



In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Dallas, Texas
December 31, 1963

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ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY,
NOVEMBER 22, 1963, DALLAS,
TEXAS

RE: WACHA MC COLLUM

On November 25, 1963, representatives of the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA), Springfield, Illinois, reported information had been received that an individual, last name possibly McCollum, who reportedly operated a sky-writing service, utilizing an AT-6 type aircraft from Danville, Illinois, had been in Houston, Texas. It was reported this individual was negotiating with the Fair Play For Cuba Committee to perform certain services incidental to the visit of President Kennedy in Houston, Texas, on November 21, 1963, and at Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963. The Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC) is characterized in an appendix attached hereto.

On November 26, 1963, Detective D. D. Collins, Houston, Texas, Police Department, advised he and other officers of that department had been present in the motorcade accompanying President Kennedy from the airport to downtown Houston on November 21, 1963, and he had observed a light aircraft towing a sign, flying parallel with this motorcade. Detective Collins reported he observed this sign to consist of the phrase "Coexistence is Surrender." Detective Collins

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RE: WACHA MC. COLLUM

stated he had neither observed nor heard reports of any other aircraft having appeared over Houston during this period towing any type of sign bearing a political slogan.

On November 26, 1963, Mr. John Blair, Control Tower Chief, FAA, Houston International Airport, after consulting individual air traffic controllers who were on duty in Houston on November 21, 1963, reported the only aircraft engaged in activities as set out above on that date was a Cessna aircraft bearing identification number 26B. Blair stated he had determined this aircraft was based at the Genoa Airport.

On November 26, 1963, Hugh Raulerson, Inspector, General Aviation District Office, FAA, Houston, Texas, advised his office grants waivers which are required of all aircraft flying over the City of Houston for the purpose of towing signs and the only aircraft presently authorized for such activities were owned by James F. Brauch, 602 Arion Lane, Pasadena, Texas.

Raulerson further stated that he had received no information indicating AT-6 type aircraft had been operating in the Houston area during the above period and he had received no requests for waivers from a Mr. McCollum from Danville, Illinois, or from any other person during the above period.

On November 26, 1963, Charles Emmett, Manager, Genoa Airport, Genoa, Texas, advised he was familiar with the flight of the Cessna aircraft number 26B on November 21, 1963, and had assisted Mr. James F. Brauch in removing the sign which had been pulled by that aircraft.

On November 26, 1963, Mrs. James F. Brauch, 610

Arion, Pasadena, Texas, stated her husband had contracted to pull a sign bearing the words, "Coexistence is Surrender," over the City of Houston on the afternoon of November 21, 1963. Mrs. Brauch stated the persons arranging this flight had made all the arrangements by telephone, had refused to furnish their identities and had paid for this service by cash without identifying themselves. Mrs. Brauch stated no written receipt or invoice was prepared in connection with this transaction and she could not identify the person who contracted for this service.

Shortly after the above interview, Mr. James F. Brauch telephoned the Houston Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and stated he desired to furnish additional information concerning this matter. Mr. Brauch stated that the above services were rendered for a man who gave his name as Joe Bryant and gave his telephone number as ML. 5-5819. Brauch stated that Bryant paid him \$225.00 in cash for this service and he prepared and furnished to Bryant a signed receipt prepared in longhand. Mr. Brauch stated he had received no other inquiries from any other source in connection with a possible flight over Houston during the period of the visit of President Kennedy.

On November 27, 1963, Joe B. Bryant, Sales Engineer, Rapids Standard Company, Inc., 2216 Walker Street, residing at 5963 Belnsath, advised he was the individual who arranged for the sign to be towed over the City of Houston on the afternoon of November 21, 1963. Bryant stated that he was a member of the John Birch Society but that the above operation was not connected with the John Birch Society or any other group but resulted simply from the informal activities of himself and a group of friends who collected money for this purpose. Mr. Bryant stated this action was taken merely as a protest against the policies of the Kennedy Administration.

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Bryant stated that while he strongly opposed everything the present government had done, he certainly considered the assassination was a terrible thing and he would never have been connected with anyone who approved such a crime. Bryant stated he thought the only proper way to oppose any administration was through the ballot box.

Bryant stated he had never heard of any person from Illinois having been in Houston during the above period in connection with any type of aerial display, that he had negotiated with no one other than the Pasadena firm in connection with this matter and he knew of no organization in the Houston area which had even considered underwriting such a demonstration.

Mr. Bryant added that no human being in his presence had ever said anything concerning any plan or scheme to raise money for the assassination of any government official and he had neither participated in nor heard about any plan whatever for the assassination of any official.

Wacha Mc Collum, airplane skywriter, residing Rural Route, Danville, Illinois, advised on November 26, 1963, that on November 20, 1963, he had flown to Texas to do a job at San Antonio, Texas. He stated that he arrived at Waco, Texas, on the night of November 20, and there received a telephone call from an individual, first name unknown McKee, who telephoned him long-distance, stating that he, McKee, was from the Dallas-Fort Worth area and that he wanted him to write the word "CUBA" in the sky over Dallas, Texas, and, also, over Fort Worth, Texas, during the afternoon of November 21, 1963, while President Kennedy was in those two cities. He stated that he discussed his price of approximately \$600.00 for writing the word "CUBA" over

these two cities but never did come to a definite agreement or contract and this concluded his conversation with McKee. He stated that McKee did not state with whom he was connected and stated that he would obtain backing for the payment of the fee but did not divulge the source of his private backing. McCollum stated that he never received any further information from this individual, McKee, nor had McKee ever contacted him in the past.

McCollum stated that he flew to San Antonio, Texas, on November 21, 1963, and arrived at 10:15 A.M. He stated that at San Antonio, Texas, he contacted an individual, first name unknown, King, Finance Officer, American Legion Post #402, which was called the Jonathan Wainwright Post. He stated that he had previously negotiated with King on a contract fee of \$1,000.00 to skywrite the word "CUBA" in the sky over San Antonio, Texas, on November 21, 1963, while President Kennedy was in that city. He stated that his contract was to commence writing in the sky at 1:30 P. M. and that he completed the word "CUBA" with two question marks, one an inverted question mark, at 2:20 P. M., November 21, 1963. He stated that he had already collected his fee of \$1,000.00 and after writing the word "CUBA" determined that he had enough gas to fly to Fort Smith, Arkansas. McCollum stated that he gassed up at Fort Smith, Arkansas, and then continued to Danville, Illinois, where he arrived at approximately 12:45, November 22, 1963, and landed his plane at Danville, at a private airport. McCollum stated that he performed the skywriting in his North American plane, Number 6423D. He stated that immediately upon landing, someone at the airport told him that President Kennedy had been shot and had been taken to a Dallas hospital where his condition was unknown.

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McCillum stated that he had never done any skywriting for the organization known as "Fair Play for Cuba" and had never had any contacts with this organization to his knowledge. He also advised that he had never seen or had any contact with an individual by the name of Lee Harvey Oswald, also known as Alek J. Hidell or O. H. Lee. McCillum stated that it was not unusual for him to fly to the State of Texas to do skywriting inasmuch as he and Andy Stintinus were the only airplane skywriters in the United States to his knowledge.

FAIR PLAY FOR CUBA COMMITTEE

The April 6, 1960, edition of "The New York Times" newspaper contained a full-page advertisement captioned "What is Really Happening in Cuba," placed by the Fair Play for Cuba Committee (FPCC). This advertisement announced the formation of the FPCC in New York City and declared the FPCC intended to promulgate "the truth about revolutionary Cuba" to neutralize the distorted American press.

"The New York Times" edition of January 11, 1961, reported that at a hearing conducted before the United States Senate Internal Security Subcommittee on January 10, 1961, Dr. CHARLES A. SANTOS-BUCH identified himself and ROBERT TABER as organizers of the FPCC. He also testified he and TABER obtained funds from the Cuban Government which were applied toward the cost of the aforementioned advertisement.

On May 16, 1963, a source advised that during the first two years of the FPCC's existence there was a struggle between Communist Party (CP) and Socialist Workers Party (SWP) elements to exert their power within the FPCC and thereby, influence FPCC policy. However, during the past year this source observed there has been a successful effort by FPCC leadership to minimize the role of these and other organizations in the FPCC so that today their influence is negligible.

On May 30, 1963, a second source advised that the National Headquarters of the FPCC is located in Room 329 at 799 Broadway, New York City. According to this source, the position of National Office Director was created in the Fall of 1962 and was filled by VINCENT "Ted" LEE, who now formulates FPCC policy. This source observed LEE has followed a course of entertaining and accepting the cooperation of many other organizations including the CP and the SWP when he has felt it would be to his personal benefit as well as the FPCC's. However, LEE has indicated to this source he has no intention of permitting FPCC policy to be determined by any other organization. LEE feels the FPCC should advocate resumption of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States and support the right of Cubans to manage their revolution without interference from other nations, but not support the Cuban revolution per se.

The CP and the SWP have been designated pursuant to Executive Order 10450.



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