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Alvarado

On November 16, 1977 the Select Committee interviewed Thomas C. Mann, the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico at the time of President Kennedy's assassination. (HSCA Interview, T. Mann, JFK Doc. 003966) The Mann interview was prompted by the Committee's two-fold interest in Oswald's pre-assassination trip to Mexico City and the subsequent post-assassination CIA-FBI investigation of Oswald's activities in Mexico City ~~by the CIA and FBI~~. The Select Committee was specifically interested in ~~Of more specific interest to the Committee was~~ learning from Ambasador Mann the extent of his efforts to investigate Oswald's Mexico City activities; especially whether Oswald had conspired with Castro Cubans to assassinate President Kennedy. [Ibid]

During the course of the Mann interview, the Ambassador indicated that he had received instructions from the State Department to cease his efforts to confirm or refute rumors of Cuban government complicity in the assassination. [Ibid. p.1] It was Mann's belief that CIA and FBI representatives had received similar instructions from their respective directors. [Ibid, p.1]

The Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations (hereinafter Church Committee) ~~Church Committee~~ touched upon Mann's belief that U.S. authorities had foreclosed investigative efforts to determine whether Castro Cubans were connected to the assassination. [SSC, Book I, pp 40-43] An FBI supervisor who had traveled to Mexico

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City on November 27 to assist in that aspect of the FBI investigation testifying before the ~~Senate~~ Church Committee noted that:

> he "knows of no investigation in Mexico to determine if there was a Cuban involvement in the assassination of President Kennedy" other than disproving the "D" allegation. (SSC, Book V, p. 42.)

Ambassador Mann was questioned about "D" during his interview with this Committee. "D", whose true name is Gilberto Alvarado Ugarte, had on November 25, 1963 alleged that Oswald had during September 1963 received $6500 from Cuban officials in Mexico City to assassinate President Kennedy. [Ibid, pp 41-5] U.S. and Mexican authorities later determined that Alvarado's allegation ~~to have been~~ was a fabrication. [Ibid, pp 29-30] Mann asserted to the Committee that Alvarado's retraction of his Oswald allegation had been tainted by the interrogation methods utilized by the Mexican authorities. [CIA/FBI Interview of T. Mann, JFK Doc 003966 p 2] Mann stated that Mexican police procedures were ~~coercive and~~ of a kind that would have caused Alvarado to adjust his statements in order to conform to the position which the Mexicans wanted him to adopt. [Ibid] ~~(HSCA Interview, T. Mann, p. 2, JFK Doc. 003966)~~

Because the Alvarado allegation stands as the only specific substantive investigation by U.S. authorities in Mexico City of possible Cuban complicity in President Ken-

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nedy's assassination, the ~~Select Committee~~ has endeavored to make two critical determinations. These are:

1) Whether the conduct of the FBI and CIA investigation of Alvarado's allegation reflected Ambassador Mann's belief that efforts to investigate possible involvement of the Castro Cubans in the assassination ~~was~~ were prematurely terminated; and

2) Whether the investigation by FBI and CIA of Alvarado's allegations was subject to objective scrutiny and investigative diligence.

In order to make these two determinations the Committee has reviewed the Alvarado files maintained by the FBI, CIA, and State Department. Moreover, In addition to Mann's initial interview, a second follow-up interview pertaining to Mexico City aspects of the assassination was conducted w/Mann by the Committee on November [HSCA Interview of T. Mann, JFK Doc] , 1978. Moreover, depositions and hearings involving former CIA personnel concerned with the investigation of Alvarado have been conducted to complete the record of review by this Committee.

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The Alvarado Allegation and the Possibility of Cuban Complicity in the Assassination

On November 23, Ambassador Mann cabled the State Department declaring:

> circumstances already developed here point to possibility that Oswald may have been Castro's agent. Mexicans are also keenly aware of the possibility. (CIA Doc. MEXI 1180, 11/23/63)

I think this is A STATE Dept CABLE, NOT A CIA Cable

The Ambassador's suspicions were further fueled two days later, November 25, when Gilberto Alvarado Ugarte, a twenty-three year old Nicaraguan national appeared at the American Embassy in Mexico City. Alvarado reported to Embassy officials that on September 18, 1963, he had witnessed a payment of $6500 to Lee Harvey Oswald by a Cuban official in Mexico City to assassinate President Kennedy.* (CIA Doc MEXI 7069, 11/26/63) Alvarado contended that, at noon on September 18, while he was in the Cuban Consulate arranging his travel

Implied

* The CIA reported on November 26 that Alvarado:

> "is a well-known Nicaraguan underground member who is also a regular informant of the Nicaraguan security service, an officer of which has provided this Agency with his reports for over a year. We consider his reliability to be questionable although he has not been wholly discredited." (CIA out Teletype No. 85089, 11/26/63)

N. Lok

FN all this stuff.

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to Cuba, he observed approximately eight persons enter the office of Eusebio Azcue, the Cuban Consul in Mexico City. [Ibid] FN

However, according to Alvarado Azcue was not in his office but rather a Cuban man not known to Alvarado was seated behind Azcue's desk. FN [Ibid] Alvarado reported that after observing this man he needed a bathroom which he reached by walking through a passageway onto a patio. FN [Ibid] At the patio, Alvarado stated he observed three men grouped together. FN [Ibid] One man was a tall, thin, red-haired Negro, with prominent cheek-bones displaying a scar on the lower right side of his chin. FN [Ibid] This man spoke with a Cuban accent. FN [Ibid] The second man was described by Alvarado as Caucasion, with green eyes and blond hair-cut in a pompadour style. FN [Ibid] Alvarado added that he had previously observed this man displaying a Canadian passport in the Consulate waiting room. FN [Ibid] The third man was dressed in a black sportcoat, white pants and an open collar shirt. FN [Ibid] He also wore clear eyeglasses. FN [Ibid] Alvarado contended that he recognized this third man as Lee Harvey Oswald FN [Ibid] (following the assassination and after publication of Oswald's photograph.)

Could they have been what?

Alvarado alleged that while situated on the patio,

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he observed the Cuban who had been seated at Azcue's desk, approach the red-haired Negro and hand him a sum of money.* Alvarado reported that the following exchange then transpired between Oswald and the red-haired Negro:

Negro: (in English) I want to kill the man.

Oswald: You're not man enough. I can do it.

Negro: (in Spanish) I can't go with you. I have a lot to do.

Oswald: The people are waiting for me back there.

(CIA Doc. MEXI 7069, 11/26/63)

Alvarado alleged that following the ~~above~~ verbal exchange between Oswald and red-haired Negro he observed the red-haired Negro hand Oswald both $6500 in U.S. currency and 200 pesos. Alvardo stated he then saw a female employee of the Cuban Consulate embrace Oswald and give him her address. Later, according to Alvarado, while standing outside the Consulate, he saw Oswald and his two companions leave the Consulate and enter an automobile. (Ibid.)

The CIA's Mexico City Station reported Alvardo's allegation on November 26. (CIA Out Telegram no 85089, 11/26/63) It noted in its cable to CIA headquarters that Alvarado claimed he had, at the end of September 1963, telephoned

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* Alvarado stated that he did not see the Cuban man again after Sept. 18.

the U.S. Embassy several times to report the conversation he alleged he overheard while at the Cuban Consulate. Alvarado told the American authorities that he had used an alias, Jorge Kynaut, when he placed these calls to the Embassy. Alvarado alleged that after his repeated phone calls to the Embassy with no positive response from the Embassy personnel he was finally told to "quit wasting our time. We are working here, not playing." (CIA out teletype no. 85099, 11/29/63)

As cited above, Alvarado contended that he recognized Oswald from press photographs generally available after the assassination. As a result, Alvarado recontacted the American Embassy on November 25. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7069, 11/26/63) On the morning of November 26 Alvarado was questioned at the American Embassy by a CIA representative and an Embassy security officer. As a follow-up to Alvarado's initial interrogation, CIA's Mexico City Station requested headquarter's traces on Gilberto Alvarado Ugarte.

Ambassador Mann reacted with great concern to Alvarado's allegation. He requested that an FBI officer thoroughly knowledgeable about all aspects of the assassination investigation be sent to Mexico City to brief him and help direct the investigation. (MEXI 1182, 11/25/63) An FBI memorandum

recorded that:

> when Mann heard of Alvarado's detailed account of payoff, he requested FBI representatives be sent from FBI headquarters to take charge of investigation in Mexico. Request referred to Bureau by Legat, Mexico City and State Department. On 11/26/63 it was decided that FBI supervisor Laurence P. Keenan should promptly depart for Mexico City to assist in this investigation. Mann was tactfully told that while FBI was disposed to send Keenan FBI was not assuming State or CIA responsibilities and could only offer advice on policy matters concerning those Agencies.* (FBI file 105-82555-656, 12/3/63(Emphasis added)

Is that exact quote from document?

In addition, on November 26 the CIA Mexico City Station had intercepted, taped and transcribed a telephone conversation between the Cuban President Dorticos, in Havana, and the Cuban Ambassador Hernandez Armas, in Mexico City. During the course of the Dorticos-Armas conversation, Dorticos twice inquired whether Silvia Duran, during her interrogation by Mexican authorities, had been asked whether the Cubans had offered Oswald money. Armas twice replied that the Mexicans had asked no such question. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7068, 11/26/63) This informa-

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* In response to Ambassador Mann's request, the State Department informed Mann that J. Edgar Hoover believed the FBI Legat in Mexico City, Clarke Anderson, was fully aware of all information then available pertaining to the assassination. However, if Anderson believed he required additional assistance, Anderson should so inform FBI headquarters. (State Dept. Cable 958, 11/26/63)

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tion, Mann felt, added credibility to Alvarado's allegation. Mann therefore suggested that Alvarado should be put at the of the Mexican President Mateos' disposal with the condition that Duran be rearrested and confronted with Alvarado. (CIA Doc MEXI 7072, 11/26/63)

On November 27, the CIA's Mexico City Station cabled CIA headquarters ~~detailing~~ Reporting Mann's request that an FBI representative be dispatched to Mexico City. (CIA Doc MEXI 7084, 11/27/63) The Mexico City Station reported in a second cable on the 27th that "Mann feels not fully briefed on Oswald/Rubinstein case. (CIA Doc MEXI 7092, 11/27/63.)" As a result, the CIA's Mexico City Chief of Station recommended that FBI dispatch a representative to Mexico City unless the State Department JOHNSON? could convince Mann that he was being briefed fully on all information developed. (Ibid.)

As the record reflects, both the FBI and the CIA were seriously concerned with Ambassador Mann's ~~interjection~~ active involvement ~~of himself~~ in~~to~~ the Mexico City investigation. On November 27th, the FBI liaison officer to the CIA, Sam Papich, spoke with [redacted] of the CIA's Counter-intelligence staff. (CIA Doc, LHO Add'l Info File, [redacted] Memorandum, 11/27/63) ok — N.L. During the course of their conversation Papich and [redacted]

discussed Alvarado's allegations. It was Papich's opinion that "the Ambassador down there w~~ants~~ants nuts" in his efforts to determine if the Cubans had conspired to assassinate President Kennedy. Papich commented further that, "It would be premature to move so quickly on that angle." [redacted] responded, "It might have been alright if we knew we would find other confirming stuff." (Ibid.) — N.L., ok

Thus, by November 27th signs of conflict with respect to U.S. investigative policies in Mexico City had surfaced. U.S. responsibility for Alvarado, investigation of his allegation and Ambassador Mann's role in the matter were all at issue.

The record ~~also~~ further reflects that by November 27th, Alvardo's allegation was being thoroughly scrutinized by American authorities in Mexico City. Alvarado was undergoing a detailed reinterrogation conducted by CIA representatives at a CIA safehouse in Mexico City. (CIA Doc MEXI 7093, 11/27/63) During the course of the reinterrogation Alvarado was shown photographs of Cuban Consulate personnel from which he identified Luisa Calderon as the ~~man~~ woman who he claimed had embraced Oswald inside the Cuban Consulate on September 18. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7098, 11/27/63) Alvarado also was able to identify Oscar ok Not sure this supports

Concepcion Hernandez as the Cuban who had been seated at Azcue's desk and subsequently handed a large amount of currency to the red-haired Negro prior to its alleged passage to Oswald. (Ibid.) — same — Is that the trail cubano?

A second conversation between Dorticos and Armas was intercepted by the CIA on November 27th. (CIA Doc MEXI 7097, 11/27/63) Armas reaffirmed to Dorticos that Duran had made no mention of a money offer to Oswald during the course of the interrogation by Mexican police. (Ibid.) Mann cabled this information to the State Department and also noted that Alvarado was being reinterrogated by CIA representatives in Mexico City. He commented:

> It will not have escaped your attention that the wealth of detail Alvarado gives about events and personalities involved with Oswald in Cuban Embassy is striking. (CIA Doc MEXI 7104, 11/27/63, see also CIA Doc DIR 85573, 11/27/63) — N.L.

NOT SUPPORTIVE

Mann further reported that Mexican authorities

had rearrested Silvia Duran to avoid her possible escape to Cuba and consequent unavailability as a witness. (Ibid.)*

Reports that this just excus is a lie

Finally, Mann requested that:

> Washington should urgently consider feasibility of requesting Mexican authorities to arrest for interrogation Eusebio Azcue, Luisa Calderon, and Alfredo Mirabal [a Cuban Intelligence Service officer at the Cuban Embassy compound in Mexico City]...
>
> They may all quickly be returned to Havana in order to eliminate any possibility that Mexican government could use them as witnesses...
>
> While I realize enormous difficulty in giving us instructions, I nevertheless feel obliged to point out again that time is of the essence here. (Ibid.)

This quote Not in Notes

That day CIA representatives in Washington met with Alexis Johnson of the State Department to discuss Mann's request for arrests. In a cable to Mexico City Station discussing this meeting, CIA headquarters noted:

> There is a feeling in three agencies [FBI, CIA, State] Mann is pushing case too hard. Will cause flap with Cubans. Johnson sent ODACID (FBI) channels to Mann to give better perspective. (CIA Doc DIR 85469, 11/27/63)

Not in Notes

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Johnson's "better perspective" was cabled to Mann that day. Johnson stated in his cable that the FBI was to be considered in full charge of the investigation. He also informed Mann that Oswald's presence in New Orleans from September 17 through September 25 had been established in conflict with Alvarado's statement that Oswald had been in the Cuban Consulate on September 18. Therefore, Johnson stated that sufficient validity had not been established to justify the arrests suggested by Mann.* (State Dept. Cable 961, 11/27/63)

Though the record does disclose, as detailed above, that Mann's efforts to investigate the possibility of Cuban complicity in the assassination were being limited, the record also reveals that the FBI and CIA were continuing to investigate Alvarado's story, while in the process, attempting to avoid possible serious repercussions that arrests of Cuban diplomatic personnel might well have caused. As an FBI memorandum of November 27 records:

> /the/ decision to act on Ambassador

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* It should be noted that Oswald's presence in New Orleans on Sept. 18 had not, as of November 27th, been firmly established. However, his presence in New Orleans had been established for September 17 and September 19.

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> Mann's suggestion is one for /State Dept. and CIA/ to make....meanwhile, the Bureau's investigation in an effort to definitely place Lee Harvey Oswald on 9-18-63 is going forward...
>
> Our position is that agressive, positive investigation must be continued to completely resolve Mexico City Angle /FBI file 105-82555-122,11/27/63/
> (last sentence handwritten notation)

Furthermore, the same FBI memorandum noted: "Legal Attache instructed to follow with CIA, Mexico City, steps being taken to locate and identify the unidentified Negro and Canadian referred to by Ugarte." (Ibid.)

Nevertheless, by November 27, the record indicates that CIA doubted Alvarado's veracity. CIA headquarters cabled the Mexico City Station indicating that FBI had placed Oswald in New Orleans ~~from~~ September 17 ~~through~~ AND September 25th. The cable concluded that the placement of ~~Alvarado~~ Oswald in New Orleans was a further reason not to believe Alvarado's allegation. (CIA Doc. DIR 85258, 11/27/63)

The Mexico City Station reported to CIA headquarters that Alvarado's story only demonstrated that he had at some point been inside the Cuban Embassy. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7107, 11/27/63) The Station requested that [redacted] Alvarado's Nicaraguan case officer, be present at Alvarado's interrogation to add weight to the questioning (though [redacted] would

ask no questions). (Ibid.)

A second CIA headquarters cable to Mexico City on November 27 stated:

> In the face of mounting evidence it appears that Alvarado's story is a fabrication. Urge you to follow up with his Nacaraguan case officer. (CIA Doc. DIR 85616, 11/27/63)

Headquarters added that Alvarado's interrogators should probe deeply into Alvarado's makeup, appear sympathetic to him while promising the hope of future assistance should he cooperate with his interrogators. (Ibid.)

Apparently a jurisdictional conflict over Alvarado's custody and interrogation had begun to develop between the FBI and CIA.

On November 28, the CIA's Mexico City Station cabled CIA headquarters requesting that Alvarado be turned over to the Mexican authorities detailing to the Mexicans Alvarado's falsification of his traveling papers. It was noted by the Station that the "latter point alone gives Mexicans good reasons to subject him to detailed interrogation." (CIA Doc. MEXI 7113, 11/28/63) The Mexico City Station proposed that it cease contact with Alvarado following his release to the Mexican authorities. (Ibid.)

CIA headquarters responded that day by cable to the Mexico City Station requests. Headquarters instructed that Alvarado was not to be turned over to the Mexicans prior to discussion of the matter with the FBI. The Mexico City Station was ordered to notify CIA headquarters if the FBI Legat in Mexico City attempted to persuade the Station to release Alvarado to the Mexicans. (CIA Doc. DIR 85661, 11/28/63)

An FBI memorandum also discussed Alvarado's handling. The memorandum reveals that:

> On 11/28/63 our Legal Attache pursuant to instructions issued by Assistant Director Sullivan, unequivocably advised the Ambassador [MANN] that the Bureau was not directing the investigation in Mexico and that we considered ourselves to be in full charge of the investigation conducted within the U.S. In discussing this matter with Assistant Director Sullivan, Legal Attache Anderson suggested that the best course of action would be for CIA to turn Alvarado over to the Mexicans and request a thorough investigation of charges including a polygraph

> examination. This course was adopted representative ~~and~~ and the Bureau liaison so recommended to CIA on the afternoon of 11/28/63.* (FBI file 105-82555-246, 11/29/63) [Emphasis added]

CIA Headquarters subsequently cabled the Mexico City Station that the FBI had requested Alvarado be turned over to the Mexican authorities who could be requested to administer a polygraph examination. (CIA Doc. DIR 85663, 11/28/63)

The Mexicans took custody of Alvarado on November 28. Ibid

Apparently Ambassador Mann was pleased with the development for an FBI memorandum records:

> This morning Ambassador Mann expressed to us his great pleasure on authorization given for CIA to make Alvarado available to the Mexicans. He stated he felt this was the only way to resolve question of veracity of Alvarado's story. (FBI file 105-82555-384, p. 3.)

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* ~~Apparently~~ It appears that, the FBI and CIA had differing views regarding the Mexico City aspects of the assassination investigation. A [redacted] memorandum, dated November 29, 1963 reveals that [redacted] on November 28 had advised Sam Papich of the FBI that the CIA was not yet prepared to turn Alvarado over to the Mexicans. Acting on instructions from Richard Helms, [redacted] informed Papich that the CIA considered it the FBI's responsibility to decide whether Alvarado would be turned over to the Mexicans. Papich responded that he believed the responsibility was the CIA's. Papich, after consultation with his superiors, informed [redacted] that the FBI had officially decided that Alvarado would be released to the Mexicans for interrogation and polygraphing. [redacted] later informed Papich that the CIA was immediately complying with the FBI instructions. (CIA Doc. [redacted] Memo to the Record, 11/29/63, CI/SIG, Soft File on LHO)

The Mexico City Station that day requested ~~that~~ a Spanish speaking polygraph operator be sent to Mexico City to polygraph Alvarado. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7120, 11/28/63) CIA headquarters replied that no Spanish speaking polygraph operator was then available. (CIA Doc. DIR 85667, 11/28/63)

On the morning of November 29, Alvarado was interrogated for one hour by the Mexican authorities. He was further interrogated for three hours that afternoon. At the close of these sessions, the Mexican interrogator concluded that either Alvarado was telling the truth or "he is the best liar I have talked to in many years and I have talked to some of the biggest." (CIA Doc. MEXI 7156, 11/30/63)

The Mexico City Station ~~had~~ also reported on November 29th that Alvarado had repeated his original statement to the Mexicans but that he had failed to identify a photograph of Silvia Duran. It was noted that the Mexican interrogator did not believe Alvarado's story and would attempt to "break" him. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7127, 11/29)

During the evening of November 29, Alvarado's Nicaraguan case officer [redacted] met with the Mexican interrogator (CIA Doc. MEXI 17168 11/30/63) and briefed the interrogator on Alvarado's background. [redacted] had indicated to the Mexico

City Station that Alvarado's reporting had been "75% accurate" and that he had in the past furnished good information on Communist activity. He did indicate that Alvarado tended to "go off on his own at times" making him impossible to control. (Ibid.)

On November 30 the Mexican interrogator reported to Win Scott that Alvarado had signed a statement stating that his story of seeing Oswald inside the Cuban Embassy was a complete fabrication. FBI Legal Clark Anderson advised Bureau headquarters:

> Gilberto Alvarado Ugarte in Mexico City... has confessed to the Mexican official that his statement on Oswald was false....
>
> Alvarado stated his motive was personal. And did not involve his country. He said he wanted to give the U.S. a reason for overcoming Castro. ¶ Our Legal Attache said Ambassador Mann is very pleased at the way the FBI handled the matter and has so advised the Department. Ambassador Mann also wanted his personal gratitude extended to the Director.
>
> SA Lawrence Keenan sent to Mexico from the Seat of Government to handle our aspects of the matter will be returning to Washington, D.C., tomorrow afternoon with full particulars. (FBI File 105-82555-823, 11/30/63)

Nevertheless, it appears that Ambassador Mann maintained certain reservations regarding Alvarado's interrogation by the Mexicans. Mann cabled Washington on November 30th and indicated Alvarado's admission ~~that his story was~~ of a fabrication. Mann stated that he accepted Alvarado's confession but that there were still unexplained circumstances in Mexico City connected with the assassination. He indicated his desire to be kept informed of any new investigative developments because the inquest for evidence would continue. (MEXI 1213 Nov. 30, 63) An FBI memorandum stated that:

> "/Ambassador Mann/ accepts fact that story was a fabrication but continues to feel Castro may have been behind Kennedy's assassination." It was further noted that Mann based his feelings in part on the Dorticos Armas conversation which had concerned possible questioning of Silvia Duran about Cuban offers of money to Oswald to carry out the assassination. (FBI File 105-82555-879)

CIA Headquarters on November 30th also expressed some concern over Alvarado's interrogation by the Mexicans. Headquarters inquired "what threats, promises, inducements, and tactics were used by the Mexican interrogator." "Was Alvarado mistreated?" CIA headquarters urged that the Nicaraguans not do away with Alvarado. It was also stated that

the question of Oswald acting solely on his own still remained unanswered. (CIA Doc. DIR 86064, 11/30/63)

It should be noted with some concern that while the cable traffic reviewed indicates that Alvarado gave a full confession of his fabrication, the summary of his interrogation by the Mexicans is not so precise.

A CIA translation of the Mexican interrogation states in part:

> a. That spontaneously, and after reconsideration, he desires to state that the North American to whom he had referred in the body of his statement and whom he saw on 18 September of this year in the Cuban Consulate looked like, and he was 60% sure that he looked like, Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of the President of the United States. (emphasis added)
>
> b. That after the assassination of President Kennedy, Alvardo took advantage of these occurrences, giving versions such as the above one, for the purpose of provoking a strong reaction in favor of the United States against the government of Fidel Castro Ruz.
>
> (CIA Doc. DDP4-2741, Memo from R. Helms to J. Lee Rankin, 6/1/64, Attachment F, p.5)

As the above quotation clearly indicates, Alvarado did not in fact completely retract his original allegations. Why both the FBI and CIA reported that Alvardo had admitted total fabrication when the Mexican interrogation summary records only that Alvardo was "60% sure" that he had seen

Oswald is not answered by review of the available record. In addition the record does not indicate whether Ambassador Mann or the FBI and CIA representatives in Mexico City had access to the Mexican interrogation report as of November 30th when Alvarado's retraction was reported to FBI and CIA Headquarters.

On December 2, Alvarado spoke with [redacted] his Nicaraguan case officer. During their meeting, Alvarado asserted that he had been coerced into admitting that his story was a fabrication. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7203, 12/2/63) This information was reported to CIA headquarters by the Mexico City Station. The Station also noted that Alvarado was to be deported to Nicaragua where [redacted] would continue Alvarado's interrogation. (Ibid.)*

On December 3, Ambassador Mann cabled the State Department reporting that Alvarado had retracted his statements to the Mexican authorities. Mann noted that Alvarado's story

* An FBI memorandum states in part:
As of 11/30/63, Alvarado was being held by Mexican authorities on the charge that he illegally entered Mexico. Alvarado, in his statement to Mexican authorities, advised that he had entered Mexico without a Mexican visa and after bribing a Mexican Immigration Inspector. (FBI File 105-02555-656, 12/3/63)

was still flawed by his placement of Oswald in the Embassy on September 18 and his contention that he had telephoned the American Embassy in Mexico City prior to the assassination to report his observations at the Cuban Consulate on September 18th.*

Thus, the record tends to support the conclusion that Alvarado had not telephoned the Embassy during late September 1963 as he had alleged. FN

The Mexico City Station cabled CIA headquarters on December 3 noting Mann's cable to the State Department about Alvardo's retraction of his confession. The Station also noted Mann had recommended that a polygraph operator be sent to Nicaragua to examine Alvarado. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7209, 2/3/63) CIA headquarters responded stating that Alvardo should be polygraphed prior to his deportation to Nicaragua and that the Mexican authorities should be contacted to arrange

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* Regarding Alvarado's alleged telephone calls to the American Embassy prior to the assassination, an FBI memorandum records:

> Minute examination of the U.S. Embassy switchboard "log" for late September 1963 failed to disclose any evidence that any such calls were received from Alvarado. Interviews of switchboard operators also failed to reveal any information which would corroborate Alvarado's alleged telephone calls. (FBI file 105-82555-656, 12/3/63)

for his temporary release to CIA though the Mexicans were not to be informed of the motive behind his release. In addition, a CIA polygraph operator was being sent to Mexico City on December 4. Clarke Anderson was designated as the interpreter for the polygraph sessions.* Finally, CIA headquarters stated that in anticipation of the polygraph examination, Alvarado was to be well fed, rested, and not in fear of bodily harm. As for his return to Nicaragua, the issue was to remain open so that the polygraph operator would have "maximum maneuvering room." (CIA Doc DIR 86563, 12/3/63) From review of the record it is unclear whether the "maximum maneuvering room" to be given the polygraph operator implied that Alvarado's polygraph examination was designed to

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* This same cable noted that Anderson was to be used as the interpreter so that he would be able to testify regarding Alvarado at later hearings. Although not explicitly stated, the hearings referred to likely were Warren Commission hearings. The Warren Commission was established by Executive Order 11130 on November 29, 1963. This date may as well explain why greater efforts were not made to polygraph Alvarado while in Mexican custody. The original Mexico City Station request for polygraphing Alvarado and subsequent headquarters response that no Spanish-speaking polygraph operator was available were both made on November 28, prior to the creation of the Commission. (CIA Doc. MEXI 1720, 11/28/63 and CIA Doc. DIR 85667, 11/28/63) On November 28, the question of testimony at hearings was not at issue. Thus, the necessity of a polygraph examination might not then have been deemed of critical importance.

prove his story a fabrication. However, the possibility cannot be dismissed due to CIA headquarters earlier stated conviction that Alvarado had fabricated his story. (See

Alvarado was polygraphed at a CIA safehouse in Mexico City (CIA Doc. MEXI 7259, 12/5/63) On December 5, the CIA polygraph operator and Clarke Anderson were able to establish a rapport with Alvarado. However, the subject of a polygraph was not then discussed. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7267, 12/6/63) Alvarado was polygraphed on Decmeber 6. At that time, Alvarado stated that he trusted in the polygraph's accuracy. Alvarado's responses as recorded during the polygraph session, evidenced deception. When informed of these responses, Alvarado retorted that he must have made "an honest mistake" in identifying the individual he observed at the Cuban Consulate as Lee Harvey Oswald.* (CIA Doc. 7289, 12-7/63 see also FBI file 105-82555-657)

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* During the course of his interrogation only Anderson and the polygraph operator had access to Alvarado. At all other times Alvarado remained in the custody of Mexican Immigration Inspectors, pending his deportation to Nicaragua. In addition, during the course of his polygraph session, although not known to Alvarado, a CIA technician tape-recorded the questions and responses (FBI file 105-82555-1338). Consequent to Alvarado's polygraphing, Anderson notified FBI headquarters and commented:

(continued on bottom of page 25)

The tape recordings were subsequently made available by the CIA to the FBI. (pt. of nonpaid)

After being informed of the results of Alvarado's polygraph, CIA headquarters directed the Mexico City Station to avoid any action which would induce Alvarado to reassert his original story. As a result, the CIA requested both the Mexican and Nicaraguan authorities to avoid any punitive treatment of Alvarado. (CIA Doc. DIR 87666, 12/7/63)

Alvarado was returned to Managua, Nicaragua on December 8, 1963. (CIA Doc. MEXI 7289, 12/7/63)

says he was scheduled to, not that he did.

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*While writer not qualified to interpret polygraph results, Alvarado's insistence that he saw person identified by him as Oswald at Cuban Consulate on or about September 18 last would seem to clearly indicate fabrication. (FBI file 105-82555-657, 12/6/63) (See also CIA Doc. MEXI 7289, 12/7/63)

HSCA Conclusions

The record reviewed by this Committee, as set forth above, supports the following conclusions:

1) Immediately following President Kennedy's assassination the possibility of Cuban involvement was given serious consideration by United States government representatives in Mexico City. Cuban complicity was of particular concern to the American Ambassador, Thomas Mann. His suspicions were based upon Oswald's past contacts with both the Cuban and Soviet Consulates in Mexico City, the allegations of Gilberto Alvarado Ugarte, and suspect conversations between the Cuban President Dorticos and the Cuban Ambassador to Mexico Armas. Because of Mann's immediate posture he ~~intervened himself~~ in~~to~~ the United States investigation of Oswald's activities in Mexico City. Both CIA and FBI representatives in Mexico City had to contend with the Ambassador and probably felt that his efforts only further complicated an already complex situation. Therefore, CIA and FBI representatives in Washington, D.C. were able to impress upon the State Department, particularly Alexis Johnson,

Sought to involve himself

that Mann was not in charge of the investigation and should be so informed. It is most likely, as a result, that Mann's statement to this Committee that his efforts to investigate the possibility of a Cuban assassination conspiracy were prematurely cut off reflect the instructions he received from his superiors that the FBI was in charge of the Mexico City investigation, thus necessarily implying to Mann that he was not. However, the Committee has found no evidence to support Mann's contention that CIA and FBI representatives in Mexico City received instructions to cut off investigations of possible Cuban involvement in the assassination. But it is the Committee's ~~contention~~ belief that both the CIA and FBI were subject to political considerations created by the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the assassination. In particular, Mann's request that Cuban diplomatic personnel be arrested created an issue pregnant with serious consequences, ~~at the very least~~, without substantive evidence to support such action, ~~creating a strain~~ ~~upon~~ the relationship between

the Governments of Mexico and the United States, and Cuba would have been severely strained

2) The record does reflect that both CIA and FBI representatives in Mexico City fully cooperated during the course of the investigation of Alvarado's allegation. Nevertheless, the Committee review of FBI and CIA files tends to show that by November 27, 1963, prior to Alvarado's interrogation by Mexican authorities, FBI and CIA doubted Alvarado's veracity. As a result, the subsequent investigation of Alvarado was colored by the CIA and FBI ~~position~~ belief that Alvardo was a fabricator. Whether this stance ultimately affected the resolution of Alvarado's allegation cannot today be determined.

5) The record further reflects that Ambassador Mann, following Alvarado's polygraphying ~~by CIA and FBI~~, ~~reports~~ on December 6 agreed ~~ing~~ with the FBI and CIA position that Alvarado was a fabricator. However, Ambassador Mann persisted in his belief, though not supported by the evidence, that the Cuban government was in some manner connected to the assassination of President Kennedy.

3) From FBI and CIA files reviewed, the record tends to show that the FBI and CIA investigation in Mexico City was subject to some jurisdictional uncertainty. Whereas, with regard to the Alvarado investigation, it was the FBI's initial stance that this was a CIA matter, the CIA did not become actively involved in resolution of the issue until it had received authorization to do so from the FBI. However, this concern of proper jurisdictional authority does not now appear to have impeded in any manner the substance of the investigation undertaken by both the FBI and CIA.

4) It would have better served the expeditious resolution of Alvarado's allegation had Alvarado been subject to a polygraph examination prior to December 6, 1963. Such an examination might well have helped to resolve Alvarado's contention that Oswald was in Mexico on September 18, 1963. As the record indicates, Oswald's presence in New Orleans on September 18 has never been definitely established. However, based upon the sum of evidence reviewed by this Committee,

Alvardo's allegation was thoroughly investigated, resulting in the ultimate conclusion that Alvarado's allegation was indeed fabricated.