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out foundation. The real story was not adduced in her testimony (although the printed record has similar inferences). That we get in a series of unpublished reports.

The synopsis of Special Agent Stephen M. Callender's sev- eral investigations, completed September 9 and bearing various dictation dates, is New Orleans Field Office File NO 100-16601, Bureau File 105-82555. Without haste, it is dated September 23. It quotes Dr. Augustin Guitart as saying she "suffered a very serious emotional breakdown ... which required she obtain psy- chiatric treatment" and that, in his opinion, "in the fall of 1963 Sylvia Odio was not physically well ...". It acknowledges her family difficulties as though they also tended to make her undependable and at the end admits, "Guitart states that Sylvia Odio maintains an excellent reputation and would not intention- ally make any untrue statements ...". The inference is that she was likely to speak untruly because of her "very serious emotion- al" problems. It is unwarranted and contrary to the results of the investigation.

According to the field report dictated a week after the investigation, Guitart is a physics instructor at Xavier Univer- sity, New Orleans, not a physician. He is Mrs. Odio's uncle. Her parents were the millionaire owners of a trucking company and "considerable" tracts of land before their imprisonment by the Castro government. He considers Sylvia Odio to be "highly intelligent".

Sylvia Odio, and her former husband, Guillermo Herrera, fled to Puerto Rico where he was employed as a chemical engineer. When his company sent him to Germany in 1962, he abandoned his wife with four very small children, the oldest of whom was six years old. She had "no means of support". Because of these prob- lems, her concern for her imprisoned parents and about her ability to care for her children and herself, Mrs. Odio did have psychi- atric problems. The words "severe emotional breakdown" are Callender's and not Guitart's. In all of his reports, Callender has not a single direct quotation. This language is not in ac- cord with Guitart's statement that his niece required no insti- tutionalization. She was able to care for herself and her child- ren, and she did. In early 1963 she moved from Puerto Rico to Dallas to join her sister Annie. There is no suggestion that she did not support herself and her children. She was regularly employed at the time of the assassination.

The reference to her not being physically well in the fall of 1963, a too-cute way of saying at the time of the incident in her home and of the assassination without using those words, re- lates in no way to her mental health but to her need for a hys- terectomy, rather less delicately described by the FBI. The operation was after the assassination. She was, in fact, able to work regularly until the operation.

There are many snide remarks about Mrs. Odio's not telling Guitart about the visit of the three men to her home prior to the assassination until February or March 1964. The phrasing is care- fully calculated to give the impression it was a story she had later made up. The truth is that it was reported to the authori- ties immediately. Early 1964 was the first time, from the report itself, that she saw her uncle after the assassination. The inci- dent was triggered by her seeing a newspaper photograph of Oswald in her uncle's home. All the fact attributed to Guitart is in accord with Mrs. Odio's testimony.

Parenthetically, there is in this report an intriguing bit that seemingly interested no one in the FBI. Guitart "was present in Municipal Court in New Orleans, Louisiana, at the time Oswald



was charged with disturbing the peace ...". This is another part of the story of "The False Oswald" to which we shall return.

Guitart's seemingly strong endorsement of Mrs. Odio's integrity is in the field report, but in the prejudicial language of the FBI agent, not Guitart's.

Much the same thing happened to Loran Hall and for the same reason.

The synopsis tells the essence of the account in the Report and then seeks, by language that is misrepresentative, to make it seem as though the entire incident was falsely reported:

LORAN EUGENE HALL advised 9/16/64, that in September, 1963, he was at Dallas, Texas, in company of LAWRENCE HOWARD and WILLIAM SEYMOUR to solicit aid in anti-CASTRO movement. HALL contacted many Cubans in Dallas area. HALL recalled a Cuban woman, Mrs. ODIO, who lived in apartment 4, located on Magellan Circle ... specifically denies that LEE HARVEY OSWALD was with him during his visit to Mrs. ODIO's apartment. On 9/20/64, HALL reinterviewed and advises that information furnished by him on 9/16/64 was incorrect and was furnished by error ...

So, to a careless examiner of the files or to a hasty member of the Commission staff, it might have seemed that the FBI was repudiating the very report cited by the Commission's Report as the source of its information. And thus it would seem that the visit of the three men, one of whom resembled and was presented as Oswald, never occurred. The truth is to the contrary. But even if Hall had been "in error" about the entire event (and with such specification there is no possibility of simple error), the FBI had ample time to communicate its correction to the Commission. Hall was "reinterviewed" September 20; Hoover's letter is dated September 21.

The Commission's interest was not in "The False Oswald". If the language of the Report is to be believed, the Commission ignored him. Its concern was, of all strange things, "that Oswald may have had companions on his trip to Mexico". What the Commission asked of the FBI "specifically", according to the same paragraph, was that it "attempt to locate and identify the two men who Mrs. Odio stated were with the man she thought was Oswald" (R324). Not "The False Oswald"!

What Hall never repudiated but actually expanded confirms Mrs. Odio in intimate detail save for a single item. On the 16th he told FBI Special Agent Leon F. Brown that he and the other two named had been in Dallas the latter part of September 1963; had contacted a number of people, including three Cuban refugee professors at the University of Dallas, one of whom is named Odio, by which coincidence he recalled the name of the woman they saw; had been arrested, "during which time they were interrogated by various Federal intelligence agents concerning their activities ..."; that "the police took Polaroid photographs of himself and of SEYMOUR"; that both were fingerprinted; and many other things. He located the Odio apartment correctly and in detail, and affirmed the visit to it.

His description of William Seymour is much more like Oswald than the version broadcast by the police and accepted as accurate enough by the Report: age, 25-6; height, 5'9-10"; weight, 155-160 pounds, etc.

When reinterviewed four days later there was only one part of this that Hall said he was uncertain about. He had made five trips on such business to Dallas in 1963 alone. A provocative omission here is any reference to 1962 when the Cuba situation was "hot", when invasions were in the wind, the year of the Cuban

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Missile Crisis. Almost as strange is the emphasis on a 1963 invasion when the United States, through the assassinated President, was pledged not to attack Cuba and to protect her from any attack.

Hall thought that on the September trip, when he had a trailer-load of "supplies" (others involved said these "supplies" included weapons for the anti-Castro forces), he was accompanied by Howard and a Cuban called "Wahito". Although he took Wahito along, Hall did not trust him and, in the words of the FBI agent, "HALL has now concluded was a CASTRO plant".

On this trip the trailer was left in Dallas and the trio proceeded to Miami. Seymour was the third man on the return in October, and it was then they were arrested. This is confirmed by the FBI investigation quoted earlier. Hall reaffirmed that the police took pictures "several times while he was in custody, both by Polaroid and by a 'mug' shot when he was seated behind a board which had numbers placed on it. Seymour was also photographed. Both were fingerprinted." An unnamed "Dallas resident" put up \$5,000 bail. Two days later "they were told by the prosecuting attorney, one Mr. WADE, that the charges had been dropped."

So not only did the silent Federal investigative agencies, including the FBI, know all about this arrest and these people, but the prosecuting attorney, a former FBI agent, knew the story and the men - and was also mute!

This intelligence was not important enough for the "synopsis".

Suddenly, according to the misleading language of the FBI report, Hall's recollection failed, and while he knew the whole story of Sylvia Odio's family, he equivocated on having been at her apartment. He did not deny it, as how could he, when he knew the address and even the apartment number? He reaffirmed it. What we have is the FBI agent's words, not Hall's. No doubt Hall was unconcerned about violations of the firearms and neutrality laws, and no doubt it was not called to his attention. He did confirm that both of the other men look like Latins.

Lawrence John Howard was also interviewed by the FBI on September 20. "... in January 1963 he was in the Florida Keys engaged in training activity with a group of men planning for an anti-CASTRO invasion of Cuba. HOWARD stated that he did not want to identify these men further by name or description." These are the words of FBI Special Agent Harry H. Whidbee, not Howard. There are almost no direct quotations in any of these reports. The information is paraphrased, always in a manner consistent with what the FBI wanted said. Here, through the FBI lingo, is a clear description of CIA. The name does not appear and, naturally, the FBI always respects the minor wishes of those it interrogates, particularly in presidential assassinations. It is public knowledge that the CIA was training the refugee Cubans.

Howard's biography of Hall quotes Hall as claiming to have been in Cuba with Castro "during the revolutionary period" and to have defected. Hall wanted to support a small invasion group. Howard went to Los Angeles in August. Hall told him of "an unknown man in Dallas, Texas, who was willing to furnish a boat for the group's invasion attempt". He left for Dallas with Hall and "one CELLIOS ALBAS, a Cuban refugee who is also known as 'QUARITO' and who was one of a group of anti-CASTRO persons training to land in Cuba ...".

They got to Dallas about September 20 and remained for ten days, intending to "pick up additional supplies, funds and contact an unknown man regarding a boat". This is precisely the time given in Mrs. Odio's story. But Howard said "he recalls no con-



tacts" and "he would have remembered such a contact", stating "that the circumstances concerning a refugee woman living in Dallas would have certainly spurred his memory ...".

Only the FBI could accept such a spurious explanation, if it was made. Howard's memory would have been under constant prod in Dallas, which has one of the larger concentrations of Cuban refugees.

They left Dallas "around September 30, 1963", which is in accord with Mrs. Odio's testimony. "HOWARD stated he was anxious to return to the training activity with this invasion group." He also recalled the return trip in October. He gave the FBI "snapshots of himself, GELIOS ALBAS and BILL SEYMOUR taken during 1963 somewhere in the Florida Keys". These pictures are not attached to the report.

This report concludes with Howard's denunciation of Hall for "having destroyed the effort which HOWARD, SEYMOUR and others of an invasion group had made to effect a successful invasion of Cuba. HOWARD said that HALL is 'a scatter brain, unreliable, emotionally disturbed and an egotistical liar'." Here the FBI found a direct quote to its liking.

If Howard ever revealed the nature of the "supplies", the agent did not see fit to incorporate it in his report.

William Houston Seymour had no such reluctance when he was interviewed by FBI Special Agent Calvin W. Evans two days earlier, September 18, 1964, at Phoenix, Arizona. He, too, had "aided in the training of various persons, mainly exiled Cubans, for a possible invasion" while he was in Florida. That trailer, he said, contained arms. Hall "was caught with these arms near Key Largo, Florida, by the U.S. Customs Officials (sic) who confiscated them. HOWARD and SEYMOUR became disgusted at HALL for this and the way he 'ran off at the mouth' (another quote to the taste of the FBI) when he was stopped. Both HOWARD and SEYMOUR gave up any attempt to help the anti-CASTRO Cubans."

Seymour's opinion of Hall was deemed worthy of inclusion in the FBI report by a government agent who was without criticism of Seymour's hatred for the man who, when caught in a violation of the law, had not further impeded other federal officials. This time not inside quotation marks, "SEYMOUR described HALL as a loud mouth, boisterous, a filthy talking individual, a liar, one who likes to tell a story and include himself in as one of the 'big wheels' (of what? Those connected with the CIA?) when he actually had nothing to do with the story, and as one who is given to exaggerations."

The description of Seymour in this FBI report is not claimed by the agent who drafted it. He says, "SEYMOUR furnished the following description." Even Seymour's self-description of a 27-year-old, 5'6" man weighing 150 pounds is closer to a description of Oswald than anything broadcast by the police.

Predictably, Seymour denied any knowledge of the Odio incident.

First of the documents after Hoover's covering letter in this file is an unsigned FBI memorandum dated Miami, Florida, October 2, 1964. The first page is a kind of summary of the field reports. The second page is not inconsistent with the corrected report when it reports that Seymour's Florida employment record represented him as working during the period September 5 to October 10, 1963. It makes no reference to his training activities, which presumably did not interfere with this employment.

It quotes Celio Sergio Castro Alba, interviewed on September 24, as stating "he had travelled with LORAN HALL and LAWRENCE HOWARD from Dallas Texas to Miami, Florida in September, 1963" but

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Sylvia Odio had just moved to Miami. She was interviewed October 1. She was shown only old photographs of the four men, some more than five years old, rather old for such young men. She was not shown the 1963 photographs the FBI had. Again, the language is that of the FBI, not Mrs. Odio. "Mrs. ODIO stated that none of these individuals were identical with the three persons, including the individual she believed to be Oswald ... She stated she is not certain that she could identify photographs of the two individuals accompanying the one she believed to be Oswald, because of the passage of time since the incident and because photographs sometimes differ from the real appearance of an individual."

She might have added especially the government photographs in this case. It need not be pointed out that before Mrs. Odio was reinterviewed, the FBI had seen all the principals and could have taken pictures from various angles to show Mrs. Odio. It did not. Contemporaneous photographs, although obviously called for, might not have been as useful as the photographs "taken during 1963 somewhere in the Florida Keys". Five different FBI reports in File 1553 refer to the men as bearded. They might not have had beards beginning more than five years before Mrs. Odio saw their pictures and might have shaved after the incident of "The False Oswald". The reports do not indicate whether Mrs. Odio was asked if the men were bearded. The Miami report continues:

Mrs. ODIO added she did believe, however, she could recognize the individual who gave his name as LEOPOLDO. She indicated that the photograph of CELIO CASTRO was similar to the appearance of LEOPOLDO but that LEOPOLDO's hair line was receding at the temples.

She also identified as a neighbor in her former Dallas apartment building a man with a name similar to that given by Hall as one he visited in that same building.

The last page of this report contains further allusions to the state of Mrs. Odio's mind because of her continuing psychiatric consultations.

There is still another unsigned Miami FBI memorandum report, this one dated September 26 with a rubber stamp. It rehearses the story briefly and adds its own summary of a September 24 interview with Celio Sergio Castro Alba. Castro confirmed his acquaintance and travels with the others beginning "while they were engaged in plans to engage in military action against the CASTRO regime by setting out from the Florida Keys" and including the date of the Dallas trip in September, again coinciding with the approximate date given by Mrs. Odio. He denied the Odio incident but acknowledged a visit by the three "to the apartment of a Cuban woman in Dallas, but no one was home on this occasion."

Castro "broke off his association with HALL and HOWARD because he was convinced that they were engaged in the anti-CASTRO movement for personal advantage ...". Except for his age, 33, his description also closely approximates that of the police for Oswald. This means nothing because almost anybody within the range of years and weight could have.

Rather than refute the Odio story, these reluctant witnesses confirm it, save for a natural unwillingness to admit being mixed up in the assassination. What comes out of these reports and the puerile pretense at investigation is a self-condemnation of the FBI none of its critics could equal.

Did it expect those implicated to confess involvement?

Did it not consult its own files, if not in Washington, then in Dallas, when it first heard this story at the time of the assassination? Did it have to consult only a clerk who was wrong if quoted correctly when ostensibly looking for pictures of the men? Did it not know normal police practice required both mug shots and fingerprints on a serious charge? Did it not think of taking pictures of the men as it interviewed them, or of getting pictures not as old? Or of including the pictures it did have in Hoover's report to the Commission? Could it not compare the information of its reports with the descriptions of the witnesses in the case of "The False Oswald", when the likenesses are so close? Did it have to wait so long to do anything? It knew about the Odio incident at the beginning and had conducted an investigation apparently abandoned within a month of the assassination.

Could it not think to ask each of the men for an accounting of his whereabouts and activities in November 1963 to compare with those of "The False Oswald", especially what he did and where he was immediately before and on November 22, the date of the assassination? Not a single report contains this!

Why had it no interest in the mysterious man who put up bail in Dallas? Or the man who was to provide an expensive boat to strangers? Or the "associates" of the men training Cubans for the invasion, a responsibility publicly associated with and undenied by the CIA? And all the other "mistakes" demeaning to a police rookie, so numerous that to enumerate them would bore the reader?

All of the people in the FBI are not incompetent. The public image is that none is. But if all the people involved in this farce called "investigation" were that incompetent, can it be believed that Mr. Hoover does not know the FBI business?

He invented it!

And as has been true of every aspect of the case with which the federal police were connected, their performance leaves more questions than it answers. Instead of a "False Oswald" who is not William Seymour (and that depends upon the records of a company that might be legitimate but is not so established in the evidence, and it is in an area abounding in CIA and other fronts), we now have an additional candidate. Hoover is in the position, from the record, of having misinformed the Commission on September 21 when his agency had the information then presented as correct the day before.

He should have something to say - much, very much - for this is not the only such case of a pretended incompetence that no American can believe represents the abilities and skills of Hoover and his bureau. Others are in this book and in WHITEWASH.

The non-"False Oswald" part of the file is the September 23, 1963, report of Special Agent Stephen M. Callender in New Orleans. It begins by summarizing the checks on the bus schedules, has the prejudicial comment on Sylvia Odio and her health attributed to "Dr. Augustin Guitart" without saying he is not a medical doctor, goes on to the checking of the cheap hotels and concludes with a single provocative sentence:

Lt. MARTELLO, New Orleans Police Department, provided original longhand notes made by him of information on a slip of paper in OSWALD's possession at the time OSWALD was arrested in New Orleans on 8/9/63.

Seventeen pages later, those not already having abandoned the file because of the endless and pointless material on the hotels and buses will find FBI Agent John Lester Quigley's report

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