

HO 44-939

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Re: FAIR PLAY FOR CUBA  
COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

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 a 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.

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 air port 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 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

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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 persons 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 MI 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 R. BRYANT, Sales Engineer, Rapids Standard Company, Inc., 2216 Walker Street, residing at 5963 Belneath, 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. He 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.