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INTERROGATORIES

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MONDAY, MARCH 20, 1978

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House of Representatives,
Select Committee on Assassinations,
Miami, Florida.


Present: Albert Gonzales and Gaeton Fonzi, Investigators; and Edwin Lopez, Researcher.

Also present: Frank A. Sturgis, the witness; and Ellis Rubin, Esq., Attorney for the witness.

Mr. Triplett. We will come to order.

Mr. Shapiro. Sir, I am Herbert S. Shapiro, United States Magistrate. I'm a Federal Judge. Would you please raise your right hand?

(Thereupon, the witness, Frank A. Sturgis was sworn.)

INTERROGATORIES OF THE WITNESS, FRANK A. STURGIS

Mr. Rubin. Before we begin, Mr. Sturgis has a number of friends out there, members of the press.
He has no objections. They've asked if they could be in attendance at this. I thought that I would ask, if it is permissible.

The Witness. I would like to correct my Attorney. I'm sorry to do this to you. They're not my friends because the press is not my friends.

Mr. Rubin. Personal acquaintances.

Mr. Triplett. We full understand that.

Mr. Sturgis, it has been the custom and the habit of this committee to conduct closed hearings. And for that reason, I would point out to you that it is not within the purview of this committee to conduct open hearings at this time, and the press would be excluded.

The Witness. Well, one reason why I suggested that to my Attorney is to show that -- to give me some credibility that I'm openly and honestly, even in the past, where it pertains to the United States Government, I have nothing to hide naturally. And that's one of the reasons why my Attorney and myself asked that question.

Mr. Triplett. We understand that. However, just for the orderly conduct of the hearings we prefer to have the press excluded at this time.

Now as you are aware this proceeding is being
transcribed and the transcript will be prepared of
the proceedings and it's my duty to advise you that
my name is William Triplett.

Pursuant to House Resolution 222 and Committee
Rule 4, I have been designated Counsel on behalf of
the committee to take statements under oath and
that's what we will be doing today.

For the record, you are Frank A. Sturgis. Is
that correct?

The Witness. Yes, sir. My name is Frank Anthony
Sturgis legally. When I was born in Norfolk, Virginia,
I was born with the name Frank Angelo Fiorini. My
father's name was Angelo Anthony Fiorini. My mother's
name was Mary Vona, V-o-n-a. My mother remarried at
a later date which in turn, legally through the
courts in Norfolk, Virginia, my name was changed to
her new husband's name, to Frank Anthony Sturgis.
I kept my family name as much as I possibly could.

Mr. Triplett. Very good.

And for the record, you are here to make a
statement of your own volition. This is voluntary
and not under any compulsion. Is that right?

The Witness. Yes, sir, as I have done before
in the Senate Watergate Committee -- well, the Grand
Jury -- the Rockefeller Committee and any committee
pertaining to anything, I have always went voluntarily. I was not subpoenaed nor was it necessary to subpoena me.

Mr. Triplett. That's right. That was my next question.

You're not here under subpoena, are you?

The Witness. No, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And you do have Counsel present.

And for the record, would Counsel identify himself?

Mr. Rubin. Ellis Rubin, Miami, Florida. A member of the Florida and the Federal Bars.

Mr. Triplett. Now at this time I'm going to hand you a copy of the rules of the House Select Committee on Assassinations, House Resolution 222, 433 and 760.

Mr. Rubin. Are we allowed to keep these?

Mr. Triplett. Yes.

At this time I would request you, Mr. Sturgis, and your Counsel, to read Rule Number 4 in the top pamphlet in that package.

Mr. Rubin. Rule Number 4 is entitled, "Statements Under Oath by Designated Counsel."

Mr. Triplett. That's correct.

Mr. Rubin. Fine. We've read Rule 4 and Mr. Sturgis is aware of its contents.

Mr. Triplett. Very good.
Now as I mentioned earlier, this entire deposition will be transcribed and you, Mr. Sturgis, and your Attorney, will be sent the original of this deposition, the original transcription, and asked to sign and verify it. And at that time we request you return the signed and verified copy to the House Select Committee on Assassinations.

If you have any changes in the transcript or desire to make any changes, you should get in touch with myself and we will make arrangements for you to make the changes and initial those changes that you so desire to make, and that will have to be done before a Federal Magistrate.

I would suggest at this time, possibly, Mr. Rubin, that you might inform the press that it is a closed hearing, since they're waiting outside.

Mr. Rubin. All right.

Mr. Triplett. Now that the press has been advised, one further matter.

Mr. Sturgis, I'm going to hand you a Xerox copy of our Committee Document No. 06327. It's a letter to the Chief Counsel and Staff Director of the Select Committee on Assassinations from the Legislative Counsel of the Director of Central Intelligence regarding your testimony.
The Witness. Fine. Can we have a copy of this also?

Mr. Triplett. We have a copy of this for you. Do you understand that letter? Do you have any problems with it?

The Witness. No. I understand it. As far as I'm concerned there is no reason why I shouldn't appear to testify.

Mr. Triplett. That's correct.

Mr. Sturgis, just a few clarifying questions. What was the date and place of your birth?

The Witness. I was born December 9th, 1924 at Norfolk, Virginia.

Mr. Triplett. And I believe you've already stated your parents full names on the record.

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Rubin. Don't volunteer anything. Just answer his questions. It'll go faster.

Mr. Triplett. And again, I don't know if you told us what was the date you changed your name?

The Witness. I don't recall, but the Government does have the records of when my name was changed in Norfolk, Virginia.

Mr. Triplett. And what was the purpose for changing your name?
The Witness. Well, two. One, because my mother remarried a Sturgis; and secondly, I thought it was convenient at that time because there were so many Frank Firoini's in my family.

Mr. Triplett. Just to make it very clear, I believe on the official court records your former name was listed as Frank Firoinio, ending in an "O". Was that a clerical error?

The Witness. Well, I've always, since the day I was born, signed my name and knew my name as F-i-r-o-i-n-i.

Mr. Triplett. Where did you attend grammar school?

The Witness. Holy Rosary Catholic School, Germantown Philadelphia; Roosevelt Junior High, Germantown Philadelphia; Germantown High School, Germantown Philadelphia; later I went to William and Mary College in Norfolk, Virginia, which is the extension of William and Mary College.

Mr. Triplett. And when did you attend William and Mary?

The Witness. Oh, again we're going back so many years. It would be on record. The Government would have that on record.

Mr. Triplett. Well just roughly the year, if you
can recall?

The Witness. I would say in the '40's, the late '40's I would think, yeah, the late '40's.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

When were you first married?

The Witness. I got out of the Marine Corps in 1945. I believe I was married in 1946.

Mr. Triplett. And what was the maiden name of your first wife?

The Witness. I forget off-hand.

Mr. Triplett. What was her first name?

The Witness. You've got me in a blank moment.

Mr. Rubin. It will come to him.

The Witness. It'll come to me. I'm sorry.

Mr. Triplett. How many times have you been married?

The Witness. This is my third time.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

What was the maiden name of your second wife?

The Witness. These experiences have been, because of the particular time, were very unhappy experiences with me. Like I say now, it's a complete blank to me.

Mr. Triplett. Do you recall when and where you married your second wife?
The Witness. At Norfolk, Virginia. My second wife at Norfolk, Virginia and my first wife I think was in Carolina. South Hill, North Carolina, I believe it was.

Mr. Triplett. And your first wife. Did you divorce her?

The Witness. My first wife? She died. My second wife, we divorced. As a matter of fact I was here and she applied for a divorce and I did not contest it.

Mr. Triplett. And do you know where your second wife is presently located?


Mr. Triplett. And you remarried a third time?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. And what was the maiden name of your third wife?


Mr. Triplett. And what is her first name?

The Witness. I call her Janet. She calls herself Jan Hunt.

Mr. Triplett. And when and where did you marry her?

The Witness. Here in Miami, Florida.
Mr. Triplett. Approximately when?

The Witness. Oh, it's 15 years, I think. These things are very minor things.

Mr. Triplett. So that would be approximately 1963 you married her?


Mr. Triplett. All right.

And you're still married to her?


Mr. Triplett. All right.

When did you first enter the military service?

The Witness. I joined the United States Marine Corps, volunteered, when I turned 17. Well, I was 17 years old, in Germantown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Triplett. And going back, approximately what year was that when you were 17?


Mr. Triplett. And what units were you in? Do you recall?

The Witness. I believe so.

I took about seven weeks of basic training in the Marine Corps at Paris Island, South Carolina. I
got on the H. T. Allen, they sent me through the
Panama Canal; went to American Samoa. I was in a
training outfit there and I volunteered for the First
Raider Battalion which was on Guadocanal. I was
sent to Guadocanal to join the First Battalion, and I
stayed with the same Company until the end of the war.
So First Raider Battalion and then we increased.
We were losing the war then. Our actions was commando
type activities.

The First Marine Battalion, the First Marine
Regiment to the First Marine Brigade to the Sixth
Marine Division, to the Tenth Army under the command
of General Buckner, who was Army Commander of the
Tenth Army, which we made the invasion of Okinawa.

Mr. Triplette. What rank did you attain in the
Marines?

The Witness. Corporal. I was discharged -- well,
my rank fluctuated. And when I was discharged I
really forget. I was a Corporal. I think I was a
Corporal when I was discharged.

Mr. Triplette. You say your rank fluctuated.
Were you higher than a Corporal during times?

The Witness. Well, during the times you had
acting Sergeants and so forth. And being out in the
jungles and out in the islands there, like one time
I went on a bombing raid over Bougainville that I was not supposed to go from Guadalcanal, and when I came back I, you know, lost my rank. But these are the fluctuations.

Mr. Triplett. What types of training did you receive in the Marines? Did you receive any special type of training?

The Witness. Well, the Marine Corps was a highly specialized, well, a highly trained organization as a whole. But when I joined the Raider Battalion, we were trained specifically to do behind the lines activities. For instances, assassinations, infiltrating enemy encampments. These are the types that we did because we were such a small outfit. We only had 500 and some men in the battalion at a particular time, and most of our activities were done by submarines and destroyers, First World War destroyers. Because we were losing the war, so we had to operate behind the enemy lines.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Where did you receive this raider training?

The Witness. On American Samoa. And the training continually, naturally, as we went from operation to operation. It was continuous training out in the Pacific.
Mr. Triplett. What type of discharge did you receive from the Marines?

The Witness. Honorable discharge.

Mr. Triplett. What did you do after you were discharged from the Marines as far as an occupation?

The Witness. I came home and because of the influence of my family, the Fiorini family in Norfolk, Virginia, I got on the Norfolk Police Department. I spent -- not at the beginning -- but I was a plain clothes police officer. I did go through training that we had which they called the Police Academy training.

And from then I was working as manager of several bars there in Norfolk, Virginia.

Mr. Triplett. Did you subsequently enter the military service, any other military service?

The Witness. Yes. I was in the United States Naval Air Reserve, stationed at Norfolk Naval Air Station as a Radio Gunner there. And eventually I did receive an honorable discharge.

Mr. Triplett. When did you enter the Naval Reserve?

The Witness. Oh, that was, I would say after I got off the Police Department. I would think it might have been in '46 or '47. I'm not too sure of
the date.

Mr. Triplett. Did I understand you correctly, you were a radio gunner?

The Witness. Yeah, in a PBY Squadron on the Naval Air Station.

Mr. Triplett. What was your function as a radio gunner?

The Witness. Well, we took our training with the PBY's. We learned radio. And weapons was no problem because I had my basic training with the Marines as far as weapons were concerned.

Mr. Triplett. And did you receive any special training in the Naval Reserve?

The Witness. No, sir. I was already prior trained.

Mr. Triplett. What rank did you attain in the Naval Reserve?

The Witness. Seaman, or whatever.

Mr. Triplett. Again, approximately when did you enlist in the Naval Reserve and when were you discharged?

The Witness. Honest, it's a complete blank. You'd have to check with them, you know, the military records.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.
Roughly, how many years were you in the Naval Reserve?

The Witness. Oh, I would say I stayed with them a couple of years. Maybe more, maybe less.

Mr. Triplett. And what type of discharge did you receive?

The Witness. Honorable discharge.

Mr. Triplett. Did you subsequently enlist in the Merchant Marine?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. And when did you enroll, or enlist in the Merchant Marine?

The Witness. Again, it's so many years back.

Mr. Triplett. Early '50's; late '50's; early '60's?

The Witness. It could be, yes. I would say in the '50's. Could be the late '40's maybe, or early '50's.

Mr. Triplett. And what kind of training, if any, did you receive in the Merchant Marines?

The Witness. Actually no training at all. Because I did join the union. In order to get in the Merchant Marine you had to be cleared. You had to get a U.S. Customs clearance, a security clearance, which I did get that security clearance. And I was part of
the union, the Maritime Union in Norfolk, Virginia.
And through them I naturally received certain jobs
on Merchant ships.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

In line with those jobs, did you have occasion
to travel?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And do you recall, or can you
list some of the ports you traveled to during that
period?

The Witness. Well, I'll give you one in particular.
I went to the one up in Greenland, which was one of our
biggest air bases that we had, about 200 miles this
side of the North Pole. I'm trying to remember the
name of it. I forget the name of it, but it's one
of our biggest bases we had, military bases we had
in Greenland.

Mr. Triplett. And did you have occasion to
travel back and forth between this country and Europe
in the Merchant Marine?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Approximately how long were
you in the Merchant Marine?

The Witness. Not too long. I'd say possibly
a year, a year and a half, approximately.
Mr. Triplett. And what was your reason for leaving the Merchant Marine?

The Witness. The situation, international situation with the United States Government as far as shipping was concerned, was getting very bad. They were doing it more with foreign carriers than they were with American carriers, and naturally American unions were a little upset with that. So I could not make a living really, by staying with the Merchant Marine.

Mr. Triplett. I see.

And after you left the Merchant Marine, what did you do as far as an occupation is concerned?

The Witness. Well, I had a night club that I was involved with called the Top Hat Night Club on Virginia Beach, Virginia. I also was part owner in that. Mr. Arthur Bass was my patron and also my partner. I had a bar on Main Street in Norfolk called the -- I was part owner in that. It's been so many years ago.

Anyway, before I went with him to the night club I was part owner at this bar and then when we sold the bar that's when I started to go to the Merchant Marine thing.

And one of the reasons why I quit the Merchant
Marine was because he convinced me to go into the 
busines of the night club. Now it's coming back.

Mr. Arthur Bass.

So I went into the night club business with him.

This was another reason why I discontinued going with
the Merchant Marine.

Mr. Triplett. And how long were you in the night
club business with Mr. Bass?

The Witness. I imagine a good couple of years.

Mr. Triplett. And following that, did you
subsequently enlist in the United States Army?

The Witness. Yes, I did.

Mr. Triplett. Approximately when, if you recall,
did you enlist in the United States Army?

The Witness. I imagine it would be in the '50's.

This was at the time of the Russian blockade of Berlin.

When I joined the Army, I signed up in Norfolk,
Virginia. I believe it was Norfolk, Virginia. I
went to Fort Dix, New Jersey. I passed my OCS test
and they were going to send me to Officer Candidate
School, and I asked if they had one in Europe and
they said yes, they did. And they lied to me.

So when I went to Europe I found out that the
Army lied to me and they did not have an Officer
Candidate School there. That I would have to stay in,
you know, a year in order to come back to the States and go to the Officer Candidate School back here.

So I immediately asked to go overseas and a few weeks later -- I did not have to get training because of my prior training and because of my combat experience, I was sent to, I believe it was Marburg (phonetic), Germany, which was a repo depot there, a replacement outfit there, where they sent me to Berlin, Germany, and I was with the Fourth Regiment there, and I was with General Clay's Honor Guard.

Mr. Triplett. What was your purpose in asking to be sent to Europe?

The Witness. To go through Officer Candidate School.

Mr. Triplett. Well, Officer Candidate School was available here, but you said you wanted to go to OCS in Europe. What was your purpose in wanting to go to Europe?

The Witness. Well, I wanted to go back to Europe because I had been to Europe before and I liked Europe. And I felt well, I'd prefer to go to Europe and I was having problems with my first wife at that time and I just wanted to get away from the United States.

Mr. Triplett. What rank did you attain in the Army?
The Witness. I was discharged a PFC in the Army.

Oh, when I left Berlin, Germany, I was having a very close affair with a young lady there who happened to be going with a Colonel on General Clay's Staff, so I was immediately sent out of Berlin back to Marburg, which in turn they sent me to Heidelberg, Germany, which was headquarters, UCOM Headquarters, and I was assigned to Armed Security Agency, which I had the clearance for.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Besides Marburg, Heidelberg and Berlin, were you stationed in any other places in Europe?

The Witness. Not that I recall. I went other places in Europe, but these were the places that I was actually stationed.

Mr. Triplett. Now will you again describe, you say you had security clearance at Heidelberg?

The Witness. Oh, you would have to have security clearance with the Armed Service Security Agency.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Exactly what were your functions there?

The Witness. Well my functions were, I was under command of, I believe he was a First Sergeant, who was directly in command of a Colonel and my functions was typing, which if you asked me to type
today I couldn't do because I haven't typed in so many years. I received training for typing at that time before I went there. And one of my duties was to type the "C" numbers on all classified and top secret documents that we burned in the incinerator. And this stuff naturally was activities concerning our headquarters, the UCOM Headquarters in Europe.

Mr. Triplett. What functions did you have besides typing?

The Witness. That's it.

Mr. Triplett. Did you receive any specialized training in the Army?

The Witness. My training in the Army, as I went along, was being trained again. Basic military training was not necessary because of my past military training, but specialized training. For instance like Army Security Agency. As you went along you received that particular type of training.

Mr. Triplett. Well, I presume you were trained in something other than typing. What, if anything, were you trained in within the confines of Army security?

The Witness. Just to type these "C" numbers of the classified documents and top secret documents that were going to be destroyed by fire in the
incinerator. That was my particular job and that was it. I don't think anybody needed specialized training to do that.

Mr. Triplett. You also mentioned you were in General Clay's Honor Guard?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. What exactly was the Honor Guard and what was your function in it?

The Witness. Well, the function of the Honor Guard was a specialized group of military personnel that was trained specifically that when any high ranking officer or political VIP that came into the area, at the airport to military bases, the Honor Guard would perform for these particular people.

Mr. Triplett. So it was more a show function rather than a military function?

The Witness. Military, right. You would call it a military function if a General came in, you know. That would be a show military function for them. It looked good.

Mr. Triplett. Okay. Let's get into another area.

I want to know if you had any relationships with any United States Government Intelligence Agency, whether it be FBI, CIA, Military Intelligence or whatever. Have
you had any relationships with any of those agencies I enumerated, or any other Federal Government intelligence agencies?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And what was your first contact with any?

The Witness. Well, I was in the mountains in Cuba with Fidel Castro. My first contact with any was with the Vice-Consul in Santiago, Cuba. One of my missions when I came out of the mountains was to deliver some secret messages to the underground in Santiago.

When I was in Santiago I always went to the Casa Grande Hotel, which was the biggest hotel there, and one evening, which was on a Friday, I sat down to play bingo and an American came to my table and made contact with me and was playing bingo, and he identified himself as we went along in a few hours, he told me was the Vice-Consul. Also, he was the Chief of the CIA stationed there in Santiago.

And he questioned me and so forth. This is where I first started to spy on Castron forces for the United States Government.

Mr. Triplett. So that was your first contact?

The Witness. Yes, sir.
Mr. Triplett. And that would have been what, 1958?

The Witness. I would say it was 1958, approximately. Yes. Now what month I don't know, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And this was while Batista was still in power in Cuba?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Do you recall the name of the Vice-Consul?

The Witness. I did have the name of the Vice-Consul. It's on record. His name is on record.

Mr. Triplett. Would it be Clark Wollen?

The Witness. No, sir. No. Mr. Wollen, I believe, was the Consul, but the Vice-Consul -- as a matter of fact this gentleman is retired today.

It'll come to me. Unfortunately I didn't know what questions you were going to ask me, otherwise I would have written it down because I have it at home. I would have written down his name.

Mr. Triplett. But in any event you could provide that name later to Mr. Fonzi or myself?

The Witness. Oh, certainly. As a matter of fact I think I spoke to Mr. Fonzi before, spoke to him about him. I gave him the name. But I could give Mr. Fonzi his name. No problem.
Mr. Triplett. Okay.

While you were gathering this information presumably in 1958, were you paid for these services?

The Witness. I was offered money, but I refused it and the reason why I refused it was the fact that I felt that in helping my country at that particular time, I had my own resources which was with Castro. Money was no problem, so I didn't feel that I needed to take money from my own Government who I voluntarily, when he asked, to go ahead and spy for the United States Government there.

Mr. Triplett. So you rejected any money at that time?

The Witness. Actually, yes.

Mr. Triplett. When did you first arrive in Cuba?

The Witness. Well, my connection with the -- oh, my uncle, after I got out of the Marine Corps, I came to Miami to live and my uncle married a Cuban lady, a young lady, at that time, whose family was here in exile. This is how I had a source -- naturally I had a family, or married into my family. This was on the Vona side. My uncle's name was Angelo Vona. He married this young lady, which he's still married to today. I have not been in contact with them.
for a number of years. I don't know where he's at. And my connection with the Cuban colony was through his family.

Fidel left Mexico, came to the United States, and I met Fidel here in the United States. This is how I got involved in the Cuban --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) This was after you got out of the Marines?

The Witness. Yeah.

Mr. Triplett. Would that be before you went into the Army?

The Witness. Yeah. The first contact with the Cuban exile people.

Then I met Carlos Prio, the ex-President of Cuba and I had an association with him. As time went on, I believe it was, it might have been '56, or '57, as time went on I tried to convince President Carlos Prio that the people, his gorilla force in the mountains of Cuba was not very active. That I felt that it might be a good idea for me to go there to help in the training of the gorillas and to step up the military actions there.

He agreed, but that wasn't the question. The question that he needed was naturally the arms that the gorilla forces needed to fight against the Batista
forces.

So it was decided that I would go and join
the Castro forces because he wanted to know what was
going on with the Castro forces because he was, at
times, helping finance Fidel Castro.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

This was a decision between you and Carlos Prio?
The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. So when did you finally go to
Cuba?
The Witness. Well, let's make it 1957. Within
that range.

Mr. Triplett. And where did you reside then
when you arrived in Cuba?
The Witness. I made contact directly with the
Catholic Church. I went to Santiago and I was in
touch with certain people in the Church there who
took me personally -- I'm sorry, they didn't take
me personally -- they told me to go to Motonzos. To
go to the Catholic Church there, which I made contact
with a priest there who took me out in the countryside
to meet a Cuban fellow who was the manager of the
Coca Cola plant there in Montonzo. And I stayed at
his place where he took me to a farm house this side
of the mountains where I waited for a Cuban patrol.
When I say Cuban, I mean a gorilla patrol, to pick me up and take me into the mountains to see Fidel.

So I did not see Fidel for a period of about oh, I would say seven or eight days later, that I came across Fidel. I forget the name of the small -- in the mountains -- a small conglomerate of houses that were along the mountain side and this is where I met Fidel again. Because remember, I met Fidel in Miami, Florida before he went to Cuba.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

Once you met Fidel, I presume you joined up with him, or stayed with him?

The Witness. Well, not exactly joined with him because my sympathies were with the Cuban exiles against the Dictator Batista.

It was decided later with Prio that I would go ahead and join Fidel's group of people.

Mr. Triplett. And prior to Fidel taking over and throwing out Batista, what functions did you perform for Mr. Castro?

The Witness. Helped train the gorillas in the mountains; went on missions, secret missions for messages; bought guns and equipment for the Castro forces; delivered these guns and equipment to the Castro forces.
When the revolution was finished, I went to Havana about a week later.

Mr. Triplett. Let me interrupt and back up here.

You say you went on secret missions. Were these the secret missions you referred to earlier as being directed by the Vice-Consul, or were these secret missions on behalf of Fidel Castro?

The Witness. Yeah, these secret missions on behalf of the gorilla forces. But they were aware of most of my activities.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

And once Fidel Castro was victorious, what functions did you perform at that time?

The Witness. Well, I went a week later to Havana and I changed over from the Cuban Army -- rather the Rebel Army -- to the Cuban Air Force.

My friend, Pedro Diez Leaz, who on one of the other missions during this period of time, him and I left Santiago and came over. That's how we made contact and we got to be very friendly.

Pedro was nominated Commander-in-Chief of the Cuban Air Force. I was made the Director of Security, which is a high ranking intelligence position.

Now -- go ahead -- this was my position at that
particular time.

Mr. Triplett. When you say Director of Security --

The Witness. (Interposing) For the Cuban Air Force, or the FAR which is the Revolutionary Air Force.

Mr. Triplett. And what were your functions as Director of Security for the Air Force?

The Witness. I maintained all of the security of all the military bases inside of Cuba. I set up an intelligence apparatus for Castro outside of Cuba, namely in the United States which in turn I notified the Government of the Agents that were being set up here. Set up an intelligence apparatus here in the United States through the Cuban Air Force.

At the same time the American Government was advised of these Cuban agents working in the South Florida area.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

So that was not clandestine as far as the American Government was concerned?

The Witness. Certainly it was clandestine.

Mr. Triplett. Well, was the American Government aware of the names and activities of these Cubans?

The Witness. Sure. I gave them the names of the agents that was being formed and sent here to spy.
for the Cuban Government.

    Mr. Triplett. And was Fidel Castro or Pedro Diez Lanz aware that you were providing this information to the United States Government?

    The Witness. I'm not sure whether they were.

    No, I don't think so because they did not know of my contact with the Embassy at that time. .

    I was advised to make contact with Colonel Nichols. Colonel Nichols was the military attache for the Cuban Air Force.

    Mr. Triplett. And is he the one to whom you provided the names of these agents?

    The Witness. Not only provided the names of these agents but also the various conspiracies that were taking place within Havana, of people from Costa Rica, from Panama, people from the Dominican Republic, people from Haiti. The various Central and South American countries came there trying to make contact directly with Fidel or members of the hierarchy, which I was part of this. But they themselves could not get direct contact with Fidel which was very very difficult because of the turmoil that was going on there.

    I was contacted and I was involved in the conspiracies to overthrow and send gorilla forces into
the Central American countries and these Caribbean things which again the American Government was being advised through me.

Mr. Triplett. Were any Castro agents arrested as a result of this information you were giving the American Government?

The Witness. No, sir, and I'll tell you the reason why. Because I didn't find out until years later that through many of the meetings that we had had in Havana at the very beginning, many of us suspected that the American Embassy was helping in guiding Fidel Castro, especially CIA.

At one of the meetings I was asked to bypass the Embassy and go directly to Washington, D.C. to make contact with Mr. Hoover because being that we were strongly anti-communist and because of the information that many of our people had and the contacts that they had pertaining to the Embassy, had the sympathies of many of the Embassy personnel and also of the CIA personnel assisting Castro which, at that time, we didn't know this definitely. But we suspected it. Later we found it was a true fact.

So I did bypass with information pertaining to the Castro brothers and pertaining to many of the Communists who were being put in various positions by
the Castro brothers, which we were definitely against.

So I went on a special mission to Washington.

Made contact with the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

I believe -- I did not speak with Mr. Hoover personally --

but I believe I spoke to his right-hand man.

Mr. Triplett. Do you recall his name?

The Witness. No, sir, I don't. But it should be on record.

Mr. Triplett. Would it be Sullivan or DeLoach (phonetic)? Do those names --

The Witness. (Interposing) No, sir. It's been so many years I don't recall.

Mr. Triplett. Olsen?

The Witness. I don't recall.

But later on Pedro Diez and Marcus Diez Lanz themselves had, either one of them had contact, personal contact with Mr. Hoover.

Mr. Triplett. Now when was this you went to Washington?

The Witness. Oh, gee, I'm not sure whether it was February of 1959 or not. I'm not sure. January, February or March. One of those three months. But I'm sure it was immediately in February.

Mr. Triplett. And still at this time you were at least outwardly working with and for the Fidel
Castro regime?

The Witness. Right. At the same time working with the Embassy and trying to go ahead and find out who you could trust and who you couldn't trust.

But that particular time when I went to Washington, nobody at the Embassy knew that I went directly to Washington.

Mr. Triplett. Now when you say you were working for the Embassy, who precisely at that time were you working with?

The Witness. Well let me say I had an association. I'm sorry, because sometimes I get overt. My association with the Embassy was through Colonel Nichols who was the military attaché at the Embassy.

Mr. Triplett. And was there anybody else also?

The Witness. I beg your pardon?

Mr. Triplett. Was there anybody else you were associating with in your capacity?

The Witness. The only one I had contact with was Colonel Nichols.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

The Witness. I went to the Embassy several times. A document, which I'm sure Pedro or Marcus Diez Lanz has, in order to cover my association with the Embassy, named me -- I forget how it is again --
named me the contact between the Cuban Air Force and the American Embassy, in order to protect me being at the Embassy if Cuban Intelligence found out.

Mr. Triplett. But this document was merely a subterfuge, is that what you're telling us?

The Witness. Yes. So in case the Cuban Intelligence Service wanted to know what I, as Director of Security, was doing at the Embassy, I had a document that it was an official visit because of the Air Force and the American Air Force mission that was there at the time.

Mr. Triplett. As a matter of fact, at that time, what was the nature of your association with Clark Wollen?

The Witness. Well, Clark Wollen was down in Santiago. When I left Santiago, that was it. I finished with them. Then my contact was with Nichols in Havana.

And to be honest with you, the Chief of Station, which was the Vice-Consul, because Clark Wollen was the Consul, the American Consul there, and I don't believe -- again I'm going back so many years -- I don't believe my contact was with Wollen. I believe my contact was with the Vice-Consul and again I'm trying to remember his name. Anderson comes to my mind,
but I don't know whether that was his name or not. Again, I have it at home and I can turn it over to Mr. Fonzi.

Mr. Triplett. Could it have been Jim Knowles?


Mr. Triplett. All right.

Does the name Stewart ring a bell?


Mr. Triplett. Did you have occasion to recruit or enlist the support of other people in this intelligence gathering activity?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And what would be the correct designation? Recruiting? Enlisting support? Asking for help? How would you describe it?

The Witness. Well, I would describe it as making contact with people within the Cuban military, the Cuban political and even the American colony that was there.

Naturally my friends Pedro and Marcus Diez Lanz are very pro-American and they had the right contacts with a number of people in the American Embassy.
including the Ambassador. And I would say -- well, I can't speak for them because I'm not sure whether they had direct contact through me or to themselves with the Chief of Station at the American Embassy.

Mr. Triplett. Any other people besides Pedro and Marcus Diez Lanz that you recall?

The Witness. That I asked for help in the intelligence gathering?

Mr. Triplett. Yes. Geraldine Shamma. She lives in Hollywood, Florida. She was turned over to Major Van Horne (phonetic). She worked with Major Van Horne in the American Embassy.

As a matter of fact this woman here had a close contact with me when she was working in Havana. We had the Brickell House here on Brickell Avenue that the MRR was using. We all gathered there. She had a small apartment in the back of the Brickell House, a safe house. And she was traveling back and forth to Havana. And she was later arrested and given a ten year sentence for spying. Served three and a half years in Guandhi (Phonetic) prison, came over here to the United States.

Geraldine and I have been very very close. And unfortunately, physically, this prison sentence that she received hurt her very bad both mentally and
physically. She was of good service to this country.

Mr. Triplett. In the same line, regarding your
contacts with the American Embassy, did you have any
contacts with Colonel Kail?

The Witness. I don't recall. I spoke to a
number of people, you know, who were attached to
the Embassy and I honestly don't recall certain agents.

You must understand one thing. When I was
associated myself with Colonel Nichols, I received
bits and pieces from Colonel Nichols that many of
the people -- not many -- his words were somewhat like,
you can't trust some of the people in CIA there. As
I went along I found out that CIA did help Fidel, guide
him into power. The Communists, Cuban Communists Party
did make a couple of attempts to kill Fidel and I
believe that CIA was advising Fidel of what was going
on and so forth. They were very pro-communist, these
agents. Jim Knowles, to me, was one of them. The
Station Chief.

As a matter of fact Ambassador Smith accused,
you know, the Chief of Station at a meeting with the
other agents of, you know, being pro-communist by
having a close association with the Castro brothers.

Mr. Triplett. When you're talking about
Ambassador Smith, are you referring to Ewing Smith?
The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have any contacts with him directly?

The Witness. No, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Were you aware that Colonel Kail was in the CIA?

The Witness. No, sir. Like I say the name doesn't, you know, you must understand in intelligence people use code names.

Mr. Triplett. Right. Likewise from other resources you do learn their real names.

The Witness. Sometimes. And sometimes you don't, you know. You know, like people down there, over a period of years, if you still maintain contact, you know, you do recall because something will come up and you say oh, I remember you, you were working this particular thing because they'll come up with a story and then you'll know that they have worked in that particular position.

Mr. Triplett. Other than providing information for Colonel Nichols, or the CIA or what have you at that time, were you performing any other functions on behalf of the American Government or Colonel Nichols?

The Witness. Just that. Notifying the Government of the conspiracies. For instances, there were forces
being prepared, the Air Force was involved in it, where there were aircraft on our ramp with no designation, you know, no number, insignias and so forth. They were just plain aircraft. The numbers were taken off, the insignias were taken off these aircraft that were going to be involved in certain invasions of certain countries. For instance, the Dominican Republic and also Panama.

And these invasions did occur and they did fail.

Bill Morgan, who I tried to recruit for the American Government, which I gave a list to Nichols of people that I felt would be in sympathy with the American Government, would help intelligence wise. Naturally they have their own means of making contact. If it isn't directly through me, they make their own contact of these assets that would be assets to, you know, American Intelligence. And Bill wanted me to be involved in several of these conspiracies. And one was the Panama Canal. I told him I thought he was crazy and he said look, I'll be the overall commander and I want you to be the second in command of this expedition that is being formed to invade Panama.

And if I'm not mistaken, later the invasion was
sent to Panama which naturally failed.

But this is the type of things that I was doing.

Mr. Triplett. You say you tried to recruit William Morgan?

The Witness. Well, I told Nichols that William Morgan, I thought at that time, would be an asset to intelligence.

Mr. Triplett. Were you involved, or aware of any attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro while you were still in Cuba?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Were you involved in any?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And when did those occur?

The Witness. Well, I don't recall the exact month because of the confusion. It was very difficult at that time because I had to stay alive, number one.

Marita Lorenz, I made contact with, I think maybe in February or the beginning of March. She was Fidel's mistress. And I thought, you know, like well she's an American and I didn't know too much of her background at that time because I was hearing some information through my people, through Fidel's people that Fidel was living with her. She went to work as
his secretary. I knew that she was an American, not knowing her background. Her mother was American and her father was German working for the Commodore, I think, but the German Government, but this cruise ship bit.

But I made an approach to Marita and the approach was successful. I had to be very very careful. She could have gotten me killed. And in making an approach to her, I did recruit her to go ahead and do some spying for me, like I did Geraldine Shamma.

And also some of my friends in Cuba, who naturally we were all against Castro because we knew about the Communist infiltration and what was going on before I went to Washington. There were some conspiracies going on to kill Fidel and I was involved in the conspiracies. And I told Colonel Nichols, you know, about this. I said hey, you know, like this guy here is a Communist and he's even tried to put Communist people into the Air Force, and I'm trying to keep them out under orders of Marcus Diez Lanz. And I almost got myself killed one day because a Jimmy Gentry (phonetic), who was very close to Raul Castro and who was a pilot, made some very derogatory remarks against Pedro Diez Lanz, and said
he would kill Pedro because Pedro was very anti-communist, and he pulled his gun on me and I in turn took his .45 away from him and marched him to the Air Force office of Pedro. And naturally I ran him off the base. So there was friction there against Raul Castro. But Fidel was more diplomatic and against us, many of the military commanders who helped him, who was in high positions, so Fidel had to go ahead and smooth things over. But he knew who was against him.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

On how many occasions were you aware of -- well, strike that.

On how many occasions were you involved in plans or attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro?

The Witness. Well, I would say -- well, there were numerous plots that I was involved in. And I would say the most serious plots -- I'm talking about the real serious ones that I was involved in -- was about three.

Mr. Triplett. Now you mentioned Geraldine Shamma and Marita Lorenz. Other than those two, were other people involved in these plots?

The Witness. Well, Geraldine Shamma was not involved in any plots in particular to kill Fidel Castro.
She was strictly intelligence. Strictly intelligence.

I've asked Marita Lorenz to be involved with me if and when the time came.

I was told, well okay, unless we get the word from Washington, don't do anything. But at the same time I had meetings with military commanders who wanted to kill him.

Mr. Triplett. These were Cuban military commanders, or American?

The Witness. No. They were Cuban military commanders who wanted to kill Fidel and who were trying to, you know, devise a way. And I offered like, hey, I've got command of the military police, which I was personally training these people. See, at the same time being Director of Security, same time spying over here, same time being involved in all these damn conspiracies, you know, so I had a hell of a time being involved in all of these things.

And so I suggested, you know, like hey, Fidel comes to the Air Force Base. If he goes someplace in the country he flies in with a helicopter. He comes over, he sees me, he hugs me, you know, and he has meetings on the second floor of the headquarters, Air Force Headquarters. Hey, supply me with plastic explosives. I'll kill him right there, you know, on
the second floor. Or if you want me to stop him outside the gate I'll stop him outside the gate.

Mr. Triplett. Now who are you making these suggestions to?

The Witness. Colonel Nichols.

Mr. Triplett. Colonel Nichols?

The Witness. Yeah.

Mr. Triplett. And this again, just to clarify it and make sure we have a good record, this was all during the period you were an officer in the Cuban Air Force?

The Witness. Yes. This was the early part of 1959.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

And you mentioned a little earlier I believe that you discussed this possibility of killing Fidel Castro with Marita Lorenz in February of 1959?

The Witness. Well, that's when I first met her, in February. So it might have been in March because I had to get, you know, I don't just come out when I just meet her, you know, I had to gain her confidence. Because it was a very ticklish situation, and she was crazy about Fidel. This is the thing.

Mr. Triplett. Putting all this in context though,
Fidel Castro took over in Cuba January 1st, 1959. In relation to that date, when did you first become disenchanted with Fidel Castro and when did you first have a suspicion that he was a Communist?

The Witness. All of us -- I'm talking about my friends like Commander Ricardo Lauria (phonetic), Commander Hubamartis (phonetic), Commander Pedro Diez Lanz, Commander Marcus Diez Lanz, myself and other commanders, had various meetings all over Havana secretly. And I would say that by the time of February, 1959, it was definitely decided, because of all the activities that was going on with the various top Communist people, that Raul was trying to get into the military. And so far he couldn't get them into the Air Force because I was running them off, you see. But we suspected and damn well knew that Fidel was a Communist and working with the Communist Party.

Also by February we suspected that CIA was guiding Fidel also in this thing.

This is why I was sent -- it might have been February or March -- I was sent directly to Washington. To bypass the Embassy.

Mr. Triplett. You were sent there by whom?

The Witness. By Pedro Diez Lanz and Marcus and
Ricardo Lauria, to go to Washington and give a list of names of all the Communist agents directly to the FBI. Bypass that damn Embassy.

Mr. Triplett. If you could give a reason, what would be the reason for the failure of any attempts on Fidel Castro's life at that time?

The Witness. Well, I would say that the individual persons that were being used in order to go ahead and kill him. I was in the best position in the world to go ahead and really kill him, if I was in charge of killing Fidel. I was in the best position because I could have stopped him right at that gate there. Every time Fidel would come in, he would come in in a convoy. I would stop the convoy because I was out there one day when I was inspecting and I could have killed everybody. Because I had people and I trained people, you know, to check the roofs, the main street, the main entrance of the Air Force Base. We checked the roofs out, and I could have had machine gunners up there with hand grenades and machine guns and I could have wiped that whole god-damned convoy out. Could have killed everybody.

Mr. Triplett. But you apparently were not in charge. You did not have the green light.

Who, if anybody, was in charge?
The Witness. Right. Absolutely I did not have the green light.

See, my loyalties were divided. To be very honest with you, my loyalties at that time were divided and I'm sorry they were divided because I would have spit at the American Embassy, believe me. If I knew then what I know today I would have spit at the American Embassy and I would have said the hell with the American Embassy and everybody there, see. And I would have listened to my friends and I would have killed Fidel.

But because I was an American, my decision was more toward the Americans than my own friends, which I should have went along with my friends. I would have killed that dirty bastard.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

But who specifically told you not to, if anybody?

The Witness. Nichols said don't do anything. Leave him alone until we get word from Washington, and that's it.

So trying to be a good American, forget it.

Mr. Triplett. When did you finally leave Cuba?

The Witness. June the 30th of 1959, because of
a meeting that I had secretly with the Second Chief of the Cuban Intelligence, Army Cuban Intelligence. His name was Sangenis. I have been friends with the Sangenis family for years. And he asked to speak with me. He sent someone over to speak with me. And I went across the street -- I forget the name of the restaurant across the street, I believe it was across the street from the Havana Hilton. It was at night time because we sat in a dark corner of the restaurant and he said, "Frank, Raul Castro suspects you're working with American Intelligence. So me a favor. When you leave here, pretend you don't know me. That's it. Get your ass out of Cuba tonight, now. Because if he picks you up, he's going to kill you."

Mr. Triplett. And as a result of that you left?

The Witness. I didn't leave until days later. I went against what he said. I didn't leave for days later. As a matter of fact, Pedro Diez Lanz, with all the troubles he was having with the Castro brothers, he was hiding secretly the last month. This was in June. And I went to the American Embassy to try to get him, to get, what do you call it in the American Embassy when a person goes in the Embassy to protect
themselves, sanctuary, asylum in the American Embassy. You know they refused? They refused Pedro Diez Lanz going into the Embassy. Here's a guy that respected this country, respected this Government. At that time the guy was risking his life, like we all were, for the American Government, we thought.

But there was a betrayal and the betrayal came out of that God-damn Embassy right there. And here like the dummy that we were at that time, trying to go ahead and notify the American Government, trying to go ahead and help the American Government, all the American Government was doing to us was screwing us. Believe me.

Mr. Triplett. When you say there was a betrayal, are you able to pinpoint any specific person?

The Witness. I would say the CIA Station Chief in the American Embassy.

Mr. Triplett. And do you know who that was at that time?

The Witness. That was -- I didn't know the man to be honest with you. I've got his name. I can turn it over. I'm getting a mental block again. I can turn it over to Mr. Fonzi who the Station Chief was.

People like this God-damn David Phillips who was
there, that pro bastard son-of-a-bitch. Excuse me. That pro Communist bastard son-of-a-bitch. I dislike these people very much for what they did to us in Cuba and which they continued to do in the Bay of Pigs invasion. They're the same people that got involved in the Bay of Pigs invasion and betrayed us again, you know, which cost people's lives. And oh, my mind sometimes gets screwed up. But where were we anyway?

Mr. Triplett. I was asking you if you knew who specifically, but apparently you don't have a name at the moment. Let's move along now.

Once you returned to the United States --

The Witness. (Interposing) That was June the 30th, yeah.

Mr. Triplett. Were you contacted by any representative of the CIA or the Federal Government for a debriefing or anything of that nature?

The Witness. No, sir. No, sir.

Mr. Triplett. After you left Cuba, did anybody approach you to perform services or gather information on behalf of the CIA?

The Witness. After I left Cuba?

Mr. Triplett. Yes.

The Witness. No, sir.
Well, let me tell you what happened there. I had to arrange the escape of Pedro Diez Lanz because of the Embassy because they refused him asylum, which I resented bitterly. Marcus Diez Lanz also. All right.

Meantime, at that time we thought CIA was still all right, but we had our suspicions within the Embassy.

Marcus Diez Lanz was helped by CIA later to get out. This was, I would say, a month later. But when I came over on June the 30th, I took two aircraft from Cuba over here. One was a C-46D, that was in my name, and a B-25 bomber that was in my name. Okay?

Now, so I had to arrange to get those airplanes over here before I defected. I had meetings over there with Pedro and so forth and I wanted to cause an uprising there. I said look, I have command of 1,000 troops here at the Air Force Base. Let's get hold of President Arukia (phonetic). I'll put 500 men around the Capital, the Presidential Palace, if President Arukia will denounce Castro, you know, and the Communists.

President Arukia said no. That Castro was misguided and said no. Well, he was saving his own ass is what he was doing.

But also I wanted to go ahead and destroy much
of the Air Force Base. Because I asked Pedro, send our pilots up in the air, get every airplane we can up in the air, get all our troops that we can, put them in the transport planes that we have and send them over to the Isle of Pine. We grab the Isle of Pine. We get the Batista prisoners that Fidel had in the Isle of Pine prison. That would be the nucleolus of an army there. Because we could have took the island and destroyed the base and our fighters and bombers would attack Camp Columbia, try to get Arukia out of the Palace and try to kill Fidel. By having a military coup there, starting with us in the Air Force because we did have some manpower. But they turned it down.

Mr. Triplett. Again, these were the people at the Embassy that turned it down?

The Witness. I'm not sure the Embassy was aware. At least they were not aware of this particular operation that I wanted to do. They were not aware through me.

Mr. Triplett. Okay. Getting back to after you returned to the United States.

To your knowledge, were you ever contacted by any representatives of the CIA for any purpose?

The Witness. I was contacted by an official of
the Government because I was making arrangements here
to get a boat to go into Cuba and get Pedro out and
get Marcus out and his family.

I was told, Frank, leave it alone. Don't touch
it because arrangements are being made by CIA to get
them out.

Mr. Triplett. Who approached you and told you
that?

The Witness. Oh, God, I don't know. Let me
see. One possibility was -- I can't remember his
name. He's in Washington. No, it couldn't be him.
Shakter, Schenley (phonetic).

Mr. Triplett. Schaklee (phonetic)?

The Witness. It might have been Schenley,
Shackler. One of the two. Told me, stay here, don't
go anywhere. Because I was arranging with Pedro
Diez Lanz' half brother, Surgio Diez, to get a ship,
to get a boat at one of the yacht companies here,
yacht brokers, because I went with him to get the
boat.

Surgio got in the boat with somebody else, went
over to Cuba and got Pedro and his wife out, smuggled
them here. The Government knew about it because
this was the arrangements that we were making to get
Pedro out, but they didn't want me personally to go.
So what the half brother did with the boat, we used it, they allowed Surgio to go but didn't want me to go because I was an American and they knew Castro would catch me.

Then CIA did make arrangements to get Marcus Diez Lanz out because Marcus was in touch with an agent in Cuba, a CIA agent. And that agent, if you'd like to know who he is, that was Bernard Barker.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

Now after you returned to the United States, did you have any contact with any Castro Intelligence Agents? Here in the United States?

The Witness. No. At least not to my knowledge. Because some of the people we didn't know. No.

You would assume that Castro, with what people we knew over here, if they were agents, would change them around. So no. We kept to ourselves.

The reason for that is, remember, we were Cuban revolutionaries, all right? We helped overthrow the Batista Government. So the first group of refugees that come over here were the Batista people, or at least the people that were very sympathetic, which they had reason to leave there because Castro was shooting everybody, which was wrong on his part. So naturally when we came here we more or less kept
to ourselves.

But as time went by we did start to associate ourselves with certain, at least not myself, but Pedro and Marcus, with certain people who were, you know, of the Batista faction. And then myself later on.

Mr. Triplett. Did you receive any money or any pay from the CIA prior to the Bay of Pigs?

The Witness. I received -- well, not myself personally. But before the Bay of Pigs invasion, we had a special flying group.

Mr. Triplett. When you say we, who?

The Witness. Pedro Diez Lanz, Marcus Diez Lanz and myself, using my B-25. Now this is the same --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) how about the C-46?

The Witness. Well, that was not used. We sold that eventually. That was not used in the Bay of Pigs.

Mr. Triplett. This was your B-25?

The Witness. Well let's say the B-25 was in my name. Registered with the FAA in my name.

Mr. Triplett. Well, whose was it if it wasn't yours?

The Witness. Well, it was money that was paid for by the revolution, you see, and naturally being
part of the revolution and being that the other people were Cuban revolutionaries, they used my name in order to be on the license. My name was used because you couldn’t get somebody that wasn’t an American citizen.

Mr. Triplett. Who else was there?

The Witness. Just us.

Mr. Triplett. The three of you. Marcus Diez Lanze, Pedro and --

The Witness. (Interposing) And myself.

Well, the money, before the Bay of Pigs invasion, the monies that went to the repairs of the B-25, was CIA money.

As a matter of fact I was told later while I was in prison, by Howard, that Howard -- Howard Hunt I’m talking about -- Howard Hunt said he did give Barker $10,000 to turn over to Pedro to pay the bills of the B-25. I think we had an L. B. Smith over here at 36th Street Airport being repaired.

And one of the things that the B-25 was going to be used, which we were fixing the airplane up because we were going to put on the tail of the B-25, a long antennae that would be stretched out while the aircraft was in flight with tape recordings and radio equipment in the B-25 to broadcast propaganda
in Cuba while the B-25 was in flight. This was one of the operations. And the monies did come from CIA for the repairs and the bill to the B-25.

Mr. Triplett. And did you know at that time it came from the CIA?

The Witness. Certainly. Sure. I didn't know who it came from because the money came from Barker. Because I didn't know who Barker's boss was.

You must understand that a week before -- this I found out through Howard Hunt while I was in prison -- a week before the invasion, Bernard Barker was the assistant to Howard.

Howard, from what Howard told me, that he disagreed with the policies of what was happening, the change that was happening within, you know, the groups, the CIA and the Revolutionary Council, because he was the political officer of the Revolutionary Council. I had no contact with Howard Hunt. I never knew Howard Hunt at all. I knew there was an Eduardo and Eduardo was Barker's boss.

But he left the outfit and Barker was turned over to a new CIA control officer, I believe. And Barker would not tell me. I believe his new boss was Jim Knowles.

Mr. Triplett. And what led you to believe that?
The Witness. I'm not sure really. I'll be very honest with you, I'm not sure. I'm not sure whether Howard Hunt told me that Barker's new boss was Jim Knowles or not. Because you know, sometimes you don't say things, you know. I'm not sure. But Barker never told me who his new control officer was. But I believe it was Jim Knowles.

Again, this B-25 was the same B-25 that Pedro Diez Lanz and myself as pilots and Marcus Diez Lanz and another Cuban fellow by the name of Itchgoia (phonetic) flew over on October the 21st of 1959, over the City of Havana, and dropped several hundred thousands of leaflets over that City. And several Cubans, I think maybe 31 or 33 Cuban people were killed and wounded on that air raid that we did.

Mr. Triplett. Dropping leaflets?

The Witness. Leaflets, yeah. Well, you see we were 1,000 foot off the ground over the City and the gunners from Cabana Fortress and the three B-26 fighter bombers tried to shoot us down and the shells exploding killed or wounded 31 or 33 people. And Fidel raised a lot of hell about it.

And as a matter of fact, charges were brought against Pedro Diez Lanz in Federal Court here about these things and it was thrown out a half hour later
in court. A fact that they could not prove because there was 2,000 Americans there at that time and they watched us throw these leaflets out.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have occasion to purchase any other B-25's other than this one?

The Witness. No. That's the only B-25, and the B-26 that was ever purchased. And that was in my name, registered with the FAA, or at that time I think it was the CAA, or whatever.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have any contact, or have you had any contact with Rafeal Hanscomb?

The Witness. I don't know the man.

Mr. Triplett. How about Ray Sanstrom?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

When was your contact and what was the nature with Ray Sanstrom?

The Witness. Well, Ray Sanstrom is an Attorney up in Fort Lauderdale. Ray Sanstrom is also a pilot. Ray Sanstrom, I believe, worked for CIA.

Mr. Triplett. What was the nature of your contact?

The Witness. He was a lawyer. He still is a lawyer.

Mr. Triplett. Was he your lawyer? Did you go
to him for legal advice?

The Witness. Yes, I went to him for legal advice.

That's the type of association I had with Ray, for legal advice. Things that I would do and Cuba and so forth.

Mr. Triplett. Regarding your activities against Castro?

The Witness. Yes. That's right.

Mr. Triplett. Did you ever have any contact with Carlos Blanco? (phonetic)


You see many people that knew us in those days, if you never had a close association with them over a period of time, you would forget. But the name sounds familiar. I don't recall.

Mr. Triplett. How about Paul Bethel? (phonetic)

The Witness. I know Paul Bethel, yes.

Mr. Triplett. And what type dealings have you had with Mr. Bethel?

The Witness. None whatsoever. But I know Paul. I've spoken to Paul several times.

Mr. Triplett. Anything other than social
conversations?


It was strictly about Cuba.

Mr. Triplett. Has he sought information from you, or have you provided information to him?


Mr. Triplett. Your planned activities?


Mr. Triplett. How about Manola Rebozo? (phonetic)

The Witness. Oh, yes. Manola and I, I trained him before the Bay of Pigs.

Mr. Triplett. You trained him?

The Witness. Sure.

Mr. Triplett. And have you been on any raids with him or any other activities with him?

The Witness. No. He was involved in the Bay of Pigs naturally. After that he went his way and I went my way, and he got to be the Vice Mayor of Miami.

Mr. Triplett. When did you first meet him?

The Witness. Well again, before the Bay of Pigs. I imagine he came over to my house on 60th Court that I had at that particular time, or the group had. And that's how I met him and many other people that eventually got to work for the agency.
Mr. Triplett. How about Bernard Barker?

The Witness. Yes, I met Barker.

Mr. Triplett. When?

The Witness. I've known him for many years.

Not in Cuba. Here in the United States.

Mr. Triplett. What was the nature of your association with Mr. Barker?

The Witness. Strictly with Pedro and Marcus.

The association with the B-25.

Mr. Triplett. Providing you the money? Anything other than that?

The Witness. He didn't provide me. He gave the money to Pedro.

Mr. Triplett. How about Eugeno Martinez? (phonetic). When did you first meet him?

The Witness. Eugeno Martinez? In Cuba. He was working at that time, I believe -- well, he owned several businesses in Cuba and I met him once or several times during my inspection of the casinos.

Because one of my other jobs for Castro at one time, he wanted me to take charge of the casinos for Pasternita Nunez, who was in the mountains with me and with Fidel. And if I'm not mistaken, I met Martinez. He was working for the Havana Hilton at that time.

Mr. Triplett. And what was the nature of your
association with him?

The Witness. At that time there was no association at all.

Mr. Triplett. How about after arriving in the United States?

The Witness. Oh, yeah, when we arrived in the United States. Because of the Bay of Pigs many of us got together. Many people we didn't know, you know.

Mr. Triplett. Are you talking about because of the planning for the invasion or the aftermath?

The Witness. No. Because of the planning before the invasion. We came in contact with many people we didn't know and some people we did know from Cuba. Like, you know, Nino Diez I knew from Cuba. And Nino was involved in the Bay of Pigs. And Atime. I didn't know Atime in Cuba, but I met Atime here, you know. As a matter of fact the people I was with didn't like Atime.

Mr. Triplett. By the way, when and where did you first meet Bernard Barker?

The Witness. I met him when he lived in the Northwest section. I met him, I believe, either with Marcus or Pedro Diez Lanz. We went over to his house.
Mr. Triplett. And when was this?

The Witness. Oh, like I say -- let's see, the
invasion was what, 1961 or '62? '61 I think it was.

Mr. Triplett. '61.

The Witness. April, '61. So it had to be
sometime in '61.

Mr. Triplett. Before the invasion?

The Witness. Oh, yeah. Either '60 or '61. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

By the way, did you ever meet and know Jose
Sangenis?

The Witness. You're talking about Sangenis?

Mr. Triplett. Sangenis.

The Witness. Oh, I know the Sangenis family
very well since, I believe, 1956 I've known them.
I know Roger Sangenis. And I believe that's who
you're probably talking about. I knew Louie Sangenis.

Mr. Triplett. How about Jose?

The Witness. You're talking about Sam Jenis?

Mr. Triplett. Yes?

The Witness. Yeah.

Mr. Triplett. You knew him by the name Sam
Jenis?

The Witness. I knew him, yeah.

Mr. Triplett. And what was the nature of your
association with him?

The Witness. Well, Sam Jenis is a code name that he used. Sangenis is one name. So what he did is cut the name in half and said Sam Jenis. So that was his code name.

Mr. Triplett. Code name for what purpose?

The Witness. CIA. He was the head of Operation 40. One of my Watergate associates, Phillipe Diego (phonetic) was also Operation 40.

Mr. Triplett. Now just for the record, what exactly was Operation 40?

The Witness. It was an intelligence operation. Understand, before the Bay of Pigs invasion, you had three different groups that the CIA controlled. CIA controlled the Revolutionary Council, which was political. This was where Howard Hunt was in the political end of it. Okay, I had nothing to do with the political end of it, even though I knew Tony Lahone (phonetic) and some of the people in the political.

Mr. Triplett. You're talking about the CRC?

The Witness. Yeah. Cuban Revolutionary Council. Then you had the Brigade, which another person controlled that.

Then you had Operation 40 which Sam Jenis controlled.
So I had my associations in between really because here we had a special air group that we were associated with, Pedro Diez Lanz and myself, various pilots and myself, towards this special air group. At the same time I had, naturally, association with the Sangenis family.

Operation 40, the primary job was intelligence. In other words once a beach head was made inside of Cuba, the people to follow the beach head would be intelligence, which would be Operation 40, which already had contact inside Cuba through the CIA naturally. The Cuban CIA agents would immediately have direct contact with Operation 40.

And being an intelligence organization going into Cuba, in other words, to maintain contact with the local populace, the political and the military connections. That both CIA and members of this whole invasion group, whether it was the Revolutionary Council or the Brigade or from Operation 40 or CIA, make contact. And it's understandable that you have an organization like Operation 40 to make contact with certain people. If there's any betrayal with the people you make contact with in Cuba, well naturally it's logical, in order to fend your intelligence operation you would eventually start
spreading out and you'd have to go ahead and kill people, both political or military. That's part of fighting a war, you know.

Mr. Triplett. Well, you mentioned Antonio DeVarona (phonetic). Tony Varona.

The Witness. Yeah, Tony.

Mr. Triplett. When did you first meet him?

The Witness. I met Tony here in exile before the Bay of Pigs. Because we all got together trying to get the Cubans together to organize a resistance movement in exile against the Castro Government.

Mr. Triplett. When you say get together. Did you have brief meetings with Tony and the rest of the people?

The Witness. Myself? No. I went with various other people. For instance I went with Pedro, Marcus. We even went to New York with Marcus Sterling up there. We spoke with ex Presidents, you know.

Mr. Triplett. You did have one or more meetings with Tony Varona at the time?

The Witness. Not too many. I'll be very honest with you. Not too many.

Mr. Triplett. Three, four, half a dozen?

The Witness. Yeah, maybe a couple of meetings. Because again I'm not politics and my friends would be
the ones. Because I'm American remember. I'm not a Cuban. So it's better for them to make the contact and talk and talk politics.

Mr. Triplett. Up to this point while we've been talking about intelligence, we've been talking primarily about the CIA.

Did you have any contacts with representatives of Army Intelligence?

The Witness. Well, it's possible. Again, CIA draws from all intelligence services, both Naval, Army, Air Force Intelligence, and takes them away from their own service and then uses them as CIA agents.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

To your knowledge, did you provide any information or perform any activities on behalf of Army, Air Force or Naval Intelligence?

The Witness. Yes.

Alex Roark (phonetic) went on a mission to Central America and I did secure, or I did ask for Naval Intelligence, to ask for help, you know, to locate where Mr. Roark and his pilot -- Sullivan was his pilot who made this trip to Central America --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) This was the time that Mr. Roark turned up missing?
The Witness. Yeah. Jeffrey Sullivan and
Alex Roark.

Mr. Triplett. And to your knowledge, did Naval
Intelligence provide any assistance?

The Witness. Yes, they did. They immediately
sent out, I believe, Coast Guard aircraft and I
believe possibly Naval Air Force. I'm not sure, you
know, what they did, but I know they did go out and
provide the necessary search mission for locating the
aircraft.

Mr. Triplett. And was this because Mr. Roark
was a member of Naval Intelligence, or an associate?

The Witness. I didn't know too much of Alex's
background. Alex was a friend of mine. Very strongly
anti-communist. Alex did have an association in the
past with the FBI. His association, I would say that
he worked for them, not as an informant, but for them.

In what position, I don't know.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

What was your purpose in approaching Naval
Intelligence on his behalf, as opposed to State
Department, Coast Guard, Navy in general, Army?

The Witness. I'll be very honest with you. At
that particular time I didn't know. I wanted some
quick action and I got on the phone and I made the call
to Naval Intelligence.

Mr. Triplett. It was your assumption that the quick action would come from Naval Intelligence as opposed to any other source?

The Witness. Yes.

As a matter of fact I did have a meeting with Alex the day before he left on this mission, on this trip, at Opa locka airport.

Mr. Triplett. You say he was on a mission. On whose behalf was that mission?

The Witness. I don't know at that particular time. All I know is, we had the meeting at Opa locka airport. He told us he was on his way to Central America and then he completely disappeared.

Mr. Triplett. Have you had occasion on other occasions to phone Naval Intelligence and ask for assistance?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. Or to provide information?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. Have you been involved with organizations that have raised funds privately to perform anti-Castro activities? Raids, propaganda or whatever?

The Witness. Can you repeat the beginning of
of that?

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Have you been involved in any organizations that have raised private money for the purpose of fighting Fidel Castro or providing propaganda against him?

The Witness. Yes.

Pedro Diez Lanz, Marcus Diez Lanz and myself. Again, they made the connections with various people for funds in order to, you know, operate against Castro.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

When you say with various people, could you be more specific? How did they raise the funds and from whom?

The Witness. Personal contact. I will go ahead and tell you one of the groups, because most of the people I don't know who they got the funds from because it was not my position to do that. From Bacardi Rum Company, which the Vice-Consul, the Station Chief in Santiago works for the Rum Company after his retirement.

Mr. Triplett. And as a result of raising this money, did you personally make any trips into and out of Cuba?
The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. On how many occasions?

The Witness. Well -- oh, I'll give you another name. Dr. Louie Conte Aguerro, which is separate of the Bacardi Rum Company.

Dr. Louie Conte Aguerro was being trained and being financed by the United States Government, went over to Europe ---

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) Okay. So this wasn't privately financed. This was again Government money?

The Witness. I cannot exactly tell you that he received the money directly from the Government. But he contacted me at a meeting at the Miami Springs Villa one time with a whole room full of Cubans there who knew me, many of them knew me. One of the persons that was with him was Oscar Mastre (phonetic). They owned like GMQ in Cuba, his family. Which these people naturally had very close CIA connections and had their own financing. You've got to understand a lot of these people, they have their own financing. They would give money and the Government would reimburse them. So it isn't like it's coming directly from the Government. That's how they work. Go through their fronts.
And they asked me to do a series of air raids in Cuba, but to drop nothing but leaflets, which I agreed. I felt that -- there were five operations and they asked me what the operations were, how much money it would cost to do the operations, and I told them approximately about $5,000 per operation. That would lease the plane, the pilots involved and so forth. And I would obtain the pilots because they wanted me to stay out of it.

But unfortunately, because some of the pilots couldn't find their way in the daytime, as well as at night time, I had to go ahead and do them myself. Perform the operation myself personally.

Mr. Triplett. By the way, when and where did you receive your flight training?


Mr. Triplett. Through the military or privately?

The Witness. No, sir, privately. I took it through the GI Bill of Rights, my pilot training and so forth, through CAP. I was operations officer for a Civil Air Patrol Squadron Number 1 in Norfolk, and started to get my hours in in single engine aircraft and so forth.

Mr. Triplett. During what period of time were you in the CAP?
The Witness. I guess in the '40's or the '50's.

Mr. Triplett. All right. Getting back to missions into Cuba.

About how many missions in and out of Cuba did you make?

The Witness. I would safely say a great number of them.

Mr. Triplett. Well, ten, 50, or 100?

The Witness. No, I did over 100. Over 100 missions.

Mr. Triplett. Were these all by plane, or some by boat?


Mr. Triplett. Were the majority aircraft or the majority boat?

The Witness. The majority aircraft.

Mr. Triplett. And how again, precisely, were these missions financed?

The witness. Some with the knowledge of the Government and some without the knowledge of the Government.

Mr. Triplett. When you say with the knowledge, did you receive money from a representative of the Government, or was there a cut out like you described to where some private funds were replaced by the
Government?

The Witness. I would say that I myself personally did not receive the money directly from the Government. It was done through other people, which other people got me to do it. For instance, Dr. Louie Conte Aguerro. He directly said, "Frank, what's the operation cost? Here's the money." And I got it.

Mr. Triplett. And what was the average cost of each operation?

The Witness. About $5,000. $5,000 period.

Mr. Triplett. And that — did that include money or reimbursement for you and the other people involved to support your families?

The Witness. No. That was money for the particular operation.

Mr. Triplett. Well like you say, flying in and out of Cuba, one flight, dropping leaflets, would have cost $5,000?

The Witness. Right. Sure. You've got an aircraft. You've got to pay the pilots. You had to give the pilots like $1,500 each to do this mission. This was a mission that was a naturally dangerous mission.

Yes, as a matter of fact Alex went on several of these missions with me, taking pictures of the
operations and so forth.

Mr. Triplett. But you were the pilot frequently?

The Witness. Sometimes I was the pilot, yes.

Mr. Triplett. Who else went on these missions

with you besides Alex?

The Witness. Bill Johnson was one of the

pilots that I hired to work with me. Alex, naturally.

Jeffrey, Jeffrey Sullivan. If I think of any more

pilots I'll give it to Mr. Fonzi.

Mr. Triplett. We will recess for lunch until

1:00 o'clock.

(The committee, at 12:05 p.m., recessed, to

reconvene at 1:00 p.m.)
The committee reconvened at 1:30 p.m., Staff Counsel William K. Triplett, presiding.

Mr. Triplett. Let's go back on the record.

Mr. Sturgis advises that he has now recalled a couple of names that he couldn't recall this morning.

The name of your second wife?

The Witness. Juanita Terrell (phonetic) is her maiden name.

Mr. Triplett. And your first wife?

The Witness. Maiden name was Thompson. I'll remember the first name.

The Vice-Consul of Santiago, his name was Patterson.

Mr. Triplett. Patterson, the last name?

The Witness. Patterson. The Chief of Station and Vice-Consul of Santiago.

Mr. Triplett. Patterson.

The Witness. The Chief of Station in Havana, at the American Embassy, was William Caldwell (phonetic).

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

This morning we were talking about money coming either from or through the auspices of Bernard Barker during your activities after your return from Cuba.

Now exactly when and where did you meet Mr. Barker?
The Witness. At his home in the Northwest section and I believe when I met him I was with Pedro.

Mr. Triplett. Okay. Who introduced you?

The Witness. Pedro.

Mr. Triplett. So Pedro Diez Lanz knew him prior to that time?

The Witness. Right.

Mr. Triplett. And how many meetings did you have with Mr. Barker?

The Witness. Oh, numerous.

Mr. Triplett. All at his home?

The Witness. No. I had meetings at restaurants, at his home.

Mr. Triplett. At how many of these meetings did money actually change hands at the meeting?

The Witness. Never with me personally. As a matter of fact I received gifts from him, from his boss. Either going out to the Ranch House which was on, close to 36th Street near LeJuene Road. There used to be a Ranch House there. He took me there. He took me to dinner and said the boss told me to take you to dinner.

Another time for a Christmas holiday he gave me a bottle of booze.

Mr. Triplett. Okay. You received gifts from his
boss?


Mr. Triplett. And who was his boss at that time?

The Witness. Again I've never met his boss. Like I say it's possibly one of several agents that was his control officer.

Naturally the first one that I know of, who I had never met personally, was Eduardo. The second one naturally I believe it was Jim Knowles, and I think Jack Stewart comes in there somewhere.

Mr. Triplett. You had never personally met Eduardo?

The Witness. No. We'd all heard in the Cuban colony of Eduardo because he was political. Belonged to the political sector of CIA. And I had nothing to do with the political sector. And that had to be done with the Cuban Revolutionary Council.

Mr. Triplett. Do you know who Eduardo was?

The Witness. Personally, no. But I knew who Eduardo was. It was Barker's CIA control officer.

Mr. Triplett. I mean his actual full name?

The Witness. No, I did not know his actual full name.
Mr. Triplett. Do you know now?

The Witness. Oh, certainly.

Mr. Triplett. And who is that?

The Witness. Eduardo was E. Howard Hunt.

Mr. Triplett. And you say you've never met him?

The Witness. To the best of my knowledge.

Because remember at that time you run across a lot of people and unless you actually know who they are, you know, or --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) Pardon me. Let's clarify this.

You have met E. Howard Hunt?


Mr. Triplett. And you have, after the fact, learned that Eduardo was in fact E. Howard Hunt?

The Witness. Right.

Mr. Triplett. So you have met Eduardo?

The Witness. Oh, certainly. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

When did you first meet him?

The Witness. I believe it was Barker's office. He introduced me to him when I was going into the office and I think he was going out of the office.

Mr. Triplett. When?
The Witness. I'm not sure of the exact month, but I believe it was 1972. Before, you know, I got involved with the Plumbers Unit. The special intelligence unit formed by the President of the United States.

Mr. Triplett. You never met him before 1972?

The Witness. To the best of my knowledge I had never met this man before 1972. The name I knew, Eduardo. I did not know E. Howard Hunt was Eduardo. Never personally met this man to the best of my knowledge. Never at all. I don't ever recall meeting E. Howard Hunt, nor did I know that Eduardo was E. Howard Hunt before 1972. Never knew the connection between them.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

What was your role with respect to the International Anti-Communist Brigade?

The Witness. Well, going back, understand, my role was at one time this was a group that I formed which were one of many many groups that was formed in the Miami area. I'm talking about Cuban groups who were anti-Castro groups.

And Jerry Patrick Heming (phonetic) had a group of Americans from the United States or from Canada in the area, that these boys were associated with
Rolando Masferer. And we, because we were trying to do operations against Cuba we more or less got these fellows incorporated with us. But we have never done anything with them because it was a raunchy group of men. Believe me. Real raunchy. And they just more or less shifted away.

Mr. Triplett. You mentioned Heming and Rolando Masferer. Who else was involved?

The Witness. Well, I have never had any dealings with Rolando Masferer. Because you must understand that Rolando Masferer was a Senator in Cuba who, under the Batista regime, had a terrible name for torture and killing and so forth.

Mr. Triplett. His nickname was El Tigere wasn't it?

The Witness. El Tigere, little tiger.

But he was in exile. And we more or less -- when I say we, I talk about people like the Diez Lanz brothers and myself and other Cubans who more or less were anti-Batista, naturally. And so even as the years went by we integrated with certain people in the Cuban colony that had dealings with Batista in the past, but only certain people. And Masferer was not one of these people.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.
When did you form the International Anti-
Communist Brigade?

The Witness. Oh, I don't know. It was, I
imagine, in the early '60's, the Brigade was formed.
And then I gave up with it really. And then the
person who took over the Brigade was Bucanhan, Jim
Bucanhan.

Mr. Triplett. Jim Bucanhan?

The Witness. Who was a newspaper man from
the Sun Sentinel in Fort Lauderdale.

Mr. Triplett. Well, did you form it all on
your own, or were other people involved in the
formation?

The Witness. I more or less formed it on my
own. I had, I think, Ray Sanstrom take care of the
legal aspects of it and any letters or correspondence
that would come in would go to his office and so forth,
and that was it.

Mr. Triplett. Were the Diez Lanz brothers
involved with the formation of it, or the operation of
it?

The Witness. No. No, not really.

But again my friends, the Diez Lanz brothers,
are my friends and anything I would do naturally, I
would do with them or without them.
Mr. Triplett. How about Loren Hall?

The Witness. That name, until I started to get all this information pertaining to the JFK assassination, I never really, and truthfully never thought that I had met this man, nor did I know this man.

But as I came out, people like Jerry Patrick reminded me well, he was with my group and this and that and you met him and so forth. And then there was some things that I read in various books that Loren Hall did leave the Miami area, did go out there and wanted to raise money for the Brigade and so forth, and then I recollected that probably he was one of the persons that I did know here that was with the Jerry Patrick group.

Mr. Triplett. Is it possible you knew him by the name of Lorenzo-Bassilio (phonetic)?

The Witness. I don't think so. Hall is more, you know --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) How about Lawrence Howard, or Lorenzo Howard? Did you know him? Was he involved?

The Witness. No.

The only Howard I know was a David Howard. He was a pilot.

Mr. Triplett. Would that be Howard Davis?
The Witness. Howard Davis.

Mr. Triplett. That everybody called Howard?

The Witness. That's it. Well, they called him, yeah --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) Howard Davie?

The Witness. Howard Davie, right.

Mr. Triplett. What was his relationship with the group?

The Witness. Well, he was one of the people that I met through Jerry Patrick. There was a parachute group, you know, that he was trying to form. A parachute school or group. And they had been associated or involved with various other Cuban organizations to try to get tied up with, and it all boiled down to one thing. The money. Who had the money to do operations, who didn't have the money.

Mr. Triplett. Was Howard Davis connected with the CIA?

The Witness. At that time, I don't believe so. As a matter of fact I don't know, at that particular time.

Mr. Triplett. How about William Seymore? Did you know him? Or was he involved?

The Witness. I don't think I know Seymore. Remember, Jerry Patrick had a number of people,
a number of Americans with him and I didn't personally
know every one individually, you know. Only certain
ones that I did recall and some I didn't recall.

Mr. Triplett. Well, at that time Jerry Patrick
also formed a group called Interpen, or Intercontinental
Penetration Force?

The Witness. Right.

Mr. Triplett. Was that a subsidiary of your
group, or were they more or less in tandem, or what
was the relationship?

The Witness. I don't think there was any
relationship because they went off and did their own
thing, really. You know, after that they did their
own thing.

And I personally, like I say, I don't recall
when Bucanhan decided well, go ahead and use the
Brigade, because I didn't care at that particular
time. So I disassociated myself, you know, with them.
And Bucanhan took over the group.

As a matter of fact Bucanhan also can verify
that I was here until around November the 22nd.

Mr. Triplett. We'll get to that a little
later.

What other things were you doing at that time?
The Witness. I was doing air and boat operations
at the time with Bill Johnson.

Mr. Triplett. Air and boat operations? You mean into Cuba?

The Witness. Right.

Mr. Triplett. What was the funding of the International Anti-Communist Brigade?

The Witness. No funding at all. Completely broke.

Mr. Triplett. Just a paper organization?

The Witness. Just a paper organization. Just to have an organization to try to do something.

Mr. Triplett. Were there any activities beyond a beer party?

The Witness. I never went to any beer parties. I don't drink. I'm a teetotaler.

Mr. Triplett. I probably said that a little flippedly.

Were there any activities of the Brigade conducted whatsoever?

The Witness. As an organization at that time, no.

Mr. Triplett. Well, what was the purpose of the Brigade?

The Witness. As I said before, the purpose of the Brigade was to get a group of Cubans and at that
particular time to get these Americans to be available for any operation.

But I decided that I couldn't handle these people and I disassociated myself with Patrick and his group. They were uncontrollable.

Mr. Triplett. Was it a corporation? You mentioned Mr. Sanstrom was involved in it.

The Witness. It's very easy to find out. I think possibly it was formed as a corporation to try to arrange money legally. And like I said before, there was no money to be raised.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

If it was a corporation or even if it was a partnership, it would require more than one person as the organizer. Who else organized it with you? Whose names were on it?

The Witness. To be honest with you, my mind is blank on that. If it was a corporation and legally incorporated, Tallahassee would have the papers and the people's names on it.

Mr. Triplett. How long were you with the organization before you turned it over to Bucanhan?

The Witness. Well I didn't exactly turn it over. I just let it ride and told Bucanhan, oh, forget it. So he more or less started it up himself
and made himself the Secretary General of the organization and so forth.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

For how long were you involved with it? Weeks, months, years?

The Witness. No. Not that long. The Brigade, it may have been a year possibly, that I wanted to go ahead and be involved with it. But like I say, I just lost interest in the whole thing because of a lack of funding.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever been contacted by any person for the purpose of killing somebody in this country?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. By whom?

The Witness. At that time, a CIA agent.

Mr. Triplett. And who was the agent?

The Witness. Do I have to tell you? Well, I've got nothing to hide. I'm sorry I even said that.

The year, I don't recall the year, but I don't know whether I called this party or the party called me. Anyway we got together and in getting together, I was either asked at his home or at a restaurant, whether I would be interested in doing a domestic assassination. And that surprised me.
Mr. Triplett. Who was this person?


Mr. Triplett. And approximately when? Do you recall?

The Witness. No. I don't recall.

Mr. Triplett. Can you put it in a frame of reference, after you returned from Cuba? Before or after the Bay of Pigs?

The Witness. This is the problem. It was after I came from Cuba. I don't recall what year. Whether it was before or after the Bay of Pigs. I honestly don't recall.

I did tell Sam Jenis about this and he kind of laughed and he said really, you've got to be kidding. Well, find out.

So, I pursued it. I told Barker, I said yes, I would do it, a domestic assassination. But first I've got to find out who the person is. Then he started questioning me, well how would you go about it and so forth. And I said hey, you know, it all depends on who the party is.

So we went from there and I had a couple of meetings with him pertaining to that. Then finally I was told to pin him down and say hey, I will not do it unless I get word from his control office. And
that's what I did. I said, until your control officer sits down with me and tells me that he wants a domestic assassination done, then I would do it. But through you, no. I want another verification from your control officer. He never came back.

Mr. Triplett. Did he ever talk to his control officer?

The Witness. Evidently he must have, because he never mentioned it after that particular incident. And I'd been in touch with him up until the day of Watergate, our problems with Watergate. And he never came back and told me whether or not he wanted me to go ahead and continue, you know, whatever the domestic assassination was. Because I said I want to know who the party is, depending on how I would do it. If it's going to be domestic, it's pretty hot stuff, you know.

So I told Barker, well, go to the Everglades, you dig a hole, put lye in there and bury the guy or we'll get an airplane or boat and do it out here in the Gulf, you know, blow the boat up and so forth.

But I said before I actually do it, I want your control officer to sit down with me and I want it from his mouth that this is national security business. And I would want to know who the party is, depending on how I would do this particular operation, you know.
Because you've got to kidnap the guy.

Mr. Triplett. And who was the party he wanted killed?

The Witness. I don't know. He never told me.

Mr. Triplett. Did he offer you any money or any facilities for the purpose of doing this?

The Witness. No. It never got to that point.

In other words, after I told him, you know, that I would have to sit down with his control officer, the thing never developed into anything else.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever been contacted by anyone else, or by Mr. Barker, for the purpose of killing anybody else domestically?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. Only that one time?

The Witness. Yes. Just that one time.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever been contacted by anybody for the purpose of killing somebody outside of the country?

The Witness. Since I came from Cuba? No.

Mr. Triplett. Specifically Fidel Castro?

The Witness. Oh, with Fidel, yes. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Well, that's killing somebody.

The Witness. I'm sorry. I'm awfully sorry.

Well, Marita Lorenz, but naturally we're going
back I think what, about '60 or '61. That's about it.

Mr. Triplett. Just one occasion, or more than
one occasion?


Mr. Triplett. And again, who contacted you
for that purpose?

The Witness. For that particular purpose who
contacted me to go ahead and set this thing up? No
one at all. Just the Cuban groups, you know, here
ourselves, trying to go ahead and do penetration work
inside of Cuba. We were going to try to kill Fidel
naturally.

Mr. Triplett. So it was a joint decision of
which you were a part?

The Witness. A joint decision.

Mr. Triplett. Well, whose idea was it?

The Witness. Yeah, it was a joint decision to
go ahead and try to kill Castro naturally. Which
continues until this day. The only exception is
that I'm not involved today and haven't been for the
last number of years to do anything like that against
Castro.

Mr. Triplett. How many times since you came back
from Cuba have you been involved in planning or
attempting an assassination on Castro?
The Witness. How many times? Well, going back many years ago, I would think that after the Bay of Pigs invasion, maybe shortly after that, I more or less lost interest because of not having the proper financing. In order to do that you have to have proper financing, to kill Fidel.

I'd say, the Bay of Pigs failed, and I may have tried after 1963 because of the President's assassination, because I was very bitter about that.

And I felt, from as early 1964, that the President was assassinated, that Castro's intelligence service was one of others that was behind the killing of the President. And naturally my feeling was continuous revenge against the friends that he executed and would be feeling that he was involved in the killing of the President.

Mr. Triplett. So how many times did you attempt, or plan to kill Castro?

The Witness. Oh, I would say about, not counting the Marita Lorenz thing at the very beginning, I would say here in the United States, probably about two times, two or three times, approximately.

Mr. Triplett. And who else was involved with you on these two or three occasions?

The Witness. Myself and a number of Cuban groups
here in town that eventually left, or probably are
living in Venezuela, are Venezuelan citizens, or
Mexico and Central America.

Mr. Triplett. Again you mentioned groups. It
had to be individual people.

The Witness. Well, individual people who had
their own groups.

Mr. Triplett. Who were these individual
people? I want their names.

The Witness. Oh? Well, that's pretty tough
because of the years that went by and the connections
that we have had. My goodness.

Mr. Triplett. How about Orlando Bosch?

The Witness. Orlando Bosch, yeah.

Mr. Triplett. How about Louise Posada?

The Witness. Louise Posada? I don't know
whether I know Louise Posada. Louise Posada? But
Orlando Bosch, yes.

Mr. Triplett. Did you ever discuss the
assassination of Fidel Castro or plan the
assassination of Fidel Castro with any official
of the United States Government?

The Witness. No, sir. Not here. When I
left Cuba and came here, no.

Mr. Triplett. How about an FBI Agent named
Frank O'Brien?

The Witness. O'Brien? I don't recall Frank O'Brien. But more or less, over the past years, the FBI has been in touch with me. But I don't recall me discussing anything about killing Fidel with any FBI agents.

Mr. Triplett. You say you don't recall, or never did?

The Witness. I don't recall.

Mr. Triplett. So you may have?

The Witness. It's possible. Again I will say that I've been involved in so many things in the past years that I could not say, you know, yes or no. You know, straight out.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever planned, or been contacted by other people for the purpose of assassinating somebody outside this country other than Fidel Castro?


Mr. Triplett. Like maybe a Central or South American President or Dictator, or Raul Castro?

The Witness. Well, the Castro brothers, including Chang, I have naturally went to various countries and naturally there are always conspiracies going on with some of the Cuban exiles that would like to
really nail these people.

Mr. Triplett. I'm talking specifically?

The witness. Myself specifically? Well, I have heard through my associations with various Cubans in the past of wanting to go ahead and try to, you know, kill them on certain visits that they had taken from Cuba to certain other countries. But for myself specifically to be involved in trying to do it, I don't recall that me myself did any planning stage, you know, trying to kill Castro.

And to be honest with you, if there was a plan to do it, I would certainly get myself involved because I hate the man. I would have no hesitation.

Mr. Triplett. In other words you're not adverse to that sort of plan? Even today? Is that what you're saying?

The Witness. Well, let me say this. I won't say that because I'm much older today. Much older and much wiser and you can't buck the system. And if Uncle Sam says don't touch the man, well then you don't touch the man. So I don't touch him.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Let's get back to the time when you were in Cuba. What relationships did you have, if any, with
the casinos, or the casino owners?

The Witness. I believe at one of the Staff
meetings that I had with Castro, it was either at
the Air Force Base or the Prime Minister's office,
and it might have been as early as February, Castro
wanted me to help Pasternita Nunez, who was a woman
that was in the mountains with me, or I was with them
in the mountains. She was a minister and all this
control came under her. So Fidel wanted me to help
her because of the confusion in Government that was
going on as early as February.

So I, representing the Cuban Government, assisted
Pasternita in the, well say control for the Government,
of the casinos. I believe there was approximately,
maybe 22 casinos at that particular time.

My job was, for Castro, to make sure, as he
was changing everything around, to make sure that
only a set amount of tables in each casino would be
operational and that each one of these tables had
to have the Government tax stamp on the tables. And
my job was to make sure that for instance, the Havana
Hilton was a big room there and they had X amount
of tables, roulette, black jack, this, that and so
forth, that they would have to have each table with
a tax stamp, and my job was to make sure that that was
Mr. Triplett. And this was at the same time that you were with the Air Force in Cuba?


Mr. Triplett. Had you, previous to that time, ever worked in any of the casinos?

The Witness. I have never worked, nor have I owned any gambling casinos in my whole life.

Mr. Triplett. Had you ever worked for any of the people who owned casinos at that time?

The Witness. No. Never in my whole life. No. None whatsoever. The only contact I ever had with either casino operators or the management is when I would go on an inspection tour to inspect the tables in the rooms and so forth for the Government. And that wasn't too many times because I had my other duties.

Mr. Triplett. So you're saying you were essentially an inspector and tax regulator?

The Witness. Yeah. To make sure they keep everything honest.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have any personal or social connections with any of the people that were involved with the casinos?

The Witness. Social, no. But I've had personal
contact with them because as I went to the casinos I
introduced myself, who I was. Naturally had to have
my identification. I used to have my uniform on,
but after awhile Fidel said that anybody who would
go to the casinos -- that was one of the rules that
anybody in uniform had to keep out of the casinos
area, the gambling area. They could go to the clubs,
but not in the gambling area. So I had to change
my clothes from my military uniform to my civilian
clothes and then I went and identified myself. Because
I used to go to the casinos and go up to the crap
table and I'd grab, if somebody would roll the dice,
I would grab the dice and I would look at the dice
and I would say excuse me, I'm just checking the dice
and so forth. These are things I would do. They would
be very angry at me for doing it.

Mr. Triplett. How did you go about checking
the dice?

The Witness. Well, I know something, a little
bit. With the dice, you know, they could be shaved
and have mercury in them where they would fall a certain
way and so forth and they could switch dice and so
forth, and I wasn't really up to that. Because Fidel
asked me to come to the United States, if possible,
to go ahead and get some people who knew about gambling
and who knew about how to do the roulette wheel, you
know, electronically and so forth. So I was going to
go ahead and do that, but unfortunately I didn't have
time to do that, to get the proper people to work for
the Cuban Government in order that the tables would be,
you know, operated in a legal manner.

And naturally there came a day where Fidel
ordered me to go ahead and close the casinos for ten
days, which he wanted to put them out of business,
which he did do for ten days.

Mr. Triplett. And you personally closed the
casinos for ten days?

The Witness. Well, I notified the casino -- I
did not notify the casino operators -- but I notified
the inspectors that the casinos were going to be
closed on a certain day. So naturally, Pasternita
Nunez, who was the minister, sent out the memorandum
form to the casino operators that the casinos were
going to be closed. And they got furious about it.

When the order came about, that day it was
closed, naturally inspectors with troops went to the
casinos and made sure that the doors were locked and
nobody could enter the casino rooms to do gambling.

Then the next thing that followed that actually,
was big demonstrations of the families of the casino
operators -- not operators -- but the casino workers because they had a union there. So they had a peaceful demonstration and Fidel was forced, ten days later, to reopen the casinos.

Mr. Triplett. Did any of the casino owners personally complain to you?

The Witness. No. During this period of time I had no contact with the casino operators because again I was involved in these other things that I was doing for the Cuban Government.

Mr. Triplett. But you were occasionally at the casinos inspecting?

The Witness. Oh, yeah.

Mr. Triplett. So you at least knew them?

The Witness. I knew some of them, yeah. Because there were so many people who had pieces of the operation or whatever.

Mr. Triplett. So did any of them ever complain to you of this ten day closing?

The Witness. Well I, at one time, had a meeting with Fidel, a Staff meeting, and Fidel told me that he was going to close the casinos. He was going to run the God-Damned gangsters out of Cuba. This is what he told me.

So during the process of the times that I went
to do my inspections, I told a number of the people, whether it was an operator of the casino or whether it was the management, you know, that was there, that hey, Fidel is going to go ahead and close the casinos and so forth. They didn't believe it.

Mr. Triplett. Who did you tell?

The Witness. Well, I can say one of them was Santos Trafficante one time. I was at the -- what the hell casino was I at -- and Fidel's sister was there with this movie actor, John -- the one who played Wild Bill Hickcock -- so she called me over.

The younger sister. Fidel's younger sister. And I sat down and Trafficante came over and I got up because I knew he was one of the operators of this particular casino. And so I got aside with him and I told him, I said, Mr. Trafficante, I had a meeting with Castro and he said he was going to go ahead and nationalize all American business interests and he was going to run the God-Damned gangsters, or the gambling operators out of Cuba.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Who else did you tell this to, if you recall?

The Witness. Well, I told a Mr. Hymie Levine (phonetic). He was there. And I believe that's about all because very shortly, a few days later, naturally
the things were closed.

Mr. Triplett. When they were closed, did any of the owners or operators complain to you about the closing?

The Witness. No. Because I had no further contact with them. When they were reopened again I was seeing to my duties elsewhere. They were so heavy on me, that my inspectors continually worked throughout the casinos, all the different casinos.

Mr. Triplett. How long were you actually a casino inspector?

The Witness. Well I would say from February until June when I left. That was it. Because I left the 30th of June, 1959.

Mr. Triplett. When you left the 30th of June, that was sometime after the ten day closing you previously described?

The Witness. Oh, yeah, sure.

Mr. Triplett. During this period of five or so months that you were a casino inspector, did you have occasion to make any deals with any of the operators or owners of the casinos?

The Witness. I never made any deals whatsoever with anyone. None whatsoever. Because when I came over here, you must understand, my activities here did
not include doing anything with those people. I have no interest in those people.

Mr. Triplett. Did you receive any favors or presents from any?


Mr. Triplett. Did anybody offer you any favors or presents?

The Witness. No.

I would not be in this situation today, the way I am, if I did. Because I understand that people who deal with them have good connections and I am, throughout this whole thing with Watergate, in a very very bad financial situation. All this publicity since Watergate, with the JFK situation, have left me at a very very bad situation financially.

Otherwise, I have had tremendous positions offered me, but unfortunately because of the exposure that I have received throughout all of this, it has denied me really to earn a decent living. And if I had mob connections, believe me, then I would be all right.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever heard of somebody called Stretch Rubin?


Mr. Triplett. Did you have occasion at one time
to save his life?


Mr. Triplett. How did that happen?

The Witness. Well, I was in my jeep with some
of my bodyguards and I saw a commotion right near
the Casa Grande Hotel. I stopped because I heard
this American raising a lot of hell and so forth,
and I stopped and I jumped out of my jeep between
my bodyguards. These were Barbudas (phonetic).

I asked them what's happening here? They said
well, he's one of these gangsters here and so forth
and Rubin is hollering, you know, "They are going
to kill me, they are going to shoot me."

So I went over and says wait a minute, like
what's the problem here?

And he said look I just left the business
over here, and he had two bags of money. I said,
did you steal anything, or what? He said, no. He
said I checked the slot machines. They had a
gambling room at the Casa Grande Hotel.

So I told the Barbudas, I says look -- I told
him, look, these people are not going to kill you. I
says as a matter of fact I am going to take you with me,
you know, so you will be all right.

So I told the Barbudas, leave him alone. I am
going to take him with me. And I told him to come with me. Whether I walked with him someplace, or took him into the jeep with me. That is what I did.

Mr. Triplett. By the way, I presume Stretch would be a nickname. What was Mr. Rubin's actual name?

The Witness. I do not know.

Mr. Triplett. All you know is Stretch Rubin?

The Witness. Stretch Rubin, right.

Mr. Triplett. Did you subsequently see Mr. Rubin on occasion after that?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Did he introduce you to any of his friends?

The Witness. Yes.

Remember, this is Santiago, Cuba. The next time I saw him was when I got to Havana and they came over to the Air Force to see me because I told them I was going to Havana, I was going to the Air Force. So they came over to the Air Force to see me. And he brought another person over to the Air Force, which was a Hymie Levine.

Mr. Triplett. Did he introduce you to Mr. Levine at that time?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Was there any purpose for the
introduction of Mr. Levine?

The Witness. Yes. He was facinated with the fact that I was an American officer with the Rebel forces, especially with Fidel. That day they came out to see me, Fidel came in with a helicopter and he landed and Fidel saw me at a distance, and naturally they were there to see me, and Fidel walked over with his entourage and saw me and gave me an embrazo, you know. So they were highly impressed. The fact, you know, Fidel and here's this American, a Rebel officer. And Fidel left after that.

Mr. Triplett. Did Stretch Rubin introduce you to anybody else?

The Witness. Well, from that time -- let's see, this was in January. Then remember I didn't have anything to do with -- no, I did not have anything to do with the gambling at that time. Because it came later. In February.

But in February, what Hymie did, and Stretch both, they said I am going to introduce you to some of the operators when you identify yourself to them, which I did because I saw them at casinos. So I am not sure which casino it was. I saw them at one casino and naturally they introduced me to one of the
managers who was operating the place.

Mr. Triplett. Who was that?

The Witness. I forget off-hand who it was.

So they mentioned, this is Frank Fiorini. He is Fidel's right-hand man. In charge of this. I mean, this is how this thing went around. So I got to know who was who, you know, and I made my report when I got back to my office with Pasternita, because they really didn't know who was who and so forth. Because many of the documents that they had concerning, you know the ministry concerning the casinos, many of them were missing. So we had to go ahead and find out who was involved in the Hilton operation, who was involved in the Nationale, who was involved in the Capri, who was involved in the thing. You know, we had to go in and try to make a list of these things, of the people involved in the operation of the gambling casinos.

Mr. Triplett. Well, who were some of these people that you do recall that Stretch Rubin and Hymie Levine introduced you to?

The Witness. I think one of them was Santos Trafficante. Let's see, at the Nationale I think he introduced me -- who was the operator of the Nationale -- McLeaney (phonetic) I think was the one
at the Nationale.

Mr. Triplett. Which McLeaney?

The Witness. Mike McLeaney. He introduced me
to Mike McLeaney and told Mike who I was. And I
told Mike, if you don't mind telling your people
that if I come here, or my inspectors come here, be
courteous with them because this is the way it has
got to be with Fidel. It has got to be strictly
legit and we are going to find out whether your
slot machines -- well, there was no slot machines --
but whether your roulette machines are working properly,
whether your dice tables, there is no loaded dice.
All these other things that I instructed the people
I was introduced to, if I was introduced by them.

But they were impressing their people that they
knew me. Especially Stretch telling them that I saved
his life, you know. It's one of those things.

Mr. Triplett. Did he introduce you to anybody
else that you recall?

The Witness. He introduced me to a number of
people.

Mr. Triplett. Considering these people you
were introduced to, other than telling them that they
had to keep their slot machines straight --

The Witness. (Interposing) No slot machines now.
Because Fidel never told them they could do the slot machines.

Mr. Triplett. Okay, that their games had to be legitimate, whatever they were.

The Witness. Right.

Mr. Triplett. Other than that, what other services, if any, did you perform for these people?

The Witness. For what people?

Mr. Triplett. These people, Stretch Rubin, Hymie Levine and the people they introduced you to?

The Witness. Well, I never performed any services for them because I represented the Cuban Government. Everything had to be a set way for the Cuban Government and that was it.

Mr. Triplett. How did you first meet Norman Rothman?

The Witness. There in Havana.

Mr. Triplett. How did you meet him?

The Witness. Introduced by either Stretch Rubin or Hymie Levine.

Mr. Triplett. What was the nature of your association with Mr. Rothman?

The Witness. The same thing. Introduction, you know. I was going to inspect the casino and so forth.
Mr. Triplett. Did you ever perform services for him at that time, or later?

The Witness. Perform services for Norman Rothman?

Mr. Triplett. Yes.

The Witness. I never worked for these people.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever met Joseph Shilmon?

The Witness. I don't know Joseph Shilmon.

Mr. Triplett. Shilmon?

The Witness. You mean Commandant Schmone?

Mr. Triplett. No, that's not the man we are talking about.

How about Robert McKewon (phonetic)?

The Witness. I don't know. The name sounds familiar. I might have read it in books or something about McKewon. But I do not recall personally ever meeting him.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever met Dominic Bartone?


Mr. Triplett. When and where did you first meet him?

The Witness. At the Air Force Base. He came to the Air Force Base. I think his people flew in
in an experimental aircraft and landed at the Air
Force Base and they were trying to sell this aircraft
to the Air Force. And I put more or less a clout to
it because I said hey, what the hell are we going to
do with this big aircraft, you know. They wanted
some ridiculous amount for it. I think it was a four
engine aircraft. And that is how I met Bartone.

Mr. Triplett. And have you had any associations
with Bartone since then?

The Witness. No. I met Bartone one other time
in exile, through the exile movement.

Mr. Triplett. When you say in exile, you mean
here in the United States?

The Witness. Here in the United States.

Pertaining to equipment necessary to fight against
Castro.

Mr. Triplett. You may have met him?

The Witness. I think I did one time, with
Hymie Levine. I'm not sure. I am pretty sure that
is the only way because otherwise on my own I never
had any connection with him.

Mr. Triplett. So you were associating with
Hymie Levine after your return to the United States?

The Witness. Oh, when I came over here I ran
across Hymie Levine one time, yes. Hymie Levine at
one time said this Dominic Bartone was, I forget, some office he had downtown or something, and I went with him at his office.

Mr. Triplett. Let me make sure I have this straight.

You have seen Hymie Levine one time since you came back and on that one time he probably took you to see Dominic Bartone?

The Witness. I am almost sure it was Hymie Levine that took me to see Dominic Bartone. But now Hymie Levine, over the past years, I have been in touch with Hymie Levine and the reason for that is, Hymie came here from Cuba himself and stayed here all these years.

And as a matter of fact Hymie Levine did have a stroke. As a matter of fact I took Hymie Levine to my home. Hymie Levine had dinner in my home and I liked Hymie Levine. I liked him. He was a nice fellow. A nice old fellow.

Mr. Triplett. Did you ever meet Sam Benton?

The Witness. I don't recall Sam Benton.

Mr. Triplett. By the way, did Norman Rothman ever offer you money to assassinate Fidel Castro?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. Never?
The Witness. No. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever met Charles Tourine?


Mr. Triplett. Once, or more than once? What was the nature of your association with him?

The Witness. Strictly casinos.

Mr. Triplett. Have you seen him since you returned to the United States, or talked to him on the phone?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. How about Dino Cellini over there in Havana?

The Witness. I ran into Dino one time on 36th Street when he was buying some bread, and this is going back a few years.

Mr. Triplett. So you've only seen him once since you have been back in the United States?

The Witness. Once that I know of.

Mr. Triplett. Have you talked to him on the phone?


Mr. Triplett. How about Santos Trafficante? Have you seen or heard from him since you returned to
the United States?

The Witness. All of these years I may have run into him again on 36th Street one time.

Mr. Triplett. Was that an accidental meeting, or did you plan to meet him there?

The Witness. Accidental.

Mr. Triplett. Have you talked to him on the phone?

The Witness. Not that I recall.

Mr. Triplett. Approximately when was it that you ran into Santo Trafficante?

The Witness. Oh, this was years ago. I don't recall just about what year it was. Going back many years ago.

Mr. Triplett. How about Donald Edward Browder?

The Witness. I don't recall Browder.

Mr. Triplett. Joe Marola (phonetic)?

The Witness. I ran into Marola two or three times.

Mr. Triplett. When did you first meet him and how?

The Witness. I don't recall, really, when I first met Joe Marola.

Mr. Triplett. You do not recall when you met him? Did you meet him in Cuba or did you meet him in
the United States?

The Witness. Possibly I met him in Cuba. If not in Cuba, it had to be here in the United States, in the Miami area.

Mr. Triplett. How about Carlos Marcella (phonetic)?


Mr. Triplett. You never met him?

The Witness. Not that I know of.

Mr. Triplett. Never talked to him over the phone?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. How about Sam Giocana (phonetic)?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. You've never met him?


Mr. Triplett. John Rozelli (phonetic)?

The Witness. No, never met him.

Again I will say if these people were ever in Cuba, went back during the time I was inspecting the casinos, I was introduced to several people, you know. And who knows? I may have met these people, hello and goodbye, and that was the end of it. But to my knowledge, today, I don't believe I ever met these people.

Mr. Triplett. How about Joe Rivers? When and
how did you meet him?

The Witness. In Cuba.

Mr. Triplett. And have you seen or talked to him since you returned to the United States?

The Witness. I think I run into him one time, possibly.

Mr. Triplett. About when was that?

The Witness. On the Beach, I guess. I don't know. I'm going back many years ago now.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

The Witness. And that was accidental.

Mr. Triplett. This last approximately 12 or 13 people we talked about -- it might be more, I do not have the exact count -- this last group of people that we have been discussing, when is the last time you saw or talked to any of them?

The Witness. Years. Believe me. And I don't recall what year, where at or what. It has been years. I go to the Beach quite often and that is where they stay at. And if you run out to the Beach you are liable to run into them accidently, you know.

Mr. Triplett. You go to the Beach quite often?

The Witness. I haven't been at the Beach for awhile, you know, but I used to go quite often to the Beach.
Mr. Triplett. Have you ever had any associations with the Drug Enforcement Administration?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. And what type of associations?

The Witness. Well, while I was in jail, just before I got out of jail on the Watergate thing, I was in the Dade County jail, where I got released here. A friend of mine came to see me and wanted to get in touch with the CIA. And I looked at him and I said, you got to be crazy. I am in jail. How am I going to get in touch with the CIA for you? I said, tell me what it is about?

He said well, Frank, it is National security business outside the country.

I said well, you are going to have to wait until I get out. Which, in a few days I did get out here. So when I did get out he made contact with me over at my home. His name was Jerry Bucanhan.

Mr. Triplett. Jim Bucanhan's brother?


Jerry Bucanhan.

So I made contact with a Mr. McVaine (phonetic).

Mr. Triplett. What was his first name? Do you recall?

The Witness. No. I forget his first name. There
is only one McVaine because that's a code name that
they use. There's only one agent that uses that
particular code name.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

The Witness. And in the process of that,
making contact with McVaine, I got a call from the
Senate Watergate Committee, which I had to go to
Washington, D.C. and I was questioned again over
the same thing just like I am going over the same
thing here, the Rockefeller Committee and so forth
questioned me. And then finally the punch line came,
have you been in touch with CIA since you have been
out of jail? And I said, yes, I have. Who? And I
said well, it pertained to National security business.
So why don't you get in touch with these people and
find out, you know, because I do not even know what
kind of National security business it is. I have
not even had time to make the personal contact, you
know.

So I was instructed by the CIA stationed here
that any of the Watergate people could not have any
personal contact with the local CIA stationed here.
Any contact with CIA would have to be done through
Langley, Virginia. So they slammed the door in my
face here.
So then I had to go through a friend of mine who I knew had direct contact with CIA. So I turned my friend over to another intelligence organization to make contact with them.

Mr. Triplett. What other intelligence organization?


Mr. Triplett. Well, this is very interesting, Mr. Sturgis. My question was, have you ever had any contact with the Drug Enforcement Administration?

The Witness. Yes. This is what leads up to it.

Mr. Triplett. All right. Keep going then.

The Witness. So we had a meeting with the agent in the car, which was tape recorded and Mr. Bucanhan was with me. And Mr. Bucanhan spelled out everything. It had to do with international drug smuggling.

So I told them, I says, well, I am turning him over to you people because that is out of my line, which I did.

So a meeting was set up with U.S. Customs and the DEA for Jerry Bucanhan to do what he had to do with them. And that is it.

Mr. Triplett. And is that the only contact you
personally had with DEA?

The Witness. Yes. Well, that and a few other things. But that is it more or less.

Mr. Triplett. Well, a few other things. What few other things? Have you been investigated?

The Witness. No, not as an informant because I am not registered with those people. But there are other people that I did, have made contact with these people, to work with these people.

Mr. Triplett. Are you familiar with the name Kenneth Bernstein?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. And what is your association with him?

The Witness. I have no personal association with him. This is where Jerry Bucanhan comes in because he worked on that case.

Mr. Triplett. Bernstein was with DEA?

The Witness. Bernstein, at the beginning, was not with DEA, but because of the investigation that Jerry Bucanhan was doing as an undercover agent for DEA and U.S. Customs, this is where Bernstein at a later date was recruited by DEA and so forth. You would have to look at the record on that because I was not too much involved in that. This was a Jerry
Bucanhan situation.

Mr. Triplett. Are you familiar with the name Steve Czukas?


Mr. Triplett. And what is your association or knowledge of him?

The Witness. Steve Czukas is a U.S. Customs investigator.

Mr. Triplett. Is that also the person you contacted with respect to Customs?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Have you had any other dealings with Mr. Czukas other than this one you related?

The Witness. Any time that any information -- yes, I have, pertaining to information concerning Cuban terrorists, that I felt a lot of it was done by Cuban intelligence and so forth, in order that CIA would have a hand in it. This was international. That they would be advised of it through Steve Czukas.

Mr. Triplett. Now when you talk about Cuban terrorists, are you talking about any Cuban terrorist, or just pro-Castro Cuban terrorists?

The Witness. I am talking about the pro-Castro Cuban terrorists because I am not aware of all the terrorists activity that's going on in this area.
Because I am not in that business. I am not in the business of investigations or anything like that at the present time. But any time I would gather some information through friends of mine, like CIA fellows who were Cubans, this information, if I felt that it was essential to the Government, then I would turn certain people over, make introductions to certain people to Steve Czukas who in turn, if they had to go ahead and take them to either the DEA or U.S. Customs or FBI or CIA. He was my contact with the Federal Agencies to turn these people and the information over to them and I kept out of it.

Because I maintained to them that much of the drug smuggling in this country here, which is slowly, Castro is behind it. A lot of the drug smuggling has something to do with the terrorist activities that has been going on here.

So these things I am concerned of, which I consider National security to this country. And because I, myself, would not want to be directly involved in any of these things as far as, you know, being the informant or anything like that. I made the connection for these people to go see Steve, go see this, go see that. Get in touch with him, and then they were on their own. I kept out of it.
Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Again, why did you use Steve Czukas as a go-between?

The Witness. Because he had contacts with CIA.

Mr. Triplett. To your knowledge was he a CIA agent or employee?

The Witness. Steve Czukas? To my knowledge, I do not know. The only thing I know about Steve Czukas, he is a very influential man with the U.S. Customs for many years and even though his capacity is not as an official of that, but he holds great influence and personally I like him. Tremendous man.

Mr. Triplett. Are you familiar with Cesar Diosdado?

The Witness. I have heard of him. I am not sure if I am familiar with him or not.

Mr. Triplett. Have you had any dealings with the Immigration and Naturalization Service?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. What type of dealings was that?

The Witness. I had my citizenship taken away from me in the early '60's when I came from Cuba. It was because of all the attempts against Castro and my activities against Castro, which I did not know at that time the American Government did not want these
activities to persist. So naturally, not knowing this, the Government put pressure on me.

I went with Marcus Diez Lanz to go to Guatemala to speak with President Ydigoras in Guatemala. And evidently the Cuban Intelligence Service found out that Diez Lanz and myself were there and we were eating dinner and here it comes over the television in the dining room, it showed my picture and Diez Lanz' picture, that we were there for the United States, which was not true, for the United States Government, arranging for bases in Guatemala to invade Cuba.

So that evening at our hotel, the Chief Intelligence Officer of President Ydigoras told us that for all concerned, it would be much better that we leave Guatemala because of the international pressure that was going on by our presence there and us talking with President Ydigoras. So naturally we left.

Marcus Diez Lanz decided on his return trip to the United States we would go by way of Mexico in order to arrange for his reentry, or whatever he had to do, and people he had to see in Mexico, and I would leave Guatemala directly to Miami.

When I got to Miami I was detained going through
the gate at Customs and Immigration and they told me that I would have to prove — evidently my name was on the black list there, and they grabbed me, took me to a side room and they said you are going to have to prove that you are an American citizen. I said, you have got to be kidding. This is my passport. Well, we can not accept it. They were busting my ass. Excuse my language. That is exactly what they were doing. And I got very angry at them. Because there was some shit in Washington going on because of me and Diez Lanz being in Guatemala with President Ydigoras.

So they told me, they said, we are going to send you back to Guatemala. I says look, I am an American citizen. I have my passport. In order for me to get a passport I have to have my birth certificate. I was born in this country and you bastards are not going to deport me anywhere because if you deport me back to Guatemala, I will sneak in the country. What are you going to do? You are going to have to put me in prison.

Well, they locked my ass up. Would you believe it? They did. They locked my ass up. Right here in this Post Office here. I got out 30 minutes later.

Then I had a series of things I had to go to on
Biscayne Boulevard at the Immigration there with Mr. White who is the presiding officer for the Immigration, not knowingly every time I had to go there, the Government, with the Federal Attorney, popped it out, he says well, Mr. Sturgis is no longer a citizen of the United States. Here is a paper, a document signed by the Secretary of State taking away Mr. Sturgis' citizenship.

Well, this little Guinnie (phonetic) here blew his stack. And I said, all you queers up in Washington, D.C. in the State Department -- believe me, on record, on tape there. And I apologized to Mr. White. And I looked at that Federal prosecutor and I says, you, and I said if you fall into it with those queers up there that you represent, and believe me, I was so upset that my lawyer was holding me down. And I used every filthy word in the language. Take my citizenship away? Illegal.

I contacted Mr. George Smathers, Senator Smathers, Mr. Smathers contacted the State Department and wrote a letter saying you mean to tell me, at the stroke of a pen, that you took the citizenship of this World War II hero -- I don't know if I'm a hero or not -- at a stroke of your pen?

He says, well, you know, documents are put in
front of me and I just sign them. He says, is that right? He says then I, as a Senator, somebody can put a document in front of you and you will take my citizenship away from me. He said well, no, it's not like that. And he said, bull shit it is not like that.

That is exactly what happened. Well Senator Smathers told me, he says, Frank -- cooked steak for me at his house with his apron on, and cooked steak for me and Pedro Diez Lanz -- he says don't worry about it. He says, if they do not give you your citizenship back, Frank, I will put a special order in to the Congress or the Senate and you will get your citizenship back. And I got it back eventually.

But can you imagine the Secretary of State signing my citizenship away and that dirty bastard, when the war was going, was out screwing while I was fighting and giving my blood for this country?

Mr. Rubin. Okay. Now let's just answer the questions.

The Witness. Good. But I want it on record because I am still hot at the State Department.

Mr. Rubin. Cool off and let's go.

The Witness. I got hot about it. The more I think about it.
Mr. Triplett. Was that early 1960's or late 1960's?

The Witness. I don't know. It had to be early 1960.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

The Witness. This was before the Bay of Pigs. Before everybody got the bases in Guatemala and Nicaragua. You know what I mean? So it had to be — I would say exactly 1960.

Mr. Triplett. Have you had any other associations with the Immigration and Naturalization Service?

The Witness. I do not think so. Not that I recall.

Mr. Triplett. How about the United States Secret Service?


Mr. Triplett. Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms?

The Witness. Not that I recall. I mean they used to run after me years ago, you know, the ATA — Alcohol, Tobacco —

Mr. Triplett. And Firearms.

The Witness. Firearms. The ATF. Years ago, you know, because of my activities against Castro. But otherwise not that I remember. If I did it was
years ago and I do not recall.

Mr. Triplett. Aside from you being a police
officer in Norfolk, Virginia, have you had any
associations with any local law enforcement agencies?

    The Witness. Here?

    Mr. Triplett. Here, or anywhere in the country?

    The Witness. Well here, organized crime -- I
have Cuban friends of mine naturally, and we want to
know what is going on. And in order to know what is
going on, we have contact with everybody, you know.
Because that is how we pick up information.

    For instance this WFC Corporation, what is
going on now, this big investigation that is going
on now. Naturally the people, I received information
that these people were behind certain killings here
and we suspect them of being Castro agents. As a
matter of fact this Salvadore, however you pronounce
his last name, either his brother or his first cousin
is a top Cuban General in Cuba. And this guy --
look at me. Look at my bank account, and here this
dirty bastard come in from Cuba into exile and the
guy is a millionaire, see. In exile, coming here,
playing footsies. He's a millionaire. Me, I am
dying to make a living around here. You know. But
that is the way do, you know. They want to play spy
and they want to play their little games. And I get angry at the Government because the Government knows all this and the Government don't do a God-Damned thing about it. And they run around with their big yachts and their Cadillacs and people like me got to struggle in this world.

Mr. Triplett. Let's take a five minute break.

(A short recess was taken.)

Mr. Triplett. Okay, let's get started again.

At this point, Mr. Sturgis, we would like to just make a record of your employment history from the time of 1952 when you got a discharge from the United States Army to date.

Do you have a record of that available?

The Witness. To date -- let me make this record, if my Attorney will look at this also -- I have this newspaper card signed by the Sheriff of Dade County. Show it to Mr. Fonzi.

Mr. Triplett. Let the record reflect that Mr. Sturgis is showing us a Dade County Public Safety Department News Media Card indicating he is a news reporter for Elexpresso, which is a newspaper.

The Witness. Spanish newspaper, yes.
Mr. Triplett. Okay. Why don't I advise you of what we know.

You got out of the Army in 1952?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. And from '52 to 1954 you were a part owner and manager of the Top Hat night club in Virginia Beach?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have any other employment during that period of '52 to '54?

The Witness. Well, before that I owned a bar on East Main Street. And I am trying to remember the name of the bar. But it is there because I had to be registered, you know, with the City, in order to have the license.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

After 1954 what did you do for employment?

The Witness. I think I worked with a steel company building a gasoline storage tank, Bethlehem Steel, building storage tanks. I worked real estate. I was a real estate salesman in Norfolk.

Mr. Triplett. Were you on salaried employment in these jobs?

The Witness. I believe so, yes.

Mr. Triplett. During the year 1955, did you have
occasion to be in Panama?


Mr. Triplett. Did you happen to be in Panama at the time that President Ramon was assassinated?

The Witness. No, sir.

Mr. Triplett. You were not?

The Witness. No. I did know --

Mr. Rubin. (Interposing) Now Frank, that is what I mean. Why don't you just answer the questions.

The Witness. No, I was not.

Mr. Triplett. Well, my next question is, what did you know?

The Witness. Again, the Panamanian exiles contacted many of us in the Cuban Government in 1959. One of the persons who contact me, which I found out later supposedly was involved in the assassination of the President of Panama --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) And who was that?

The Witness. I forget his name right now. I did have his name.

Mr. Triplett. Could I suggest Rubin Mirror? (phonetic).

The Witness. Right. That is the man.

Mr. Triplett. Where did you meet Rubin Mirror?
The Witness. I met Rubin Mirrow in Havana. And I am not sure whether it was the Air Force Base or not. Or maybe in one of the restaurants. I am not sure specifically the place where I met him.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have occasion to visit Rubin Mirrow while he was in prison?

The Witness. No. But I knew him before he got in prison. As a matter of fact he sent somebody out to contact me to help him get out of prison.

Mr. Triplett. Who was that person?

The Witness. I do not remember who it was.

Mr. Triplett. Was it a man or woman?

The Witness. A man. I think it was a man.

Mr. Triplett. During this same period of time did you have occasion to meet a Judith Campbell?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Going back to 1956, is that when you first arrived in Cuba?

The Witness. Approximately, yes.

Mr. Triplett. And you remained in Cuba through --

The Witness. (Interposing) No. I was traveling back and forth.

Mr. Triplett. Who financed this travel?

The Witness. These were like Prio. Prio’s group.
Some was my own personal finance, but others were on monies, you know, from the group itself.

Mr. Triplett. Did you ever have occasion to manage a night club in Cuba?

The Witness. Never worked with no night club in Cuba. Never worked for anybody in Cuba but the Cuban Government.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

And in traveling back and forth, what was your purpose in traveling?

The Witness. Strictly to maintain contact with the underground organization. With their officials.

Mr. Triplett. Now in the course of these travels, you were in Florida, Mexico, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama, Honduras, Mexico, the Bahamas?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Any other places that you traveled during that time?


Mr. Triplett. And then you were still working in or out of Cuba through the middle of 1959. Is that correct?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. When you left Cuba and came back to the United States, where did you go to work? Or
what was your employment?

The Witness. I had a company that was formed called Hampton Roads Salvage Company.

Mr. Triplett. Hampton Roads Salvage Company?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. And was that a corporation?

The Witness. Yes, sir. It was a Florida corporation.

Mr. Triplett. Who were the incorporators?

The Witness. I am not sure. It is going back so many years ago. But it is on record in Tallahassee.

Mr. Triplett. Well as a matter of fact, Mr. Sturgis, was not that Hampton Roads Salvage Company incorporated in 1961?


Mr. Triplett. When you first came out of Cuba, what did you do for a living?

The Witness. I think we opened up a business.

Mr. Triplett. Who is we?

The Witness. Marcus, Pedro and myself.

Mr. Triplett. What kind of business?

The Witness. I think it was on 17th Avenue. We had an office on 17th Avenue. Oh, wait a minute. I had an office in Coral Gables, import-export business. That is right. I forgot all about that.
Mr. Triplett. And how long were you in that business?

The Witness. Not too long. Because naturally when I had lost my contacts inside of Cuba -- because I was going back and forth -- naturally that was the end of the business. Because of my connections in Cuba. The fact that my position in Cuba was totally disconnected. So I had to go ahead and close up that office and close up that business.

Mr. Triplett. What did you do after you closed that business?

The Witness. Well, Marcus and Pedro Diez Lanz naturally were in exile here. And being in exile here, we contacted -- when I say we, sometimes I was with them, sometimes I was not with them -- they were in touch with various business interests in the Cuban colony. Cuban business interests. One would be Barcardi. And then there were other --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) One would be who?

The Witness. Barcardi Rum. And they naturally gave us money.

Mr. Triplett. You say a corporation. Who were the people who gave you the money? The corporation doesn't give you the money.

The Witness. That would be Bosch himself,
personally. The owner of Barcardi. Other people
who gave money, they had an office here and their
main office was in New York, was this Cuban newspaper.
It was one of the biggest newspapers in Havana at
that time and they came into exile. And, what's
the name of this magazine, Spanish magazine? The
biggest one in Cuba. And they gave money to the
Diez Lanz'.

And these are the monies that we more or less
lived on in order to continue our resistence, you know,
against the Castro Government.

Mr. Triplett. So essentially you were supporting
yourself by either planning or carrying out raids
against Cuba at that time? That was your source of
support?

The Witness. Yes. From the Cuban colony itself.

Yes.

Mr. Triplett. The Spanish magazine. Would that
be Bohemia? (phonetic).


Mr. Triplett. Did you ever receive any funds
from the Catherwood Foundation?

The Witness. Who?

Mr. Triplett. The Catherwood Foundation?

The Witness. Myself, no.
Mr. Triplett. Well, your organization, or were you aware of any support received from them?

The Witness. I was not aware of it. No.

Mr. Triplett. Then in September, 1961, you incorporated the Hampton Roads Salvage Company?


Mr. Triplett. With Pedro and Marcus Diez Lanz.

What was the nature of that business?

The Witness. Well, we tried to do some salvage work. Buying and selling of boats and so forth.

At the same time it was to be used in the operations against Cuba.

Funding for that corporation came from the exile community who did have contact with the Government. I, myself directly, had nothing to do with receiving the funds personally, but the Diez Lanz brothers did receive the funds which was put in the account for Hampton Roads Salvage Company.

Four boats were bought. A PC boat was bought. Another boat called the Qusa was bought. Two moppies (phonetic) were bought from Bertram's Yacht Company and these boats were used -- primarily the idea of the company, was to be used in CIA operations.

My boat -- well, our boat -- this one mobby, went on numerous operations where another friend of mine, a
Cuban, his name is Salvador Garcia who worked for
the Central Intelligence Agency, went on infiltration
supply missions to Cuba and so forth. This primarily
was what the company was used for.

Mr. Triplett. Primarily for CIA operations?
The Witness. Well, let me say, primarily for
us to make a living. Even though it was funded by
the Cuban business community, but CIA had use of these
boats.

Mr. Triplett. On a contract basis?
The Witness. Anytime they wanted, the boat
was available. Plus we were available also to do
the operations.

Mr. Triplett. Oh, they paid for it then? Is
that yes or no? Did you receive pay for it?
The Witness. I have never received any pay
from CIA.

Mr. Triplett. Did the company -- not the
company meaning CIA, but the company meaning Hampton
Roads Salvage Company of Florida -- receive funds
for these --
The Witness. (Interposing) From the Cuban
business colony.

Mr. Triplett. In other words, it wasn't
contributing the services? There was some sort of
pay from somebody?

The Witness. Yes. Right.

Mr. Triplett. Now you mentioned a boat named the Qusa?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. How did it get that name?

The Witness. Well, this is the name, when Hampton Roads Salvage Company bought the boat. I believe Bertrums was the seller of the boat and Hampton Roads Salvage Company bought it from Bertrums.

Mr. Triplett. Well, Bertrums is a boat dealer, isn't it?


Mr. Triplett. Broker. So who was the previous owner?

The Witness. I don't know. They would have the records.

Mr. Triplett. And it had that name when you got it?

The Witness. I think so. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. What did that name mean to you, if anything?

The Witness. Nothing. The boat meant something but the name does not mean anything to me.

Mr. Triplett. Qusa being spelled?

Mr. Triplett. How long did the Hampton Roads Company exist?

The Witness. A couple of years, I imagine, approximately. More or less.

Mr. Triplett. And were you involved with this operation in day to day activities during that period?

The Witness. Part of it, yes. Part of it, yes. Part of it, no.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have any other sources of income at that time?


Mr. Triplett. What, from the raids?

The Witness. From monies received from the business community in order to do operations. Which in particular this is one type of operation that we did.

Mr. Triplett. Well now to make it very clear, you received money from the Cuban business community. To your knowledge, either then or now, was the source of that money somehow from some other place than the Cuban business community?

The Witness. Yes. Because the Cuban business community had an association with the United States Government on a very very high level. With the
President of the United States which was President Kennedy; directly with Bobby Kennedy himself, because Bobby Kennedy did take a direct hand in controlling the Cuban operations before and after the Bay of Pigs operation. Oh, wait a minute. Before, yeah, and after the Bay of Pigs operation, right.

My friends, many of the Cuban leaders, had personal contact with both Robert Kennedy and the President.

Mr. Triplett. And who were these friends that you are speaking of?

The Witness. Well, I am sure Diez Lanz and others besides them.

Mr. Triplett. Pedro and Marcus?


Mr. Triplett. Did you know Minola Rye (phonetic) at that time?


Mr. Triplett. Could he be one of those that was in contact?

The Witness. Yes. Sure.

Mr. Triplett. How about Tony Varona?

These people had contact on a very high level, which I did not. Even though I did meet the President later myself. But they more or less, as far as operational procedures with Cuba, they were on that level. I was not.

Mr. Triplett. After the Hampton Roads Company dissolved, or whatever --

The Witness. (Interposing) Just faded away. Right.

Mr. Triplett. Faded away around 1963 -- if my figuring is correct, some two years after it was started -- what was your employment or source of income after that?

The Witness. Same thing. With the Cuban business colony.

Mr. Triplett. How long did that relationship continue?

The Witness. For a number of years. Myself, with the Diez Lanz brothers, more or less. He had other things to do. Pedro, I think went on a lecture tour. And we were struggling when we were not getting financial assistance from the Cuban colony. It was a struggle, you know.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have any other employment
at that time?

The Witness. I probably did. But I don't recall specifically. It is going back so many years, you know. I could not nail down the specific employment I had at that particular time. But I was continually doing, I know, operations and again receiving financing from the Cuban business colony.

Mr. Triplett. During that period of time did you have occasion to sell stories to newspapers and magazines?

The Witness. At that time, yes. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Do you recall which newspapers and magazines?

The Witness. Not off-hand, no.

Mr. Triplett. Have you maintained any income records for the period of say 1950 to the present?

The Witness. Well naturally, when I did go to work I paid my taxes when I did work. I paid my taxes. So I would have some records when I did work. You know, I paid my taxes.

Mr. Triplett. So those would undoubtedly indicate from W-2 forms where and when you had worked, wouldn't they?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Would you have those available, say
for Mr. Fonzi at sometime to review and just check
with you where you were working?

The Witness. Yes. Certainly. Yes. I would
think my wife does keep our records for the last five
years. We may even have them longer than five years.
Oh, yes.

Mr. Triplett. Or Mr. Gonzales, if he is a
better accountant.

The Witness. Certainly. Well, I worked
for Pan American, Pan American Aluminum Corporation
for a great number of years.

Mr. Triplett. In what capacity?

The Witness. I was a window and door installer
for them.

Then I went into the sales end of the department.
This is before Watergate, naturally. And then
Watergate, you know.

Mr. Triplett. Who owned the Pan American
Company that you worked for?

The Witness. Oh, I don't know. Some Jewish
fellow. It is a very large company. Pan American
Aluminum Corporation? Yes. They're off of Biscayne
Boulevard and 183rd Street. As a matter of fact
they sent my work record up to the Watergate
investigators during the Watergate trials. So they
have a record.

Plus when I got out of prison I worked for a friend of mine who had an equipment outfit. His name was Pedro Martinez. I worked for him a short period of time until he sold his equipment.

Then I went to work with a friend of mine called Alfredo Navro (phonetic) who had, whose brother and him had their business at Dodge Island here, called Dodge Island Repairs. And I worked for him for awhile and then they sold their business.

Then I went to work again for my friend Pedro Martinez. When he sold his equipment he went into the egg business and I was working with him in the sales department of his egg business. Then he sold that.

And from the egg business -- that is all down there, you know, in the income tax file.

Mr. Triplett. Then that will be available for us to check?

The Witness. Yes. Sure.

And if you can't get them from me -- I am sure I have those records because my wife does keep the records year after year. So there is no problem there.

Mr. Triplett. Very good.

You mentioned Manuel Artime --
The Witness. (Interposing) That is Marlona.

Mr. Triplett. Marlona Artime.

The Witness. Right.

Mr. Triplett. You mentioned Marlona Artime as one of those that had contact with high people in the government.

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. What exactly was your relationship during the early 1960's with Marlona Artime?

The Witness. Well, I knew Marlona Artime. Marlona Artime came out of Cuba working with the CIA. He went into South America and then he came up to -- because we more or less founded here in exile, the MRR movement and with the funds that the MRR movement was getting from Central Intelligence Agency, one of the safe houses that we had was on Brickell Avenue, and Marlona occasionally came there to Brickell Avenue because we used that as an office. And many of the Cuban exiles who worked for the Agency and did not work for the Agency, coming out of Cuba, this was the first place they would come to, the Brickell Avenue safe house.

Mr. Triplett. Now you say Marlona Artime came out of Cuba working for the CIA. To your knowledge, was he working for the CIA before he left Cuba?
The Witness. I am not sure really. Because again I will say I did not know Marlona Artume in Cuba. I only met Marlona after he came out of Cuba.

When he came out of Cuba, I do not know where he made his contact with CIA or they made contact with him. Either in South America or here in Miami.

When he came to Miami he was under the control of CIA.

Mr. Triplett. I see.

And the Brickell Avenue -- you would refer to that as a safe house, at Brickell Avenue?

The Witness. Yes. That is what it was.

This is where Geraldine Shamma had her little apartment in the back up on the second floor. Because downstairs was the garage. I do not know whether it was a double or triple garage. It is still there on Brickell Avenue today.

Mr. Triplett. You had, I presume, various meetings there?

The Witness. Yes. All there, yes.

Mr. Triplett. And that included yourself and the Diez Lanz brothers?

The Witness. Yes. And many others.

Mr. Triplett. Eduardo?

The Witness. No. Eduardo never came there. At
least not to my knowledge. Eduardo never came there. Because he did not have direct contact with us.

Mr. Triplett. Well, he did in a sense have control, did he not?

The Witness. Well, the political. Again the political aspects of the thing. Remember, I was military.

Mr. Triplett. But the financing too, was dependent upon the political aspects, were they not?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. So in that sense he did have a fairly important control over the operations?

The Witness. Yes.

But that is people other than myself. For instance like Artime and other people. They had direct control with him. I did not.

Mr. Triplett. I see.

You, I am sure in many interviews, both official and unofficial, have been questioned as to where you were on November 22nd, 1963.

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. My first question in this area, is where were you on the evening of November 21st, 1963?

The Witness. I am quite sure that I was here in Miami.
Mr. Triplett. On what do you base that assurance?

The Witness. I really can not say. I was here on the 22nd --

Mr. Triplett. (Interposing) The 22nd is the day of the assassination. I am talking about the evening prior.

The Witness. I had to be here. I had to be here.

Mr. Triplett. Again, I know in your own mind it is clear, but if you can verbalize it, how do you know you had to be here?

The Witness. Well, the only thing I can say is the witnesses who have told me, for instance, my mother-in-law, my nephew. He lived with me. My wife, myself and I believe Jim Bucanhan, I believe Bill Johnson, because we were involved in air operations at that time.

Mr. Triplett. Are you saying you later discussed it with all of these people?

The Witness. Oh, when this thing started coming out, naturally, certainly I discussed it with them. Because I had to put clear in my mind where I was before. I knew where I was that day because I saw it on television. I saw it on television.

Mr. Triplett. Did you see it when it occurred, or
on reruns?

The Witness. I imagine it was reruns on television that day.

As a matter of fact when Marita Lorenz made these accusations and I went to New York and I was arrested by the New York Police Department, and I was released on bond, I immediately told my Attorney, that I wanted to take a polygraph examination.

In the past, I volunteered to take a polygraph examination with the Watergate Committee, with the Rockefeller Committee, and volunteered with every committee to take a polygraph.

Now here, with this mess that Marita Lorenz created, I asked my lawyer, I want to take a polygraph. And I did take a polygraph and I passed the polygraph.

Mr. Triplett. Well, when you say you passed, you are telling us that the finding was that you were not deceptive in your answers?

The Witness. That is right. And if you would like to ask me questions of what I was asked and what my answers were, I would be very happy to tell you.

Mr. Triplett. Frankly I do not want to get into a second hand account of some other polygraph.

The Witness. All right.

Mr. Triplett. And again, just to make our record
clean, I know you have been asked and answered these questions many times before. But where exactly were you on November 22nd when President Kennedy was assassinated?

The Witness. At my home at 2515 Northwest 122 Street, Miami, Florida, zip code 33167.

Mr. Triplett. And that is still your home today?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. What were you doing at that time at your home?

The Witness. Possibly I was sleeping or I was in the bedroom. And I believe my mother-in-law came, you know, and said that there was some news on the television that the President was assassinated.

Mr. Triplett. I believe there is two hours time difference between Florida and Texas. So that would have made it about 2:30 in the afternoon, on a Friday afternoon.

Were you unemployed at that time? Why were not you at work?

The Witness. I was again doing operations, before, during and after that particular time.

Mr. Triplett. I see.

And who else was at your home at that time?

The Witness. Just the people I mentioned. It
was my mother-in-law, my nephew, my wife, myself.
And as a matter of fact, Jim Bucanhan did mention to
me during all this exposure over the JFK assassination
that he came over, he told me that he came over to
the house that afternoon and that I left with him that
afternoon. So there is a possible outside witness
other than my family who knew that I was there that
particular day.

Mr. Triplett. Jim Bucanhan?


Also a William Johnson, who was doing a series
of operations with me. I believe that he can verify
that I was in town before and after the assassination.

Mr. Triplett. Do you know where William Johnson
is currently located?

The Witness. Yes, sir. He lives in Miami today
and he lives off of Brickell Avenue in Sansusi Estates.
I do have his phone number. His phone number is
893-6013. His address I don't know because I know
how to get there, you know. But I do have his address
in my address book in my automobile. It is no problem.
If he wishes to have it, I will give it to Mr. Fonzi.

Mr. Triplett. Now you have mentioned a couple
of times in other answers, the allegations recently
made by Marita Lorenz.
Let me ask you specifically, did you, in the company of Marita Lorenz, Leon Oswald and others, drive to Dallas a day or two before the assassination?

The Witness. Sir, that is an absolute lie. I have never been with Marita Lorenz and Osie, as she calls him, or with Pedro Diez Lanz, or Marcus Diez Lanz, or Dr. Orlando Bosch, or Jerry Patrick, which she claimed all of us besides some other Cubans, were in two automobiles and left Miami, Florida two days before the assassination of the President of the United States. She is a liar. I took a polygraph examination to that effect that I have never been involved in any conspiracy to kill the President of the United States, nor did I kill the President of the United States, nor was I with her at any time conspiring to kill the President of the United States, nor was I with her in any automobile with these people or any other people going to Dallas to plot to kill the President of the United States. She is an absolute liar.

Mr. Triplett. Well, not getting into her character, which I am certain you have very strong emotions about, it is your testimony then that that is not true? You never made such a trip?

The Witness. Not only not true, she is a liar,
and I believe --

Mr. Rubin. (Interposing) No. Just tell him, did you make the trip?

The Witness. No. I did not make the trip, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Very good. Thank you.

At any time during the year 1963, were you in Dallas, Texas?

The Witness. I have went, because of operations that I had been doing and so forth, traveled through Texas into Mexico, into Central America, in and out.

And I would say yes, sir, I probably have been through not only Dallas, but other cities in Texas. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Now specifically around June or July of '63, did you go to Dallas for the purpose of purchasing weapons?

The Witness. I have never been to Dallas where I stayed at any particular instance in order to buy any weapons or anything in Dallas or anyplace in Texas.

Anytime I went through Texas it was strictly transient.

Mr. Triplett. Your answer begs a question a little bit. Whether or not you stayed in Dallas for the purpose of buying weapons. Did you ever go to Dallas to buy weapons around June or July of '63?

The Witness. No, sir.
Mr. Triplett. Were you ever in an automobile with Heming, Bosch and Marita Lorenz in the Florida Keys?

The Witness. No, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Never?

The Witness. No, sir. With Marita Lorenz, Dr. Orlando Bosch and Jerry Patrick Heming?

Mr. Triplett. Correct?

The Witness. No, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Now you have mentioned both Jerry and Jim Bucanhan in a lot of your other answers. And it is correct, is it not, that they are primarily journalists by trade? Newspaper men?


Mr. Triplett. And have you, on occasion, provided them with information to incorporate into articles, or which they did in fact incorporate into articles?


Mr. Triplett. And could you give us some estimate on how many occasions this may have occurred?

The Witness. No, sir. I couldn't give you a correct estimate. No.

Mr. Triplett. But would it be a fair statement to say that you have provided them with information
that they have used in articles on numerous occasions?

The Witness. Some. Some of the articles they used. Some. Yes. I won't go into details. Some of it, yes.

Mr. Triplett. And this would be both about -- well first -- some of this information would have been about your anti-Castro activities?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And some of the information would have been your views, or reactions regarding the numerous allegations concerning the assassination of President Kennedy?

The Witness. Some, yes. Because I do not agree with everything the newspaper reporters write.

Mr. Triplett. Well, I am sure we all understand that.

But you have provided them on occasions with information regarding your views as to the assassination?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And the allegations?

The Witness. That is right.

Mr. Triplett. Would it be fair to say the same regarding Paul Mescal (phonetic)?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. You have provided him with such
information on occasion and has subsequently been used in articles?

The Witness. Yes, sir. Even though I do not agree with everything he writes, yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. And how about Andrew St. George?

The Witness. He is a lying son-of-a-bitch.

Mr. Triplett. I did not ask about his character.

The Witness. It is not his character. He is a liar.

Mr. Triplett. Have you had occasion to be interviewed by him, or have him ask you for information that has subsequently been used either for or against you in articles and publications?

The Witness. I have never given this man information during the Watergate trials, and what he has written about his association with me pertaining to a number of things, this is why I say he is a lying son-of-a-bitch.

But in the past, yes. Because in Cuba, he was there as a free-lance photographer, reporter and so forth and he was in touch with me. Yes. But I have not seen him after we left Cuba. The last time I saw him was just before the Watergate thing.

This man is typical of some of the news media
reporting. And I say some of them, because not all of them are that way.

Mr. Triplett. So, you are saying that from at least June 1960 until the early 1970's, you did not see Andrew St. George?

The Witness. Not to my knowledge. In all those years I have not seen Andrew St. George.

Mr. Triplett. Has he ever tape recorded an interview with you?

The Witness. It is possible. I don't know. I'm not sure. I do not think so. At least I am not aware of it.

Mr. Triplett. Have you talked with him over the phone during that same period?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. How many occasions?

The Witness. On a number of occasions. He was trying to get me to sign a contract to write a book. And because of my feelings of his underhanded ways of going about it and with him not wanting to have my Attorney look over the contract, I did not sign a contract with him. So I blew the deal.

Mr. Triplett. Now have you personally had occasion to investigate the various allegations regarding the assassination of John F. Kennedy?
The Witness. As much as I could financially. Because again, my financial -- this thing has not come about until after the Watergate situation and my financial situation since Watergate has completely destroyed me. But what monies I did have and so forth, in buying certain books and researching them, and also obtaining from friends of mine who at one time did have a connection with CIA and documents that these people have shown me and given me, I have tried by best to show that there was a link between Ruby and Oswald, which would show that there was a conspiracy to kill the President of the United States.

Mr. Triplett. Have you worked with, or cooperated with Jack Anderson in any of these investigative efforts?

The Witness. Well, when you say worked, no. I have never worked for Jack Anderson.

Mr. Triplett. Have you provided information to him, possibly the results of your own investigative efforts?

The Witness. Well I would say Jack and I have been in touch over the period of years since I came from Cuba. I met Jack in Washington, D.C. with Pedro Diez Lanz, and he was trying to help us. He was one of the first newspaper people in this country
to denounce Fidel Castro as a Communist. Especially with an interview that he had with Pedro Diez Lanz and myself.

And also the fact that Pedro Diez Lanz, myself and his brother drove from Miami to Washington to the Senate Committee on -- I forget the correct name of the Committee -- but pertaining to the Communist infiltration in the Cuban Government and military, notifying the American Government of the Communist infiltration, you know, naturally, in Cuba.

Jack Anderson, over the period of years has been in touch with me where it pertains to anything that goes on in Latin America because I am aware of it, because of my close connection in the Cuban colony. I am aware of a number of things that goes on in a number of the countries, especially in Cuba.

Where it comes that Cuba is involved in many things, I will go out to see my friends who give me information because we try to keep up to date on the Cuban situation in this hemisphere. And Jack has asked me certain things which I will not give Jack, as a newspaper man, a lot of information that I feel he should not have.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever given, or passed on information to Jack Anderson at the request or
suggestion of any Government Intelligence Agency?

The Witness. No, sir, I have not.

As a matter of fact when I came from Cuba years ago, Jack Anderson thought I might be a good asset to the CIA and wanted me to be introduced to an Admiral who at the time was a high ranking CIA official, and I refused. Because of my involvement here naturally.

Mr. Triplett. Now wait, I do not understand that.

You refused to be introduced --

The Witness. (Interposing) To a high ranking CIA official who was an Admiral. Had the rank of Admiral at that time.

Mr. Triplett. And why?

The Witness. Because of my work that I was doing here that I did not want to tell Jack of my association with my friends with the United States Government in this area.

Mr. Triplett. And your friends. You are talking about CIA assets here, or the anti-Castro Cubans?

The Witness. I am talking about my Cuban friends who had close connections with the American Government from the President all the way down, and the Agencies that were involved.

Mr. Triplett. Now I believe I asked you this
already, but I just want to make it very clear.

Did you ever conduct an investigation into
the assassination of John F. Kennedy?

The Witness. As much as I could on my own,
you know, my own financial status in the last number
of years. Naturally, by talking with friends of
mine who have past CIA connections.

Mr. Triplett. Was any of this ever in
conjunction with E. Howard Hunt?

The Witness. No. No, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Did you ever do any investigation
into the assassination as far back as 1964?

The Witness. Well, as far back as 1964, this
turmoil of the President being assassinated naturally,
you know, had a great effect on us here in the Cuban
exile colony. So naturally we tried to go ahead and
get all the information that we possibly could.

And the information that I have received was
that Castro's Intelligence Service was involved in
the assassination.

Mr. Triplett. And did you turn that information
over to the Warren Commission at that time?

The Witness. No, sir. The information that
was turned over by my friends were turned over to a
Mr. Al Tarabuchia here in the South Florida area, and
also to the FBI through friends of mine.

Mr. Triplett. What is Mr. Al Tarabuchia's position, or what was it at that time?

The Witness. I forget. I think he worked -- I couldn't exactly tell you the correct name because I could be wrong and you know, I don't know, but he did work with the Government. Whether it was internal security, but we did know that he had somewhat of an involvement even before the Bay of Pigs invasion, you know. He was a conduit, let's say, for the Government in this area here.

And I could possibly go as far as saying that Mr. Tarabuchi also was a person who might have been in touch with the Dade County, you know, the local law enforcement agencies for the Federal Government at that time.

Mr. Triplett. You say there was an involvement by Cuban Intelligence in the assassination? Is that what you said?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. On what evidence do you base that?

The Witness. Most of it hearsay evidence, sir.

Mr. Triplett. Okay. What is the nature of the hearsay evidence, other than the conclusion that it
was somehow involved with Cuban intelligence? In what way?

The Witness. Well, when I say it was mostly hearsay, for instance, Oswald left the United States so easily to go into Russia, when at that particular time it was so difficult for any foreigner to get into Russia, and difficult for any Russians to leave Russia. Here, Oswald had an easy entry into Russia; Oswald spent approximately two, two and a half years in Russia; he spent his time in Minsk where there was an intelligence school there for Cuban intelligence officers. We believed at that particular time, and I believe until this present day, that Oswald's contact was with the Cuban Intelligence Service because of this school that was there.

He left Russia so easily, taking a Russian wife whose uncle was a high ranking intelligence officer. Took his child that was born in Russia so easily and came back.

One or two people who had an association with the American Embassy made contact with Oswald in Russia, which I believe either work for the Central Intelligence Agency, or they were briefed before talking with Oswald, or briefed after the interview with Oswald. Again, Oswald coming into the United
States, into the area of Dallas and New Orleans and so forth, the Mohrenschiltd's close relationship with him, which I suspected the Mohrenschiltds was working or had an association with Central Intelligence Agency.

Oswald's contact with Cuban Intelligence Agency in that area. Oswald going to Mexico City, making contact with the Russian and Cuban Embassy, spending five days there. And if anybody has been to Mexico City, you know that you just don't lay around Mexico City. It costs a lot of money. A great deal of money.

And all these, with some evidence pertaining to this association and the connection between Ruby and Oswald, with the evidence that was turned over to the FBI in Dallas by individuals who had physical control of this evidence, the FBI sent it to headquarters in Washington, getting a receipt that this evidence was put in the National Archives. And that eventually when the FBI returned, and other people investigating the assassination finding out about this evidence, went to the Archives to find this evidence which linked Oswald and Ruby, this evidence completely disappeared.

So systematically over the years, many people investigating the National Archives have found that
there is evidence that has been systematically lost or stolen or destroyed. But there is record that this evidence was there.

Mr. Triplett. I understand what you're saying, Mr. Sturgis, what you related. Now the basic evidence which has been discussed in virtually hundreds of books to date, and which is used for the premise of at least half a dozen theories on who was or may have been involved, and I still don't understand the connection you use to put this evidence, to say okay, that indicates to me, Frank Sturgis, that there was involvement of Cuban Intelligence as opposed to any of a half-dozen other potential groups.

I think my question is, is there anything specific that indicates to you, above and beyond what we already have in the books, that yes, Cuban Intelligence was involved as opposed to other possible -- well, I'll admit I am asking you to speculate.

The Witness. Only what I have turned over to the Government in the past. Information and documents that I have turned over in the past, which they have and which is on record. That is the only thing I can go by.

Mr. Triplett. All right. There are just a few more names that I want to ask you about to see if
you have any knowledge of them or had any associations with them.

Are you familiar with a Rich Lauchli, spelled L-a-u-c-h-l-i?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. When and how did you first meet him?

The Witness. I do not know how I met him, but I know at one time another friend of mine who has been a newspaper man -- his name is Yamas Montez (phonetic) -- Yamas Montez is a person who was in close contact with General Wesson in the Dominican Republic, but I won't go into that because it has nothing to do with this.

Mr. Triplett. Your association with Rich Lauchli.

The Witness. And him and I took a trip over to Rich Lauchli. I think it was in Chicago. He had a farm, or at his home, or something in Chicago, where we bought a number of equipment from him. And he belonged to an organization. I'm trying to remember the name of the organization. The Minute Men organization. And somehow we found out, because evidently they must have sent people into this area here. And it is possible that I met him down here in
this area here, trying to go ahead and sell the Cuban revolutionaries guns and equipment that we would need to fight against Castro.

Now I do not know how I met this man, but I did meet the man and I did go get some minor equipment from him. From this Richard Lauchli. And after that I never had any more contact with him.

Mr. Triplett. That was during the early 1960's you were talking about?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Did you ever have an occasion to meet a Mitch Warbell?

The Witness. I do not recall ever personally meeting Mitch Warbell, but I have spoken with Mitch Warbell. And Mitch Warbell says he knew me 15 years ago, and I do not recall.

Mr. Triplett. Well, if you spoke with him, sometime or another you met him. Correct?

The Witness. Well, not personally. Over the telephone.

Mr. Triplett. I see.

The Witness. I don't ever recall meeting the man personally.

Mr. Triplett. Are you familiar with a man named Bernardo DiToros (phonetic)?
The Witness. No. I do not recall the name.

How do you pronounce that name again?

Mr. Triplett. DiToros?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. How about a man named Doug Gupton (phonetic)?

The Witness. No.

Mr. Triplett. David Phillips?

The Witness. He is another son-of-a-bitch. Chief of Western Hemisphere Division, CIA.

Mr. Triplett. Did you ever have any association with him at any time?

The Witness. I honestly do not know whether I met him at the Embassy in Havana. But he was stationed at the Embassy in Havana. And if he was stationed there, which supposedly he was when I was there, he is nothing but a pro-communist bastard. You will have to excuse my language, but this is what I think of people. I am so strongly anti-communist and so strongly anti-Castro, that these are the type of people that made a lot of my friends get killed in Cuba for nothing.

Mr. Triplett. But to the best of your recollection at this point, you do not recall any meetings with him?

Mr. Triplett. All right.

Have you ever met with John Martino?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. When and where have you met with him?

The Witness. In Havana, Cuba.

Mr. Triplett. And would you please relate what occurred at that meeting, or those meetings?

The Witness. Well, he came to meet me because he heard about me being with the Castro forces and he introduced himself to me and that was it, really.

Then I think he got in some trouble in Havana. And the reason why he got in trouble in Havana was because he was black marketing, selling Cuban money. Buying and selling Cuban money. That is why he was arrested.

And that is all I know about Martino except he came to the United States and I believe he did come over to my house at 60th Court at another time and so forth. That is the only thing I remember.

Mr. Triplett. What happened when he came to your house?

The Witness. I don't know. I said I believe that he probably came over to my house. Because I had a lot of people come over to see Pedro and myself.
My home on 60th Court was like, you know, the headquarters for our organization.

Mr. Triplett. Okay. John Martino got arrested in Cuba. You said you met with him?

The Witness. He met me in Cuba. Under what circumstances I forget really, where I first met Martino in Cuba.

Mr. Triplett. You do not recall any purpose for meeting with him?

The Witness. No. He came to meet me. There is a lot of people that came to Cuba wanted to meet me because I was one of several Americans who were with the Castro Gorilla Forces.

Mr. Triplett. Okay. But you do not recall the purpose? Why he came to meet you?

The Witness. No. Not really. He just wanted to meet me. I do not recall the purpose. No.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever had any association with Opus Dei?

The Witness. No. Not that I recall. I don't know the man.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever been involved in an assassination attempt on Fidel Castro in company with Lionel Gomez?

The Witness. I know Lionel Gomez. Myself personally

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever planned an assassination with him?

The Witness. He discussed it with me, you know, and all that.

Again, you can talk about something and unless you have got the funding, you can't do nothing.

Mr. Triplett. Okay. So he discussed it with you and so you discussed it with him, right?

The Witness. Well, he discussed it with me. I told him to forget about it. No possible way.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever been involved in any operations with Joe Rabell?

The Witness. I don't know Joe Rabell.

Mr. Triplett. You never met a Joe Rabell?

The Witness. Unless he come under a different name. No Joe Rabell.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever had any associations with Cliff Childress (phonetic)?

The Witness. I don't think I know him. The name is not familiar.

Mr. Triplett. How about Norman Diez (phonetic)?

The Witness. That name is not familiar.

Mr. Triplett. Now you already clarified your response to the allegations of Marita Lorenz.
The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. At any time, to your knowledge, prior to the assassination of President Kennedy, did you ever have any contact with Lee Harvey Oswald or have any knowledge of his attempting to contact you or your organization?

The Witness. Well, before the assassination of the President of the United States -- this is where the confusion comes in because Jerry Bucanhan told me -- Jerry Bucanhan, how I met him was part of the Jerry Patrick group of many Americans and Canadians that was in this area.

Mr. Triplett. The Jerry Patrick group. For the record, are you talking about the Interpen organization?

The Witness. Well, the group before he had Interpen. There was a group of Americans that lived off of 17th Avenue in some woman's house, a nice woman's house and so forth.

And Jerry Patrick was -- I mean rather, Jerry Bucanhan was part of this group with the Masferer people. And Jerry Bucanhan seemed to be a real nice kid. He was a young kid. And I used to tell him, look, Rolando Masferer is not the type of people for you to be with because if this man ever goes to
Cuba, you have the Cuban people that don't like him and naturally they are not going to like you because of his reputation under the Batista regime.

So this is how I got to meet Jerry Bucanhan.

Now I forgot what the question was.

Mr. Triplett. Whether or not there was any approach to you or your organization by Lee Harvey Oswald.

The Witness. Oh. So with his brother, Jim Bucanhan being a newspaper man up there at the Sun Sentinel in Fort Lauderdale, Jerry spoke to me one day and mentioned the fact, after the assassination, he mentioned the fact to me, he says well, he says there is a possibility that Oswald was down here in this area trying to infiltrate the Cuban exile groups here before the assassination. But there was nothing definite. Because I found out through my own connections and so forth that Oswald was not down in this area, at least that I knew of. That he was not down in this area and that he tried to go ahead and infiltrate our group and other Cuban groups.

There was a student directorate group that was operating here also and they have made statements to the effect, and also to us, that there was a possibility that Oswald -- now there might have been a communication
gap there because they had their group also down there in New Orleans, you know, and that Oswald possibly would have been in this area here.

So this is where it came about that Oswald was possibly in this area trying to infiltrate the Cuban exile groups.

Mr. Triplett. Well, aside from the word that was essentially just around that he might have been in the area trying to infiltrate, do you know of anybody that said yeah, I saw him trying to infiltrate, or saw him in the area?

The Witness. Well Jerry told me that he thought he had a fight with him.

Mr. Triplett. Jerry Bucanhan?


Mr. Triplett. Or Jerry Patrick?

The Witness. No. Jerry Bucanhan. That is what he told me.

Mr. Triplett. Upon what did he base that?

The Witness. I don't know. Maybe because of the times and with the possibility of the information going in the Cuban colony, that there was a possibility that Oswald was in this area. But we found out later that it was not so.

Mr. Triplett. And how did you find that out?
The Witness. Through word of mouth. Through our people in the Cuban colony.

Not only that, the Federal Agents in this area. You know, when the assassination occurred, you could imagine, everybody in this area, from the local police department to the Dade County Sheriff's Department, to every Federal Agency in this area here, was on alert doing their own investigation into, you know, this assassination. Doing their own private investigation. And we could find nothing in this area.

And I think the CIA boys in this area at that time were asked about Oswald being in this area and so forth. Because many of my friends again, for instance line Salvador Garcia, who worked for the Agency and who gave me certain documents to turn over to the committees and so forth that tried to show the link between Oswald and Ruby, also -- like I say, there was no way to find out. No proof. You know, strong proof that Oswald was in the area.

Mr. Triplett. Let me ask you, you know, I have run through a lot of names and I have got a few more.

The Witness. Go ahead.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever had any association or ever met David Morales (phonetic)?

Mr. Triplett. It is our understanding that he also was known as Elino (phonetic). He was a Mexican American.

The Witness. Like I say, it sounds very familiar. There is a possibility. I'm not sure and I can't put in my mind where I heard the name, or if I met this person.

Mr. Triplett. All right.

How about a Giffrey Pinchot?

The Witness. Is that how you pronounce it?

How do you spell that last name?

Mr. Triplett. P-i-n-c-h-o-t.

The Witness. P-i-n-c-h-o-t? I'm not sure. I'm thinking again with Alex Roark introducing me to somebody in New York that had some name that started with a "P" on the end of that. And I'm not sure of the phrasing of the name. An elderly man. At that time he was an elderly man.

Mr. Triplett. Who was this person you were introduced to in New York?

The Witness. I'm not sure really who he was. I am not sure, really.

Mr. Triplett. Well, was there a purpose for
the introduction?

    The Witness. Not really. Because Alex
introduced me to a lot of people in New York. Not
a lot, but a number of people in New York. Because
he wanted to introduce them to me because of my
being a Rebel officer in Cuba.

    Mr. Triplett. Have you ever met a Ricardo
Moralez?

    The Witness. I'm not sure of the name. I'm
not sure of it.

    Mr. Triplett. Ricardo Moralez. The nickname
would have been Elmono?

    The Witness. Elmono? Oh, the monkey? Moralez
the monkey? I'm not sure. Believe me, I'm not sure.
But I know who he is. I think maybe I did meet the
monkey. Moralez is the one who is in Venezuela. He
was the one that got in a fight with another friend,
not a friend, an acquaintance that I know by the name
of Mavaretti (phonetic). As a matter of fact he shot
Mavaretti. Mavaretti is in prison today.

    Moralez is the guy that is in Cuba today. I
think he is Chief of Airport Security there. All the
Cubans know who he is.

    Mr. Triplett. What, if any, association did you
have with him?
The Witness. I don't know really, if I had any association with this man or not. I'll be honest with you. Because he has been involved in so many things. And again, you know, unless I'm close with them, you know, if they're friends of mine. But this man here, I may have run across him in the past, met him in the past.

Mr. Triplett. Have you ever had occasion to form a church?


Mr. Triplett. When was this?

The Witness. This was before Watergate. My intentions of this church, because of the nature of me being with the special intelligence unit, I felt that once I would be, you know, after these particular operations, I wanted to go ahead and raise funds and put missions in certain Central American countries or South American countries for the purpose of helping the poor people in that area. But I never got around to it because I went to jail and that flopped.

Mr. Triplett. So the purpose of this church was to raise money?

The Witness. Yes. I would have to go ahead and have a fund raising campaign. And I wanted Jim
McCord to help me on that because of his contacts in Washington.

Mr. Triplett. Well, with respect to this church, were you or any of your friends ever ordained as ministers?

The Witness. Well, the church charter had, how do you say, it was formed where if you wanted to ordain ministers, you can ordain ministers for the purpose of, you know, doing exactly what I said.

Mr. Triplett. Who chartered the church?

The Witness. I did. I formed the charter and chartered it with Tallahassee. Anybody can do that.

Mr. Triplett. I understand that.

But was there any affiliation with any other organization?

The Witness. No. Strictly on my own. Strictly on my own. It was my personal thing.

As a matter of fact, if I ever get in the financial situation, I wish to form a new organization to either do the same thing, if the money can be raised through professional advertising and professional fund raisers, to do the same thing. You know, helping people having missions, to help people.

Mr. Triplett. Now when I first asked you the
question about the church you said because of my relationship with the special intelligence unit.

What unit were you referring to?

The Witness. The unit that was formed by the President of the United States and the unit I belonged to, and my other three companions. The so-called Plumbers.

Mr. Triplett. Let's take a five minute break.

(A short recess was taken.)

Mr. Triplett. All right. Just a few more questions and we'll be done, Mr. Sturgis. Let me throw one more name at you.

The Witness. All right.

Mr. Triplett. Do you know, or have you ever met a Francisco Rodriguez Tomio (phonetic), his nickname is El Mexicano?

The Witness. Yes, sir.

Mr. Triplett. When and where did you first meet him?

The Witness. I believe I met him probably one time in Cuba and in exile here one time. And that's about it.

Mr. Triplett. And what occurred, if anything, at those meetings.

The Witness. Well, he was in a Cuban restaurant
when I came by dressed in his Rebel uniform. He was
here in exile, with his beard and I ran across him,
and hi, and so forth. That's it. No conversation
That's it.

Mr. Triplett. Okay.

Who is Janet Mann?

The Witness. My wife. Her name was Janet Hunt.
She married a Mann, divorced and naturally I married
her.

Mr. Triplett. And who is Lora Norris?

The Witness. Who? Lora Norris?

Mr. Triplett. Yes?

The Witness. I believe you are talking about
my sister-in-law.

Mr. Triplett. I see.

The Witness. Who is the sister of my wife.

Mr. Triplett. And did the three of you have
occasion to form a corporation at some time?

The Witness. Oh, yes. If I'm not mistaken
it was the church. I put them as officers of the
church.

Mr. Triplett. I see. So the three of you
formed the church, at least on paper?

Were either of them active at all in the
formation other than being incorporators?
The Witness. No. Just being on there as names.

Mr. Triplett. I see. Was this prior to your marrying your wife Janet?

The Witness. I don't know. You will have to check the dates really.

Mr. Triplett. Well, I think you said you have been married for quite some time. When did you form the church?

The Witness. I forget. No, I think I was married at that time.

Mr. Triplett. Well, if I told you that on the incorporation papers the name is Janet Mann rather than Janet Sturgis?

The Witness. Well then, it had to be before I was married.

Mr. Triplett. All right. Let me get this correct.

Lora Norris is Janet's sister?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. So the two sisters and yourself incorporated the church before you married Janet?

The Witness. Yes.

Mr. Triplett. Did you have any -- let me change that a little. Have you ever met or had any
dealings with a General Biddle?

The Witness. No, sir.

Mr. Triplett. All right. I don't think I have any further questions at this time. You have been very helpful in answering the questions so far and I know you have brought some information with you. Rather than putting that into the record, I would suggest, could you make it available to my investigators for copying and analysis for use in our investigation?

And also it is customary when we have hearings before the committee, at the conclusion of the questioning of a witness, for the Chairman of the Committee to tell the witness that he has five minutes if he wishes, to make any statement on the record.

While this isn't a hearing, I think it is a fair custom to follow and if you have any brief statement you want incorporated into the record at this time, feel free to state it.

The Witness. No. Satisfied with all the questions.

I would like to give copies to Mr. Gaeton Fonzi or Mr. Al Gonzales pertaining to this information which is about Marita Lorenz.

Mr. Triplett. Fine. We appreciate it. Thank
you very much.

This record is now closed.

(Whereupon, at 4:05 p.m., the record was closed.)