

Oswald and The Cuban Emigrés

~~by Sylvia Meagher~~ by Sylvia Meagher

When the radio flashed the news that the President had been shot while riding in a motorcade in Dallas, a young woman who heard the bulletin at her place of employment fainted dead away and had to be removed by ambulance to a hospital in Irving.

She was Sylvia Odio, a 26-year-old Cuban emigré who was active in the anti-Castro movement. The shock that sent her into unconsciousness was the recollection of three men who had visited her apartment in Dallas at the end of September 1963, and the realization that it was "very possible" that they might have been responsible, as one had mentioned that night that President Kennedy should have been killed by the Cubans" (CE 3147).*

The three men who had called on Mrs. Odio on or about the 26th or 27th of September 1963 had identified themselves as members of an anti-Castro organization and as friends of Mrs. Odio's father, a political prisoner in Cuba, with whom they displayed personal familiarity. Two of the men appeared to be Cuban or Mexican. One called himself "Leopoldo" and the other had a name "something like Angelo" (CE 370). The third man was an American who was introduced as "Leon Oswald" (CE 369).

When Mrs. Odio saw Lee Harvey Oswald on television after his arrest, she recognized him immediately as "Leon Oswald." Her sister, Annie Laurie Odio, who had seen the three visitors briefly, independently recognized Oswald as one of the three men as soon as she saw him on television (CE 382).

Mrs. Odio did not inform the authorities of her encounter with Oswald in September, perhaps because she "feared that the Cuban exiles might be accused of the President's death" (CE 3147); but a woman friend in which Mrs. Odio had confided notified the FBI, on or before November 29, 1963 (CE 379, CE 3108).

The Warren Commission, in reporting Mrs. Odio's experience (WR 321-324), does not question the fact that three men visited her, as she alleged, but gives apparently forceful reasons for concluding that Oswald was not one of them, as she believed. The main argument for this conclusion is that Oswald's known movements ruled out his presence in Dallas at the time of the visit, on Thursday September 26 or Friday September 27, 1963.

* CE designates Communion Exhibit, found in the 26 volumes.

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The Commission points out that Oswald crossed the border into Mexico between 6 am and 2 pm, on Thursday, September 26. On Wednesday, he had cashed an unemployment check at a store in New Orleans which did not open until 8 am; "therefore, it appeared that Oswald's presence in New Orleans until sometime between 8 am and 1 pm on September 25 was quite firmly established" (MR 323).

The Commission acknowledges that there is no firm evidence of the means by which Oswald traveled to Houston on the first leg of his trip from New Orleans to Mexico but claims that his only unaccounted-for time was between the morning of Wednesday the 25th (when his presence in New Orleans was "quite firmly established") and 2.35 am on Thursday the 26th, when he boarded a bus in Houston headed for Laredo. The only way Oswald could have gone to Dallas, visited Mrs. Odio, and still arrived in Houston in time to catch the 2.35 bus to Laredo on Thursday the 26th was to fly; but investigation disclosed no indication that Oswald had traveled between those points by air.

~~Important Problem~~

In the Commission's own words:

In spite of the fact that it appeared almost certain that Oswald could not have been in Dallas at the time Mrs. Odio testified, the Commission requested the FBI to conduct further investigation to determine the validity of Mrs. Odio's testimony. The Commission considered the problems raised by that testimony as important in view of the possibility it raised that Oswald may have had companions on his trip to Mexico. (MR 324)

Special note should be taken of the stipulation that Mrs. Odio's testimony was important, although the Commission somewhat understates the reasons. If Oswald had companions on his trip to Mexico, it would point to an organized covert activity almost certainly related in some way to the Castro regime. Such mysterious associations and activities in September would demolish any November proposition that Oswald was a lone assassin, and would pose with irresistible force the outlines of a plot, implicating Cubans of some denomination, perhaps with powerful non-Cuban backers, joined in a conspiracy against the life of the President of the United States.

If there was any aspect of the investigation conducted by the Warren Commission more crucial in its implications, it is not readily apparent. The Commission itself recognized the "importance" of Mrs. Odio's testimony. It might therefore be expected that her story was the subject of extremely thorough and exacting scrutiny which enabled the Commission to satisfy itself, and the American people, that there was no "Cuban" plot behind the assassination of President Kennedy but only a lone deranged assassin without political motive.

Just how thorough and exacting was the Commission's investigation?

Unfinished Business *no #*

~~Yet the~~ *Steel*
~~Commission~~ *1* sent its Report to press without even completing the investigation into Mrs. Odio's story. That fantastic and unbelievable denouement is blandly recorded in the Commission's own text.

The Commission specifically requested the FBI to attempt to locate and identify the two men who Mrs. Odio stated were with the man she thought was Oswald... (by letter dated August 28, 1964. CE 3045).

On September 16, 1964, the FBI located Loran Eugene Hall in Johnsandale, California. Hall has been identified as a participant in numerous anti-Castro activities. He told the FBI that in September 1963 he was in Dallas soliciting aid in connection with anti-Castro activities. He also stated he had visited Mrs. Odio. He was accompanied by Lawrence Howard, a Mexican-American from San Antonio, Texas and one William Seymour, an Arizona. He stated that Seymour is similar in appearance to Lee Harvey Oswald; he speaks only a few words of Spanish, as Mrs. Odio had testified one of the men who visited her did.

Wanted #
While the FBI had not yet completed its investigation into this matter at the time the report went to press, the Commission has concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald was not at Mrs. Odio's apartment in September of 1963.

(WR 324)

(~~ital~~)

It requires some nonchalance to join the Warren Commission in assuming, on the basis of an unfinished investigation and an incomplete record, that it was William Seymour, not Oswald, at Mrs. Odio's door. We are entitled to proof, including sworn testimony from Seymour, Hall and Howard, and further testimony from Mrs. Odio and her sister after confrontation with those three men.

1/ *37* ~~Letter~~ letter dated August 28, 1964 (CE 3045).

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However, even if the Commission had given chapter and verse to prove that Hall, Howard, and Seymour were the three men who visited Mrs. Odio and that she and her sister mistakenly had identified Seymour as Oswald, the episode would still constitute strong evidence of conspiracy--but one directed against Oswald as well as the President.

~~There~~ ^{is no} other way to explain the fact that Seymour was introduced as "Leon Oswald" or the fact that "Leopoldo" telephoned Mrs. Odio the next day (377) and carefully told her (1) that "Leon Oswald" was a former Marine; (2) that "Oswald" was a crack marksman; (3) that "Oswald" felt that President Kennedy should have been assassinated after the Bay of Pigs; and (4) that "Oswald" was loco ^{stale} and the kind of man who could do anything, like "getting" the Cuban underground or killing Castro. *

Whether the visitor was Oswald himself, or Seymour impersonating Oswald, "Leopoldo" took pains to plant seeds which inevitably would incriminate Oswald in the assassination carried out on November 22nd, so that an anonymous phone call would be enough to send the police straight after him even if he had not been arrested within the hour. That setting-the-stage in itself made it imperative for the Commission to press the investigation to the outermost limits and to consider Loran Hall, Lawrence Howard, and William Seymour as prime suspects in the assassination, if they proved to be the men who had visited Mrs. Odio, unless an innocent and incontrovertible explanation for their antics was established.

The Commission's failure to get to the bottom of this affair, with its ~~grave~~ grave implications, is inexcusable. If the Commission could leave such business unfinished, we are entitled to ask if they were ever determined to uncover the truth. Indeed, the Commission did not even give an honest account of such facts as were ^{stale} established. Its own exhibits expose the "evidence" presented in the Report as a tissue of deceit which discredits more than it justifies the conclusion that Oswald could not have visited Mrs. Odio.

1/ The FBI was not unaware of this stumbling-block but it seems unnecessary to take seriously its feeble suggestion that "the name Loran Hall bears some phonetic resemblance to the name Leon Oswald" (CG 3146), an "explanation" that the Commission prudently omitted from the Report, ~~without, however, offering a better one, or confronting the difficulty at all.~~

Witness

Before documenting the charge of deception by the Commission, we should examine the possibility of deception by Mrs. Odio in her testimony about a visit at the end of September 1963, by three men who represented themselves as members of the anti-Castro underground. Several points speak in favor of her credibility, including the fact that the Commission itself accepts the reality of the visit and questions only the identity of one member of the trio.

Mrs. Odio's sister corroborates the visit and recognizes Oswald as one of the men. A letter from Mrs. Odio's father (Odio Exhibit 1) corroborates her testimony (VI, 368) that she had written to him to inquire whether the three men were his friends, as they claimed.

Moreover, Mrs. Odio related the incident to her psychiatrist a few days after the event (VI, 373, 381); representatives of the Warren Commission had a discussion lasting more than an hour with the psychiatrist, Dr. Einspruch, which apparently satisfied them that Mrs. Odio was trustworthy (VI, 381).

~~(The official record does not include a transcript or summary of this discussion, perhaps in deference to the confidential nature of the doctor/patient relationship.)~~

~~Finally, Mrs. Odio's collapse upon hearing the news of the assassination adds great force to her story.~~

Conclusion

The accuracy of Mrs. Odio's identification of Oswald must ^{also} be evaluated. The following facts suggest that it is very unlikely that this was a case of mistaken identity:

- (1) The use of the name "Leon Oswald";
- (2) The immediate recognition of Oswald on television;
- (3) The assertion ~~by~~ the three men that they had just come to Dallas from New Orleans (VI, 372), the city which Oswald is said to have left on September 25;
- (4) The assertion by the three men that they were "leaving for a trip" (VI, 372), just as Oswald embarked on a trip to Mexico City; and
- (5) "Leopoldo's" statement that he might attempt to introduce "Leon Oswald" into the underground in Cuba, shortly before Oswald actually attempted to obtain a visa for travel to Cuba.

Det?
This series of parallels may not constitute conclusive evidence that Mrs. Odio's identification of Oswald was correct but, if they are not in the realm of the supernatural, they are persuasive manifestations of the authentic Oswald. ^{isset} If the Commission nevertheless wishes to substitute William Seymour, the Commission might at least explain the means by which the image of Oswald was projected with such fidelity—and why.

The Oswald Bus Rider

Although the prima facie evidence for Mrs. Odio's encounter with the real Oswald is strong, the constraints postulated by the Commission against Oswald's presence in Dallas at the appropriate time cannot be ignored.

According to the Report, Mrs. Odio fixed the time of the visit as Thursday the 26th or Friday the 27th of September. Mrs. Odio ~~actually~~ told the FBI that the visit might have

been on Wednesday the 25th, "although she considered the Thursday date to be the most probable" (CE 3147).

Actually, the approximate dates are by no means certain, since Mrs. Odio fixed them as close to the time she changed apartment

While the Report does not make it clear that the visit might have taken

place on Wednesday the 25th, it does concede the absence of firm evidence as to the means by which Oswald traveled on that date from New Orleans to Houston.

Somewhat curiously, the Commission then suggests that Oswald's presence on a Continental Trailways bus that left New Orleans at 1:45 pm on Wednesday the 25th "would be consistent with other evidence" (WR 323).

In Appendix XIII, the Commission becomes bolder, and asserts that "he left New Orleans by bus, probably on Continental Trailways Bus No. 5121, departing New Orleans at 12:20 pm on September 25 and scheduled to arrive in Houston at 10:50 pm" (WR 731).

That assertion is completely arbitrary, lacking positive evidence and overcoming negative evidence by the simple expedient of disregarding it. As will be shown, the Commission did not even convince itself that Oswald left New Orleans on that bus. There is no documentary trace of his presence; the driver did not remember "ever seeing Oswald in person at any time" (CE 2134); and not one passenger has turned up who recalled seeing Oswald on bus no. 5121. Since the bus ride from New Orleans to Houston takes almost 12 hours (CE 2962), the lack of witnesses to Oswald's presence on a bus between those two points ^{works} ~~is strong evidence~~ against the Commission's supposition. Other dates, or other modes of travel, must therefore be considered.

1 Mrs. Odio's callers were traveling in a car, with "Leopoldo" driving (~~WR~~ 372), a detail which the Report ^{omits} ~~conspicuously neglects to mention~~. The authors, arguing against a stopover in Dallas en route to Houston, merely say ~~that~~ that "automobile travel in the time available, though perhaps possible, would have been difficult" (WR 323).

2 Even under the Commission's restrictions on "the time available," and in the admitted absence of firm evidence of Oswald's mode of travel from New Orleans to Houston (353 miles) ^(CE 3090), it appears that he could have traveled from New Orleans to Dallas (503 miles) ¹ in "Leopoldo's" car, and from Dallas to Houston (244 miles) in the same vehicle, or by private airplane for all we know.

3 Under the Commission's constraints, Oswald had to cover those distances between 8 am Wednesday, September 25, and 2:35 am Thursday the 26th. But if the basic facts are disentangled from the report, extracted from the Hearings and Exhibits, and reassembled, the constraints begin to appear dubious, if not artificial. The evidence that Oswald boarded "bus no. 5133 in Houston and departed at 2:35 am" on Thursday September 26 (WR 732) is ambiguous. A ticket agent in the Houston bus terminal sold a ticket to Laredo to a man who could have been Oswald (WR 303); but the man was dressed in clothes (brown and white sweater, white slippers, and white canvas shoes) that did not correspond with any of Oswald's garments, and none of the other 11 employees on duty in the bus terminal at the time had any recollection of seeing Oswald (CE 214). A married couple who were passengers on bus no. 5133 stated, in a brief affidavit, that they believed that they first saw Oswald on the bus shortly after they awoke at 6 am (~~WR~~ 214), but they were not pressed to be more precise; and it cannot be said that their testimony is sufficient to place Oswald on the bus at 2:35 am at Houston. (Why didn't the married couple see him at the outset? And why is there no evidence from other passengers, or from the driver, to corroborate the Commission's claim that Oswald boarded the bus in Houston before its departure at 2:35 am?)

4 The other constraint imposed by the Commission is even shakier. Oswald was seen leaving his apartment in New Orleans, carrying two suitcases, on Tuesday evening September 24, according to a neighbor (WR 730). After that time, there is no definite trace of him in that city. But the Report insists that Oswald was in New Orleans at least until 8 am on Wednesday, because he cashed a check at a

~~1/20/2000~~

New Orleans store sometime after 8 am, that day. The citation for that statement is an FBI memorandum dated April 7, 1964, which reports that,

The Winn-Dixie store, 11425, 1303 Magazine Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, the place where the warrant dated September 23, 1963 was cashed, was not open to the public on September 25, 1963 until 8 am. J D Fuchs, Manager...approved the warrant for cashing...Mrs Thelma F Fisher, Cashier #3...actually cashed the warrant...

(CE 2131)

Usually, when the commission discusses a specific check issued to and cashed by Oswald, the footnotes refer to reports of interviews with the cashiers (see, for example, CE 1165, 1167) and photocopies of the face and back of the check (see CE 1173-1175, 3121). But when the Commission discusses the 33 check which is claimed to fix Oswald's presence in New Orleans within a specific hour on a specific day, only the FBI memorandum (CE 2131) is cited but no interviews with J D Fuchs or Mrs Fisher and no photocopy of the specific check.

When critics of the Report raise objections of this nature, the faithful are quick to charge their adversaries with nit-picking. In this instance they would be well advised to hold their tongues, since the Commission itself was not satisfied with the evidence.

The discussion of the Commission's changing mind less than a month before its

Report was released is graphically revealed by a letter signed *from J. Lee Rankin*, general counsel to the Commission, addressed to J. Edgar Hoover,

FBI Director, dated August 28, 1964, *expresses the Commission's doubts:*

We are also concerned about the possibility that Oswald may have left New Orleans on September 24, 1963 instead of September 25, 1963 as has been previously thought. *It is*

conceivable that Oswald was recently advised as that her husband told her he intended to leave New Orleans the very next day following her departure on September 23, 1963. She has also indicated that he told her an unemployment check would be forwarded to Mrs. Ruth Paine's address in Irving from his post office box in New Orleans. We also have testimony that Oswald left his apartment on the evening of September 24, 1963 carrying two suitcases.

It also seems improbable to us that Oswald would have gone all the way back to the Winn-Dixie Store at 4305 Magazine Street to cash the unemployment check which he supposedly picked up at the Lafayette Branch of the Post Office when he could have cashed it at Martin's Restaurant, where he had previously cashed many of his Kelly checks and one unemployment check... *That is particularly true if he received the check on September 25, 1963, as previously thought, and had left his apartment with his suitcases the evening before.*

(CE 3045)

(Hall's...)

Since

no new evidence on those points was turned up after Rankin's letter to the FBI on August 28, 1964, the possibility that Oswald had left New Orleans on Tuesday September 24 instead of Wednesday the 25th ~~was not raised~~ *remains.*

Never

theless, when the Warren Report was published less than a month later, the ~~same~~ *inconclusive points which Rankin had questioned had now been transformed* into "facts" ^{into} ~~into~~

if the Commission did not hesitate to mislead and deceive the public about facts which have a crucial bearing on the feasibility of Oswald's presence at Mrs. Odio's apartment, what part of its Report is above suspicion? Personally, we consider it reckless to take anything at face value except the pagination.

Certainly it is a precedent to overlook the clarity with which the FBI produced Loran Eugene Hall on September 16, 1964 following on Rankin's request of August 28 to "determine who it was that Mrs. Odio saw in or about late September" (CI 3045). The FBI had been investigating Mrs. Odio's story without locating the three men since December 18, 1963, when she was interviewed by FBI agents James Mastey and Bardwell Odio (LL 369). For reasons unknown, the FBI report of that interview has been omitted from the exhibits; also missing are reports mentioned in Rankin's letter to Hoover (CI 3045) ^{1/}

in view of the fact that

It is now efficiently the FBI found Loran Hall after Rankin's a prodding letter from
~~he had been unlocatable~~ during the preceding nine months

Unfortunately, there is no interview report on Loran Hall, no address, no physical description, no indication of his age, nor any details which might permit a comparison with "Leopoldo." A letter to a Senator who had served on the Warren Commission asking about the results of the FBI investigation, presumably continued after the Report went to press, has brought no reply (as of February 6, 1966).

Another footnote to Rankin's letter of August 28, 1964, in which he suggested that Oswald might have left New Orleans a day earlier than believed previously, is the press leak that appeared a few days later. The New York Post of August 31, 1964 reported that,

^{1/} Reports of Gemberling 12/23/63; O'Connor 12/31/63; Clements 12/14/63; Callendar 12/24/63, 4/16/64; Kenny 12/23/63; letterhead memorandum 4/15/64. The reports covered investigations in Dallas, Miami, New Orleans, Houston, and San Antonio.

Investigative agencies have spent many hours and interviewed hundreds of witnesses since the Nov. 22 assassination trying to trace Oswald's steps on the Mexico trip.

It is known, for instance, that he was seen in a Dallas bus station at 6 pm Sept. 25 and that he crossed the border at Nuevo Laredo next day.

(Italics added)

That is the first and last we hear of witnesses who saw Oswald in a Dallas bus station at 6 o'clock Wednesday; the Report does not dignify that "rumor" with a refutation.

At the end of this trail of uncertain and shifting evidence, there seem to be strong grounds, but not conclusive grounds, for believing that Mrs. Odio's identification of Oswald was correct. However, the Commission's failure to press its investigation to completion leaves open at least a possibility that "Leon Oswald" was really William Seymour; and that Seymour, in complicity with Loran Hall and Lawrence Howard, was engaged in a deliberate impersonation of Oswald. *The implications are staggering.* - 30 -

~~and~~ ~~... thesis requires a link between Oswald and his impersonator through which the latter acquired sufficient familiarity with Oswald's history and circumstances to permit successful impersonation.~~ **STOP**

The Implications of Conspiracy

In the vein of purest speculation, it is possible to postulate a series of threads connecting persons known and unknown which would satisfy the conditions for successful impersonation. The starting point is the summer of 1963, when Oswald came into contact with Carlos Bringuier and others who were active in the organized anti-Castro movement in New Orleans (WR 407-408, 728-729).

Oswald sought out Bringuier under circumstances which suggest a calculated attempt to infiltrate the anti-Castro movement, perhaps in the hope of acquiring "credit cards" for a future defection to Cuba. That is how Bringuier regarded the incident (10H 32-43).

Bringuier alerted other anti-Castroites against Oswald. One of Bringuier's cohorts went on an infiltration mission of his own, after consulting Bringuier. He went to Oswald's house "posing as a pro-Castro" to "try to get as much information as possible from Oswald" (10H 41). Bringuier also informed Edward Butler, an anti-Communist rightist propagandist (10H 42, 11H 166, 168), who tried "to contact some person, somebody in Washington, to get more the background of Oswald" (10H 42), and apparently did obtain information on Oswald from the House Un-American Activities Committee (11H 163).

It is a reasonable presumption that a warning against Oswald went out also to the right wing of the anti-Castro movement in other cities, Dallas included, and to their American sponsors and supporters, both official (CIA and perhaps FBI) and unofficial (various ultra-reactionary groups). The anti-Castro movement is composed of many competing factions, ranging from the Patistianes and far-rightists (BRE, for example) who seek the restoration of a regime like Batista's (under which Cuba was an American colony in everything but name), to liberal and reform groups (like JUNE or Manuel Ray's MRF, which is considered leftist and tantamount to "Castroism without Castro"). The reactionary wing of the movement and the CIA have cordial and close relations, whereas the moderate and progressive factions do not enjoy the CIA's confidence and were systematically excluded from the CIA's planning of the Bay of Pigs adventure (see, for example, Bay of Pigs by Haynes Johnson, or A Thousand Days by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr).

The right-wing Cuban emigres were bitter and infuriated by the humiliating defeat at the Bay of Pigs, blaming President Kennedy for refusing to permit direct American military participation in the invasion. The CIA's conduct of the whole affair brought the agency into disgrace and jeopardy, it is alleged, among Cubans to override President Kennedy if he cancelled the invasion at the last minute, so that the landing at the Bay of Pigs would go ahead regardless of Presidential orders. The revelation that the CIA had contemplated countermanding the White House, on top of its incredible bungling of the invasion from beginning to end, suggested an early end to what has been called "the invisible government." Those who had placed themselves above Presidential authority must have seen large handwriting on the wall after the Bay of Pigs fiasco, and a threat to the CIA was also a threat to their Cuban proteges.

Dallas, with its hospitable political climate and its plentiful money, inevitably was an outpost of the anti-Castro right wing. Mrs. Odio testified that the Crestwood Apartments, where she lived at the time of the visit by "Leon Donald," was "full of Cubans" (LHM 374). Fund-raising meetings were held in a Dallas bank, by Cuban exiles and their American sympathizers (JE 2390). Mrs. Odio said that all the Cubans knew that she was a member of JUNE "but it did not have a lot of sympathy in Dallas and I was criticized because of that" (LHM 370).

Father Walter J. McChann, who was active in a Cuban Catholic committee concerned with the welfare and relief of Cuban refugees in Dallas, told the Secret Service about a Colonel Caster who was associated with the committee.

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Officer Redman said that Colonel Gaster was a retired Army officer who seemed to be "playing the role of an intelligence officer in his contacts with the Cubans" and that he seemed to be "more interested in their political beliefs than in their economic plight or their social problems in the new country" (CE 2943).

(Mrs J. L. Connell, a volunteer worker in the committee, also mentioned the Colonel. She told the FBI on November 29, 1963 that "General Walker and Colonel (MRT) Gaster, a close acquaintance of Walker, have been trying to arouse the feelings of the Cuban refugees in Dallas against the Kennedy administration" in speeches before Cuban groups in the Dallas area "in recent months" (CE 3198). (Neither the FBI nor the Warren Commission found that of sufficient interest to warrant an interview with the Colonel.)

[At this point, there is a hypothetical series of links connecting Oswald to Bringer, Bringer to the anti-Castro movement in Dallas, the anti-Castro movement in Dallas to Colonel Gaster, and Colonel Gaster to General Walker. Reliable information in a personal letter received by the writer suggests a further link, between the Colonel and the General to a card-playing buddy of the General's at his home near Robert Suroy, who is James R. Hasty Jr., FBI agent who was in charge of the Oswald file during 1963.

[All these threads leads to Jack Ruby. A former employee of General Walker's, *William* [redacted] was employed by Ruby in his Dallas residence (CE 2931). There is strong evidence from Robert Nichol (CE 1610-1609, 3041) and from Nancy Ferrin Rich (MRT 345-353) that Ruby was engaged in the illegal supply of arms to the Cuban underground.

[Mrs. Rich testified that she had attended a meeting in Dallas to discuss an offer to her husband of a large sum of money for running guns to Cuba and bringing refugees out to Miami. The head of the group that had made the offer was an army Colonel; another member present at the meeting was Jack Ruby, for whom Mrs. Rich had worked briefly as a cocktail waitress at the Carousel Club.

[Ruby, of course, had close links to the Dallas police. Some Dallas policemen had independent links to the far-right. J. D. Tippit, for one, had a moonlighting job at Justin's barbecue; his boss, Austin Cook, is an acknowledged member of the John Birch Society (CE 2985).

[All these threads can be woven into a web that covers the terrible and mysterious events of November 22-24, 1963. The nucleus consists of reactionary and fanatic Cuban exiles, who have compiled a record of neo-fascist and violent behavior in their new country, ranging from attacks with bicycle chains and Molotov cocktails against peacefully assembled American citizens to a bazooka attack on the United Nations building; these Cuban counter-revolutionaries are

limited to the American ultra-right by many actual interests, not the least of which was a paranoid hatred for President Kennedy, kept at the boiling point by systematic propaganda from former American army officers.

Is it far-fetched to postulate the formation of a plot among members of these circles to revenge themselves not only against the President when they considered a Communist and a traitor but also against a Marxist and suspected double-agent who had tried to infiltrate the anti-Castro movement?

This hypothesis is, of course, purely theoretical, a mere exercise in speculation attempting to explain the possible rationale for an impersonation of Oswald, in the context of Mrs Odie's experience and of other stories that pose the possibility of deliberate and informed impersonation.

We do not insinuate that such a plot existed; but we do suggest that the Warren Commission's job was to consider and check out all possible theories, however far-out, and not to dispose of disturbing evidence like that lingering in the Odie story by illusory "facts" and cynical pretenses.

Congressman Gerald Ford, one of the members of the Commission, has said that "the monumental record of the President's Commission will stand like a Gibraltar of factual literature through the ages to come." ^{1/}

Mr. Ford, in what corner of "Gibraltar" should the American people search for the results of the investigation? Should they be told that they may know whether or not conspirators of any kind joined forces with local extremists to shoot down the President in cold blood on the streets of Dallas, and cunningly to frame and execute a patsy for the crime?

The Commission's unfinished business may not disturb the Commission's self-satisfaction nor its self-imposed silence; but for those who are haunted by conscience of a frightful miscarriage of justice, and troubled by the loose ends in the "monumental record," that complacency remains incomprehensible. We must keep knocking at the closed door, untiringly, until the door is forced open.

^{1/} Portrait of the Assassin, Simon & Schuster, 1965.