



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

March 26, 1964

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LEE HARVEY OSWALD - VICTIM

The following information concerning Lewis Joseph McWillie was developed by the FBI in connection with another matter.

The January 3, 1961, edition of the "Chicago American," a Chicago daily newspaper, on page 5, column 2, contains an article captioned "Teacher Ducks Talk of Punch." The article states that LaVerne Kautt, a teacher at Senn High School, refused to answer questions by reporters after having promised three times to talk to the press. Kautt stated, "My advisers agree this is a private matter. I have nothing to say about it." The article reflects that Kautt was in Havana over the week end with eighty other Chicagoans who were guests of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Lewis McWillie, of Miami, told the "Chicago American" that he was waiting to board a plane for Miami in Cuba when Kautt started talking to Cuban newspapermen. Kautt told the reporters that everything that Castro and the Cuban Government was doing is a good thing, even taking property from the Americans. He said that the United States wasn't anything but an imperialistic government. McWillie stated Kautt also strongly denounced American newspapers quoting him as saying they constantly misinterpret and misrepresent stories that come from Cuba because imperialist advertisers dictate editorial policy to American newspapers. McWillie said he was so annoyed over what Kautt said that when their plane landed at Miami, he asked Kautt to repeat his remarks on American soil. Kautt refused and McWillie said, "He made a move like he was going to hit me so I hit him in the nose."

The January 4, 1961, edition of the "Chicago Tribune," a Chicago daily newspaper, on page 5, contained an article captioned "Teacher to be Questioned on Fidel Fracas." It mentions that Assistant Superintendent Richard C. McVey, who is in charge of school personnel, planned to talk with LaVerne Kautt concerning possible disciplinary action by school officials and the Board of Education in connection with statements made by Kautt in Cuba concerning the American Government. McVey said that if it is found that Kautt is a member of the Communist Party or any organization that advocates overthrow of the Government, he would be discharged

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for violating a non-Communist oath he signed in 1955. The article further reflects that Kautt, when interviewed by a "Tribune" reporter in Senn High School, denied comments attributed to him and said the situation was "ridiculous." He said, "What I said I would be willing to repeat to the Superintendent of Schools, the President or to anybody." Kautt said he is a registered Republican voter, not a Communist and just a tourist who got involved in a situation. Kautt described himself as an average school teacher, not wealthy, and said he got a circular in the mail about the trip to Cuba for \$200.00. "On a teacher's salary I couldn't afford what it would normally cost. It was a tremendous opportunity to take this trip." Kautt considered the incident in Havana where McWillie took offense at something he was saying a misunderstanding.

The January 6, 1961, edition of the "Chicago Sun Times," a Chicago daily newspaper, on page 7, column 1, contained an article captioned "Teacher Who Got Punched Denies He Praised Castro." The article states that Chicago school teacher LaVerne E. Kautt denied Thursday that he praised Cuba's Fidel Castro or criticized the United States after a trip to the island. "I believe him," said Richard C. McVey, Assistant Superintendent in charge of school personnel. McVey said even if Kautt made the remarks attributed to him, he certainly could not take any action against him. He went to Cuba on a legitimate leave of absence and did not try to pass himself off falsely as a school representative. "It is not my intent to muzzle an individual's prerogative to freedom of speech." McVey said he learned that McWillie, the former manager of the Tropicana Night Club in Havana, had just had most of his assets confiscated by the Castro regime. "Under those circumstances, it is not too hard to understand why he might swing at anyone who said anything that might possibly be construed as favorable to Cuba."