is now known about the alleged delay of the
Cubana Airlines flight and the unidentified passenger, the Warren
Commission may have wanted to legitimate ^{allegiate} suspicion which would
remain, and satisfy itself that these circumstances did not
indicate foreign involvement in the assassination. The CIA
contributed to those suspicions by not airing the matter and explaining

circumstances which could shed light on other similar appearing events.

The Committee has documented instances where the CIA decided to forego giving information to the Warren Commission out of a desire to not lay bare extremely sensitive sources and methods of intelligence. The [CIA] + [LIFIRE] operations certainly fall within that category.