

Panel Hears Tape Of Castro on JFK

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Washington — (AP) — House investigators are weighing the merits of a mysterious intelligence report suggesting that Lee Harvey Oswald hinted to Cuban officials that he might kill President John F. Kennedy.

The report also suggests that Fidel Castro knew this before Kennedy was slain.

Castro has denied to the House Select Committee on Assassinations that he knew of such a threat prior to the murder. Two other Cuban officials say Oswald made no such statements during his three visits to the Cuban consulate in Mexico City.

The situation may become clearer today as the committee presents details about the intelligence report and a transcript of the committee's four-hour interview with Castro that was taped last April in Havana.

The suggestion that the Cuban leader had some inkling of Oswald's plan first emerged in 1967 in a National Enquirer article by Comer Clark, a British free-lance journalist who died in 1972.

Clark wrote that Castro told him in an interview: "Yes, I heard of Lee Harvey Oswald's plan to kill President Kennedy. It's possible that I could have saved him. I might have been able to, but I didn't. I never believed the plan would be put into effect."

Clark quoted Castro as saying Cuban officials told him of Oswald's visit to the Mexico City consulate about two months before Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

Clark charged Castro said he was told Oswald said "someone ought to shoot that President Kennedy" and that he might do it himself.

Questioned about the account, Castro told committee investigators that he never granted Clark an interview. He called the story absurd.

"I didn't say that," Castro asserted. "It has been invented from the beginning until the end. It's a lie. If this man (Oswald) would have done something like that, it would have been our moral duty to inform the United States."

In a written report, committee counsel Robert Blakey said investigators "made an effort to explore Mr. Clark's background and reputation for veracity. Frankly, it was not good. Apparently he wrote extensively for the sensational press."

But Blakey continued, "Even though there may be doubts as to the

fact of Clark's interview with President Castro, the committee has been informed that the substance of the Clark article is supported by highly confidential but reliable sources available to the U.S. government."

Questioned by reporters yesterday, Blakey refused to elaborate except to say House investigators have not themselves evaluated the reliability of the secret sources, nor have they reached any conclusions about the report's merits.

The committee presumably obtained the report from U.S. intelligence officials but Blakey refused to identify them.

The committee took testimony yesterday from the two Cuban diplomats who were in charge of the Mexico City consulate in 1963.

Eusbio Azcue Lopez and Alfredo Mirabal Diaz said Oswald became extremely angry when denied an immediate visa to travel to Cuba. Both swore he said nothing about Kennedy or about killing anyone.