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about his work on behalf of Communism, and his efforts to infiltrate the anti-Castro Cubans and the right wing. He said it was urgent for him to get to Cuba so he could provide information that could help prevent future CIA attacks.⁷⁰ Ernesto Rodriguez, a former CIA contract agent, claimed that Oswald hinted he had information on American efforts to kill Castro.⁷¹ Nechiporenko later reported that Oswald said the FBI was trying to kill him. It was vintage Oswald, a mixture of bluster and fabrication. The Soviet agents, having had no previous contact with him, did not know what to believe and what to dismiss. At the time, the KGB agents thought Oswald's rantings were evidence of an "unstable personality." Oswald was politely put off until at least the following day. The Soviet officers needed to contact headquarters in Moscow to determine whether Oswald was somebody to whom the KGB wanted to grant an immediate visa. Before he left, Oswald asked if the Soviets would at least call the Cubans and inform Azcue that his Russian documents were valid. Perhaps the Cubans had initially rejected him because they doubted the authenticity of his papers. The Russians agreed, but the call changed nothing at the Cuban embassy.

The cable to Moscow about Oswald, from the KGB agents in Mexico City, ended up on the desk of the agent who had first handled the matter in 1959, Yuriy Nosenko. "Because I had no contact with the local KGB in Minsk, I did not know that Oswald had married or had a child. Then suddenly a special cable arrived from the Soviet embassy in Mexico City seeking our advice. Oswald was there and seeking a visa to reenter the USSR."⁷²

"I went to the chief of the department, and he looked and said, 'Oh, this nut. Go back and have the First Department cable the embassy that we are not interested, but have them give him a diplomatic turnaway.' Of course, Oswald didn't know he was being turned away because he was nuts. We considered him nuts. It took us almost no time to say no to his request for a visa."⁷³

*There are some indications Oswald might have entered the Soviet embassy through a separate entrance and met with the KGB officers in a secure room. Might not that indicate he had a Soviet intelligence connection? "Nonsense," Nosenko told the author. "None of that is in the least surprising. He

The following day to both embassies. I went to the Soviets and it to the Cubans and furious when told b not issue a visa. "I poor."⁷⁴ Nechiporenko that Oswald would the Soviet embassy.

Oswald left the the Cubans. "We are or persistent," reflected unhappiness sant."⁷⁵ Oswald aware of his political credible without a FBI this time that the Azcue's reasoning; [Oswald] became hear him make sense Azcue, "and he is discourteous make him to leave the tionally."⁷⁷ He told ing the Cuban toward Oswald, bassy. "Then he seems to be mu

told them he was if he was not worried why they did not been to diplomatically apply for a visa in San Francisco, and when they asked source for us, or that's why they treated him nice

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One of the most unusual aspects of the Odio case is that though she thought she had met the assassin, she never contacted any government or law enforcement agency to tell her story.⁵⁵ Carlos Bringuier, the New Orleans anti-Castro leader who was arrested in a street fracas with Oswald, had met Odio once. He considers her failing to report the Oswald sighting a telling factor: "I believe it is possible that she was visited by someone—there were a lot of people with different organizations out there. But after the assassination, I believe her immediate reaction would have been the same as mine, to have jumped up and called the FBI and say, 'Hey, that guy visited me!' Instead [after being released from the hospital], she casually told a neighbor, and that neighbor told the FBI, and that's the only reason it came out. That makes me suspicious of her story. It doesn't sound right, and I know from my own personal experience on what I did and how I felt when I realized I had some contact with the man who killed the President of the United States. I heard the name Lee Harvey Oswald and I jumped from my seat. I didn't finish my lunch—I called the FBI immediately. Maybe with all the news after the assassination she became confused and put Oswald's face and name onto the person she actually met. I have seen this as a lawyer in criminal cases. There is an accident with four witnesses and they give four different versions and they all believe they are telling the truth, and could even pass a lie detector. She thinks she is telling the truth. I hate to say she is lying, but she is mistaken."⁵⁶

Three men did visit Odio, probably on September 26 or 27, 1963. There is not a single piece of corroborating evidence, however, for her postassassination claim that one of the men was introduced as 'Leon Oswald' and that the next day one of the Cubans called to discuss a Marine sharpshooter and his Kennedy death threats.

While Odio thought she had been visited by Oswald in Texas, he was actually undergoing one of his most important encounters since he had tried to renounce his American citizenship in Moscow in 1959. At the Cuban embassy, it was a typical Friday morning for Silvia Duran, the young Mexican woman who worked as

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Oswald had been picked up almost daily
Cruz dashed in with the news that the American was back at
Canal and St. Charles. Again, they raced to confront him. "When
the three of us approached him, the guy looked at me and I said,
"That's the same American who was in the store," says Bringuier.
Oswald had a placard around his neck and was distributing
Fair Play for Cuba leaflets. "He looked at me and smiled and
he put his hand out to shake my hand, and I refused. I was angry
and started to call him names, 'Why, you are a Communist! You
traitor! What are you doing?'"¹² A crowd formed as the shouting
started. Bringuier tried to incite the throng against Oswald, tell-
ing them he was a Communist who had pretended to befriend the
Cuban movement when actually he was a friend of Castro. Some
in the crowd began jeering at Oswald, telling him to go to Russia.
The crowd's reaction further provoked Bringuier, who later said,
"I lost control and I took my glasses off as I was going to hit him—
he saw that and put his arms down and said, 'Hey, Carlos, if you
want to hit me, hit me.' That made me stop. He was smart. That
would have made me the aggressor and turned the crowd against
me." Hernandez snatched the stack of Fair Play pamphlets from
Oswald's hands and tossed them into the air. "Then Oswald got
mad," says Bringuier. "But by that time the police had arrived.
Oswald was accusing Celso of destroying his pamphlets, and the
police just took all of us away."

*Some suggest that the fight between Bringuier and Oswald was staged in
order to enhance Oswald's "cover" identity as a pro-Castro activist. Sum-
mers raises suspicions by saying Bringuier had "past contact with the CIA."
But it was with the Domestic Contact Division, which interviewed him after
the assassination about a nephew who had defected from Cuba to America.
"Except for that single interview," Bringuier says, "it is a lie to say I had any
CIA contact" (Interview with Bringuier, March 16, 1992). According to Sum-
mers, Bringuier also published a right-wing newsletter backed by the CIA-
sponsored Crusade to Free Cuba. "Absolutely false," Bringuier says.
"Summers is mixed up. My paper was *Crusado*, but had nothing to do with
the Crusade to Free Cuba, a completely different organization, to which I
had no connection." Summers also cites New Orleans police lieutenant Francis
Martello as concluding, "He [Oswald] seemed to have them set up to cre-
ate an incident." "No, that is not true," Martello told the author. "That is a
fabrication. That fight was not set up. I didn't believe it back then and I don't
believe it now—no way" (Interview with Francis Martello, March 16, 1992).

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