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CHARLES SMALL

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Classification
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TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (105-82555)

FROM: LEGAT, MEXICO CITY (105-3702) (P)

SUBJECT: LEE HARVEY OSWALD, aka
IS - R - CUBA

Classified by 9803RDD/KSC
Declassify on: OADR

(9803RDD/KSC 8/10/93)

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ReBuairtel 4/1/64 and Mexico City cable 4/8/64.

It is believed by the Mexico City Office that an
interview of CHARLES SMALL by Mexican authorities would be
highly undesirable for the following reasons:

The only information concerning SMALL's reactions
and statements concerning OSWALD came from MEX-18 and MEX-19. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to control the Mexican police and if that information was passed on to them as the basis for an interview, there is no assurance that they would not reveal it to the subject. Such action would probably result in SMALL's recognizing the informants as the source of the information, thereby destroying their future utility and embarrassing the operations of the Bureau in Mexico.

On 11/23/63, ELIZABETH CATLETT MORA (Bufile 100-395934) advised MEX-18 and MEX-19 that the PCM was

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- 5 - Bureau
 - (1 - Liaison Section)
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 - 2 - Mexico City
 - (1 - MC 100-1535, SMALL)
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MC 105-3702

very concerned over the assassination of President KENNEDY and the involvement of OSWALD, who was connected with the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC). Although she did not indicate which organism of the PCM had reached this decision, it is to be noted that MORA was a member of the so-called Leadership Branch of the PCM. She stated that the PCM had decided that there were only four American in Mexico who might possibly be involved in FPCC operations as far as the Mexican police might know: ASA ZATZ (Bufile 105-16890), CHARLES SMALL, and the informants. (X)

As the Bureau is aware, the informants came to the attention of the Mexican authorities when HELEN LEVI TRAVIS (Bufile 100-336032), who was admittedly a member of the FPCC, was arrested and deported in November, 1962. At that time, the Mexican police found the informants' home address and telephone number in TRAVIS' motel room and it was necessary for the informants to go into hiding until the Mexican police gave up efforts to interview them. (X)(u)

On 11/23/63, MORA advised the informants that if any action was taken against them by the Mexican police, they should immediately get in touch with JUAN MANUEL GUTIERREZ, the Mexico City attorney whom the informants had previously been instructed to contact in case they were arrested for political reasons. (X)(u)

Under the above circumstances, therefore, any request of the Mexican police to interview SMALL on the basis of his relations with members of the FPCC would focus the attention of those authorities on MEX-18 and MEX-19 as well as on SMALL, with the possibility that the Mexican police, who, as pointed out above, are difficult to control, might also take action against the informants. (X)(u)

Consideration has also been given to calling SMALL, who is an American citizen, into the Embassy for interview. It is not felt, however, that such action would be advisable since any interrogation by Embassy personnel, including this office, would necessarily have to be predicated on information from MEX-18 and MEX-19 which would jeopardize the informants the same as if done by the Mexican police. (X)(u)

The informants have also advised that SMALL has (X)

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a heart condition, claims to have suffered a slight heart attack while in the United States in September, 1963, and is in poor health. *Information received from CIA, Mexico, classified "SECRET" and not to be disseminated outside the Bureau, also confirms SMALL's reported heart condition and his frequent claims that he has to be very careful not to aggravate it. * An aggressive interview of SMALL by either the Mexican police or American personnel might either precipitate another heart attack or cause the subject to claim another such attack and accuse the Bureau of being responsible for it. X (S) (u)

In addition to the above factors, the Mexico City Office has no information to show that such an interview, either by the Mexican police or the American officers would be productive. Available sources have given no indication that SMALL actually ever knew or saw OSWALD. His claim that he must have known OSWALD at some time and that he might have met OSWALD in Mexico was, according to MEX-18 and MEX-19, based on the fact that many American communists visiting Mexico go to SMALL's store and that he assists them in connection with their problems while visiting Mexico City. X (S) (u)

SMALL, however, has given no indication that he recognized OSWALD from the newspaper pictures printed in Mexico City or recognized his name as being one of the visitors at his store. The informants have reported that following the assassination of President KENNEDY and the public identification of OSWALD's leftist connections with the FPCC and his former residence in the Soviet Union, the American communists in Mexico were extremely fearful, expecting police harrassment of all leftists. They considered SMALL's concern over the possibility that OSWALD might have visited his store to be part of the general concern of all American communists here after reading that OSWALD had been in Mexico. No information has since been developed to the contrary.

In light of the above, the Mexico City Office does not believe that an interview of SMALL should be undertaken by either Mexican or American officials.

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