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barber saw that Oswald returned to a four-door car with military or police-type antennas and entered on the passenger side.

Hemming said that Oswald seemed to know a lot about him that he shouldn't have known unless he had been provided the information. So, on his own volition, Hemming went to the Marine Corps Air Station in Santa Ana and managed to finagle himself inside, where he located and confronted Oswald. They then went outside the station to a pizza parlor, where Hemming provided Oswald with paperwork and instructions about how to infiltrate Cuba.

Hemming talked at length with me about Oswald. He seemed to be obsessed about him. He said that Oswald later showed up in Cuba to see him, but the contact was never made because the Cubans wouldn't let Oswald stay in the country. Hemming said that he again encountered Oswald briefly in Miami on December 6, 1962 and that was the last time he ever saw him.

There is some corroborative testimony to support, in part, Hemming's story. Nelson Delgado, also a Marine at the Marine Corps Station in Santa Ana, California, told the Warren Commission that Oswald had told him that he had been in contact with the Cuban Consul in Los Angeles. Delgado said that he had heard that Oswald was seen talking for about two hours with a visitor outside the gate at the base. Delgado also testified that he had seen an official-looking envelope in Oswald's wall locker, with a big impressive seal, Latin-looking, that he assumed was from the Cuban Consulate. He said that Oswald had told him before that he was receiving mail from them.² (H241-3)

We shall see that Hemming voluntarily joined the Castro revolution* and he claims that Angleton knew about it in advance. Hemming also claims that he ultimately made direct contacts with Angleton at his home in Washington, D.C., concerning Cuban matters and anti-Castro activities. Evidence will show that Hemming was very likely a CIA covert asset, or could be perhaps more accurately described as a "singleton" CIA agent reporting back to Angleton at infrequent intervals when Hemming could get out of Cuba.

*Hemming told me that as a youth he wanted to get into U.S. Special Forces (later the Green Berets). He said this was in part his reason for joining Castro's forces—to get experience. He infiltrated Cuba as an arms smuggler, bringing weapons that he had purportedly "stolen" from the U.S. Naval Academy armory. I suspect that this was set up for him by U.S. intelligence. Hemming also told me that he parachuted into Cuba during the 1961-1965 anti-Castro operations.

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and maintain power boats; handle explosives, electronic communications, and underwater demolition; was an expert parachutist; an expert in assassination weapons and devices, and all the other things required to be top in his profession.

After interviewing Hemming over five days (accumulating over thirty hours of tapes), I began to see him as an exceptionally talented person: brilliant, with an encyclopedic mind, excellent writing skills, and the intellect of a physicist despite having dropped out of high school in his junior year. He had an impressive knowledge of U.S. political history, the politics of Latin America, the anti-Castro Cuban community in the U.S., and the tradecraft, as it is known in the intelligence community. He displayed an in-depth knowledge of many aspects of the law, including constitutional law (when I met him in September 1996 he was working as a paralegal and private detective in Miami). I sensed that he possessed an enormous inner drive to do daring deeds, to be larger than life. (When Hemming reviewed this he noted that he preferred to be described as "having an interest in taking on calculated-risk jobs that necessitated special skills and experience.")

Hemming had a capacity for double-talk and cunning beyond anyone I had ever encountered. He also had a wide range of powerful emotions, from tears of anguish, to humor, to ferocious rage. This struck me as similar to Gary Shaw's description of Colonel William Bishop: a complex, incredible person, driven by unfathomable forces. (I was never able to fully understand his mental makeup.)

Hemming talked about his participation in the planning and direction of assassinations. His conversation ranged from refined to such profanity as to make a seasoned sailor a piker; it seemed to vary as his mood and purposes required. He could speak articulately with perfect grammar, or lapse into street talk at will. He could be charming and witty, or studied and calm, and then suddenly become frighteningly intimidating, towering over me and thrusting his face into mine with loud, angry outbursts.

Hemming remarked that he was still alive because others considered him to be a dangerous person, "a real bad ass," but he had never promoted that image.

In 1982 Hemming was convicted of smuggling marijuana* from the Colombian Cartel into Florida and was sentenced to

*When Hemming was arrested at Florida's Lantana Airport in a drug-laden Beechcraft Bonanza, the police seized 728 pounds of marijuana and 177 pounds of methaqualone, or Quaaludes (*Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel*, February 9, 1962).

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FIRST INTERVIEW

After a few performances

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incarceration in the Florida State Penitentiary for thirty years plus five, to be served consecutively. (The penitentiary, a hellish place according to Hemming, was known as the "Rock" because it was a duplicate of Alcatraz.) He said that he served eight-and-a-half years on the chain gang before his release. During his trial (reported in the *Miami Herald* on February 12, 1982) Hemming, having been denied a private attorney, acted in his own defense, claiming that he was working for the FBI and the federal Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), explaining that the only way he could penetrate major drug-smuggling networks was to act as a smuggler himself. I went into this for several hours with Hemming and am inclined to believe that he indeed had gotten himself entangled as an undercover agent in DEA operations in which the concept was that "to beat them you have to join them"—making what Hemming called "controlled deliveries from Colombia to U.S. networks for bust at street wholesale levels," the result being that some of the people who were involved got caught and were sometimes abandoned by the government.

The primary intent of this chapter was to stay with my original reason for contacting Hemming: to follow the chain of evidence linking the Dallas right wing to the JFK assassination, starting with General Fabian Escalante's statement about Felipe Vidal Santiago, which was independently corroborated by Colonel William Bishop and also by Hemming in his statements to Dick Russell.

My interviews with Hemming consisted of several telephone calls and meetings in San Diego, Fort Lauderdale, and Dallas.* *Keep in mind that these interviews are an evolving discovery process, all of Hemming's words not to be taken as Gospel.*

FIRST INTERVIEW: AUGUST 28, 1996; TELEPHONE

After a few perfunctory comments we got down to business:

Toyman: Gary Shaw sent me all of his original notes of interviews with Colonel Bishop and Bishop's telephone cards. And I've been putting together a story on that.

Hemming: Is this the same Bill Bishop that ran an enterprise down in Honduras during the '70s?

*The transcripts of these interviews and notes (except the final draft) were given to Hemming for his comments prior to publication. He had told me in San Diego that not everything in the San Diego interview was from first-hand experience; some of it had been arrived at over the years in his own private investigations. The direct experience will generally be obvious. I have condensed and edited the transcripts to what you see here.

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Hemming: Yes. Willoughby was MacArthur's intelligence chief.... Bishop passed away recently, didn't he?

Twyman: Yes, in 1992. Colonel Bishop told Gary Shaw about this Willoughby meeting about a week before he died. I seem to be coming to the conclusion of a conspiracy involving anti-Castro Cubans, the Texas right wing, and LBJ and Hoover.

Hemming: It existed. But we're not sure whether they were throwaways, fall guys, or decoys.

Twyman: Who were the throwaways?

Hemming: Those people who were being approached to do the job on Kennedy. We were all approached from 1962 on. The first thing was that they were trying to use us to do the job because we'd already been on the payroll for a couple of Latin American dictators for the same kind of work. I inherited the people from Frank Sturgis and then *severed relations with him in 1961*. And from that time forward Harvey was running ZR/RIFLE and General Lansdale was running Mongoose.

The first direct approach was from some Texas people in 1962. We took a couple of these approaches very seriously because we were soliciting funds for operations inside Cuba, staying away from the coastal raid thing.... *So in 1962 we were approached by some very serious people to forget all of the paramilitary or special-operations-type plans and go for terminating the leadership in Cuba. And in a very short time it shifted from the leadership in Cuba to the leadership in Washington—now we're talking about the military and civilian people—we're talking about people who wore civilian clothes but were from the Pentagon or reservists, or what have you, of General rank....*

Twyman: Yes, Army reserves.

Hemming: Right. And their usual retort was, "You've got a reputation for doing this kind of work and we wouldn't be talking this bluntly unless we'd been over your files and this is your line of work, this is your specialty, and that's why we're making a direct approach and being rather frank and blunt about it." But we still bowed out.

Later in the spring of 1962 Guy Banister approached us when we were in New Orleans working with Larry LaBorde on the training*

*Lawrence (Laric or Larry) LaBorde figures prominently in the JFK assassination, according to Hemming, who describes LaBorde as a "plug-ugly coldblooded assassin." A CIA document dated June 11, 1962 states that KUBARK (CIA) had used LaBorde in CIA operations since early 1961. The document states that LaBorde had formerly been employed by the

camp at Pontchartrain, and he made the same approaches, the same offers, and he was turned down. Most of these people expected to be turned down because we didn't know whether they were wearing a wire or not. It was just a formality to turn them down and then make preparations for cash transfers and what have you to make sure that the cutouts between the sponsor and the operators were completely severed at the appropriate time.* We were faced with that throughout 1962. We became very active in the summer of 1962. We were the only people who brought information out on the missiles. And of course we didn't discover that until we were given information by Senator Keating. We brought in the governor of Florida and the governors of a couple of other southeastern states and we used Israeli contacts and others to determine that there were people in government such as Curtis LeMay and others that felt there was a possibility something was happening. But they were keeping JFK completely cut off from it, and their attitude was we can take 'em without suffering damage, that is, taking Cuba and the Soviet Union without suffering excessive damage in the United States, with a pre-emptive strike.

Twyman: Well, in these meetings in Dallas...?

Hemming: The meeting in Dallas was with Robert Morris at the Adolphus Towers, and this was preparatory to meeting with Bunker Hunt and Lester Logue and other people.

Twyman: Did you ever meet with Bunker Hunt?

Hemming: Oh, yes. I was the first one to establish contact for Cuba vis á vis the petroleum industry people and that came through my uncle who was a personal friend and former associate of John

continued from previous page

Department of Agriculture (DOA) in Mexico from 1947 to 1949 as a small boat operator. Later, LaBorde acted as captain or chief engineer of a motor vessel called M/V Tejana III in CIA's JM/WAVE operations against Cuba. During or after the end of this period, LaBorde became associated with the Cuban Revolutionary Council—Sergio Arcacha Smith's operation officed in the same building in New Orleans with Guy Banister and Oswald. A. J. Weberman claims that Hemming murdered Larry LaBorde in 1981. I asked Hemming about this and he denied it, telling me "I would have liked to."

Another CIA document describes LaBorde as indiscreet, addicted to alcohol, of unsavory reputation. LaBorde is described as having become embittered with the CIA, at various times "berating the agency."

At the time of the JFK assassination, LaBorde was 52 years old.

*In later discussions (in Fort Lauderdale) I tried to clarify this statement. I told Hemming that it read as if he had accepted the offer to kill JFK. I asked him if he was certain that he wanted that impression to be conveyed. Hemming responded, somewhat upset, that he meant this to be a general statement regarding "tradecraft methods," not that he had accepted the contract.

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McCone. My uncle said to go out and see Bob Morris...well first I saw the president [D. B. Lewis] of Doctor Ross dog food in Los Angeles and he steered me to Morris. At that time I was dealing with Congressman Rousselot and he also steered me to Morris, and Morris was the cutout for meetings with Hunt and Logue and a number of other oil people. It also involved touching bases with de Mohrenschildt and some of the other people. They were running their own operation.

Twyman: They had their own paramilitary operation?

Hemming: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. But they weren't going anywhere. They didn't have the skill.

Twyman: They had a group called the AVG?

Hemming: Well that's later on...that's in the '60s. That's later...that originated in Tucson, Arizona.

Twyman: Yes. Well what do you think finally happened?

Hemming: First of May of 1963 I was in a meeting at John Martino's house where money changed hands. Giancana was there. Chuck Nicoletti was there. Santo Trafficante was there. Charlie the Blade was there [Charles Tourine Sr., who had been in prison with Trafficante in Cuba]. And others. And it was for a hit on Fidel. I passed on \$15,000 directly to Felipe Vidal that night and another \$15,000 was given to Felipe directly by Martino the next day. And things got underway.*

Twyman: But how did this convert into the Kennedy assassination?

Hemming: Because that's how they were steering it. Santo and those people were led to believe that the use of the *Fidel thing* was just a cover, a pseudonym for JFK. So you wouldn't be talking; you would be dropping names of Fidel. And the teams would believe that they were on an operation. The way a team is placed in position, you could put them in Mexico City and they'd think they were in Havana; you could put 'em in Kansas City and they'd think they were in Havana, or on the outskirts.

Twyman: You mean they went in blindfolded?

*I later remembered that John Martino's wife Florence had told Anthony Summers that her husband said, "Flo, do you remember that good-looking [Cuban] kid that was sitting on the couch? He was involved...He was one of them." (Anthony Summers, *Vanity Fair*, December 1994, p. 112.) I wondered, who would that "good-looking kid" be? When I questioned Hemming on this in our last meeting in Fort Lauderdale, he said it was Ronald Ponce de Leon, one of the members of his *Interpen* group! (See photo on page 649.) More later on this.

Hemming: Well, they're taken in at night and they have absolutely no idea where they are. They are put in a couple of safehouses, near the scene of the killing zone, and they do the job and get the hell out. They're not allowed to know where they're at, in case they had friends or if they tried to E&E...escape and evade...they would suddenly resort to their own knowledge of the real estate rather than going to the proper safehouses when the thing starts coming apart. Plus they would feel insecure if things start coming apart—that they were going to be eliminated. So they're not left to their own devices. They're completely under control. That's the standard tradecraft.

Twyman: Was Texas oil money passed in this meeting at Martino's house?

Hemming: No, this is separate. This is mob money from the Teamsters pension. This is Hoffa money. Then the next money came from Micky Cohen on the West Coast and Jack Dragna, representing the LA mob; Willie Bioff. Money came from Vegas. And it went to Marcello.

Twyman: How did the Texas right wing fit into this?

Hemming: That had nothing to do with the Marcello operation at all.

Twyman: Or the Kennedy assassination?

Hemming: Of course they did. But we had separate teams for the same job. We had a French team that worked in the Dominican Republic and Montreal. We had a team that was organized by Papa Doc [François Duvalier, dictator of Haiti]. Okay? A team organized by Ramfis Trujillo, the son of the dictator [Rafael Trujillo, Dominican Republic] assassinated by Kennedy's people, as he believed it. There were a number of people out there, including people in Lisbon that supported the OAS, who saw Kennedy as the same threat as far as the Algerian problem as de Gaulle was. So you have a number of teams, well financed, and the big thing is that if you're in the business and you have a target, you find out if there are other paying enemies [of JFK] that could be brought in and it increases your venture capital.

Twyman: Could they be brought in as covers too?

Hemming: They always are. This models up the MOs [*modus operandi*] and also their people that are linked directly to powerful people, like LBJ and others who are intentionally put there so there will be a cover-up...there will be a confusion as to who the assassins and sponsors were, what they were doing. So many leads are given that are decoys and strays that when they finally get to

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somebody who could be proven to be a principal, an aider and abettor, they bypass them because they think there's just more decoys or strangers or loners.

Troyman: This French OAS connection—was that Jean Souetre?

Hemming: Yes. They were car bomb specialists and they had a vehicle laden with explosives on the other side of the underpass.

Troyman: Then there are the FBI documents that Souetre or somebody using his name was in the Dallas area then. But who was actually behind the picket fence doing the shooting?

Hemming: That's a little more difficult. Those are the super-pros.

Troyman: What about shots from the front? You know, from the grassy knoll?

Hemming: Well that's the team.... Those are the primary people....

Troyman: They were the backup team...?

Hemming: Well, we don't have those teams connected.

Troyman: You haven't been able to identify who they were yet?

Hemming: We've identified two of them. One of them is dead, as far as the School Book Depository. The grassy knoll is still a blank. *The one thing we do know is none of the teams knew the existence of the others....* This is how I worked with Oliver Stone on the movie.* I said, when they heard the shots, they would flinch because they weren't sure that they'd been spotted and somebody was trying to take them out. And I said you can put a smile on the shooter's face because then he realizes that it's a super-pro job and there are backup and decoy teams and that's where those shots are coming from. Silencers were used extensively. These were sionic silencers purchased through Mitchell Werbell.

Troyman: What about sabot bullets?

Hemming: Well that's what we call a "meat" shot. Putting the shot into the target's back. It's not a lethal shot. If you want a shot that gives you a pristine bullet, that gives it to you.

Troyman: Does that explain the shallow back wound? Kennedy's shallow back wound?

*Hemming and two of his associates (Roy Hargraves and Howard K. Davis) were hired as consultants by Oliver Stone for the movie *JFK*. Hemming told me that his role in the movie was one of the men on the sixth floor of the School Book Depository Building. This struck me as the ultimate irony. One must admit that Oliver Stone goes to great lengths to get realism in his movies, despite the criticism that has been heaped upon him.

Hemming: Yes. And the angle, 44°.

Twyman: From a tall building?

Hemming: From above.

Twyman: Yes, not from the School Book Depository.

Hemming: Not likely...they'd of had to shoot through the trees.

Twyman: Have you gone into the Steve Rivele interviews of the French Connection?

Hemming: I've got the whole file. I've talked to a guy that's down in Vegas right now that was a cellmate with Christian David.

Twyman: Do you think there's any credence to that?

Hemming: Oh, yes. These are your backup teams and your decoys.... The interesting thing is how they were recruited and all that. We've identified the recruiter. He died three years ago. And he was in a business before. One of his last big jobs was Archbishop Romero in El Salvador. He engineered that. He attempted to recruit me for it—knew that job. So these people were busy and known before, and have kept up the good work since then.

Twyman: Did you know David Morales?

Hemming: Yes, I'd run into him.

Twyman: And he worked with David Atlee Phillips on some of these South American jobs?

Hemming: These are all disinformation bits that's common in the business.

Twyman: Disinformation? You mean Morales was not one of the CIA assassination specialists?

Hemming: I can't discount it completely, but at that point in time he was working under Jake Esterline [Pentagon staff officer] and JM/WAVE, and it's very possible that they were monitoring, just as Richard Case Nagell. He [Nagell] was a Soviet agent, and the Soviets were trying to use Nagell and others to stop the assassination.

Twyman: I talked to Nagell right before he died.

Hemming: Russell could never really get out the fact that the guy had betrayed his country. But like Pollard it was a controlled defection. Nagell was strictly under Jim Angleton's [counter-intelligence] control.

Twyman: Did you ever meet Nagell?

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Hemming: Yes.

Twyman: When he was down there investigating Alpha 66?

Hemming: He was down there doing a job for the Soviets. And we found out who he was right away. Angleton tipped me off.

Twyman: Do you think Oswald was an Angleton operation?

Hemming: When Oswald showed up at the Cuban consulate in Monterey Park, I called my contact number for Angleton. I didn't get him directly. I didn't talk to Angleton until I flew out to Anacostia about a week later, after I'd already dealt with Oswald two or three times and visited him at the base, LTA in Santa Ana. And then when I got to Anacostia I dealt directly with Angleton, and I said you put in a counterpart on me and I don't want you putting a counterpart on me. I'm going to Cuba right now. I don't need some clown that I've never dealt with regardless of the fact that he's had similar training as me and all that. It would be too risky to do this kind of thing. And he swore that Oswald was not a counterpart for me. And that he was not controlling Oswald. *Well, that's later.** But at that point in time he just said "No, I've no plans." In fact he warned me once again about the federal statutes I was violating and that I was on my own...as a singleton.

Twyman: Who do you think was the mastermind, if there was one, behind the plot? One man who put it all together?

Hemming: Hoover. *That's why Sullivan had to go. I don't think even think Tolson or DeLoach knew about it.* Hoover was monitoring it. So at any point in time he could put a stop to it. *I think Magruder and Hoover and others got together and decided he [JFK] had to go.*

Twyman: Magruder?

Hemming: Yes. General [John] Magruder. He ran the strategic services unit. He was the competitor to the CIA. That's military intelligence. That's your gestapo in this country.

Twyman: What about Willoughby?

*Here we have an indication that Angleton may have found out about Oswald through Hemming. Author A. J. Weberman speculates that Angleton, on his own, sent Oswald to the Soviet Union, without anyone in the CIA outside of his counter-intelligence group knowing about it. As chief mole-hunter for the CIA, Angleton was chartered to be on his own. No one in the CIA had the power to control him, except possibly Allen Dulles, if even Dulles. Hemming says, however, that Oswald had earlier been successfully "dangled" to a Japanese-Soviet spy ring and later was one of four men sent to Russia to take blame for the shoot-down of the U.S. U-2 plane on May 1, 1960.

Hemming: Willoughby worked for Magruder.

Twyman: Willoughby worked for H. L. Hunt too.

Hemming: [Colonel] Bishop worked for Magruder too. Just like Harvey. *Harvey worked both sides. He worked in direct contact with Sullivan and Hoover, and while he was on the CIA payroll.* A lot of these people had different loyalties because back in World War II they'd excluded OSS from the western hemisphere, so it was the FBI guys that had all the intell for the western hemisphere when CIA and INR and the State Department picked 'em up.

Twyman: Do you think Harvey could have been the one who put together the plot for Hoover? Hoover's mastermind?

Hemming: Oh, yes. But Harvey wouldn't be the key guy. [Charles] Siragusa in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics is the key guy. Siragusa was the top agent in the Federal Bureau of Narcotics who did this kind of work.

Twyman: Did he have the expertise to put together a sophisticated plan like that?

Hemming: Oh, yes. The only agency in the federal government, even to this date, that maintains an assassination capability is the narcotics people. They have to stay alive.

Twyman: I noticed in Harvey's notes that he mentions Siragusa. He wrote, "What does Siragusa know?"

Hemming: Yes, he's the mastermind for the hit team. Narcotics is the only way to be on top of intell around the world because you've got everybody on your payroll and anything that moves you know about it. And most people cooperate with the dopers because they don't see them as being political or anything, or even being a security threat.

Twyman: Yes. Now Hoover was very close to H. L. Hunt.

Hemming: Oh, yes.

Twyman: And of course Hunt was close to LBJ. And the three of those together made a pretty powerful combination.

Hemming: But I don't see them sitting around with a tableful of snacks discussing this kind of business. *They're using cutouts to communicate.* They're not talking directly... Hoover's biggest problem was he kind of took some things personal against me. He had attempted to blackmail Bobby Kennedy and our liaison (we had a liaison with Bobby Kennedy)...and we proceeded to get

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photographs and information that compromised Hoover, delivered them to Bobby Kennedy, and he turned the tables on Hoover. Hoover found out who had supplied the information so we were number one on Hoover's list from '62 onward....

Twyman: This compromising information. Was that about his sexual...?

Hemming: His boyfriend in Chicago was [name withheld by author].... We've got the photographs.

Twyman: What ever happened to them?

Hemming: They're around. Right now we're in the process of going back in to see what can be done with the confidential files that were seized. There are tremendous blackmail possibilities there even at this date. So it's a sensitive thing. All of these confidential files were seized and then sealed by people that I worked with.

Twyman: Now when you say "we," who do you mean?

Hemming: An anonymous team. We're known as the Interpen bunch and we even have decoys built into that.*

Twyman: What's the purpose of the team? To solve the JFK assassination mystery?

Hemming: No. Get back at the bastards that tried to set us up as the assassins. *They didn't just recruit us, they recruited us to be fall guys. We*

*An FBI report dated January 8, 1963 described Hemming and his Interpen group in unflattering terms:

...HEMMING received considerable newspaper publicity which caused adventurers from all over the United States to come and join his organization. Most of these adventurers and mercenaries later became police problems and a number of them have been arrested for vagrancy, larceny, bad checks, and other minor offenses.

Members of HEMMING's group usually stay in flophouses, eat at the Salvation Army and other relief organizations, beg money and food from Cuban refugees, and at times, form military training camps.

Membership in INTERPEN seldom consists of over twenty individuals. However, the turnover is high, because the members soon become dissatisfied with the organization's inactivity and leadership. During the past two years, HEMMING has visited the majority of the Cuban refugee leaders in Miami and has offered his group's services, and requested money contributions. However, Cuban refugee leaders are reluctant to participate in any action with HEMMING. At times, HEMMING has attempted to launch military invasions of Cuba, and on December 4, 1962, he and twelve others, who were attempting to launch a military invasion of Cuba from Marathon, Florida, were arrested by United States Customs Agents.

[Deleted] advised that although HEMMING claims to be anti-Communist, he is amoral, being for or against Communism depending on how it personally affects him; he is capable of anything, and is motivated by a dream of future economic and political advantage and power in Latin America....

(Emphasis added)

Hemming later told me that by this time, J. Edgar Hoover had targeted him because of Hemming's involvement in obtaining the compromising photographs of Hoover.

were supposed to go down under the gun in Miami International Airport [on November 18, 1963] because that was one of the primary sites for the assassination. We didn't appreciate their efforts. [This is an adamant point with Hemming—that the FBI and/or MI tried to set him up to be killed in a firefight in the Miami airport. He says that Howard K. Davis and Roy Hargraves will confirm this. Researcher Gordon Winslow says research of photos at the airport do not show Hemming or his group at the event.]

Twyman: And who would these bastards be?

Hemming: That's what we're still working on. I went to work to help get some blackmailers off of Marcello's back. I worked to get blackmailers off a number of the Texas people's back that were being blackmailed by people that actually believe that they participated.

Twyman: Who participated?

Hemming: The shooters. Some of the shooters. Some of the assassins that were in the area at the time and were in Chicago and were in Miami attempted to get more money because they were promised more money, they were blackmailing people that had put up money for the job, and it was my job in the late '60s and '70s to prove that these people *didn't* do the job and didn't have the money coming.

Twyman: Well, I can see where the anti-Castro Cubans could have people in your Interpen group who could have felt they had been set up.

Hemming: All of them. All of them, including Felipe, knew we'd been set up.

Twyman: Do you think these people who were behind all this are still very powerful and very deadly?

Hemming: They never stopped doing their work. It's a continuous event. You see, people don't understand. The coup didn't occur in November. The coup had already occurred before the inauguration. Kennedy never took power as the president. He never functioned as the real president. This is what Eisenhower was warning about. They'd done the same thing to him. They'd caused him to cease functioning as a president himself.

Twyman: The military-industrial complex?

Hemming: That's what manufacture the biggest

Twyman: You mean people?

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Hemming: That's what he called it. The prime financiers were the weapons manufacturers, Hanford and Rocky Flat's people. They put up the biggest bucks.

Twyman: You mean they joined forces even with the Texas right-wing oil people?

Hemming: Oh no, these are independent operations.

Twyman: So there are two independent operations between the Texas group and the others?

Hemming: No, you have a *multiple* of independent operations (Ramfis Trujillo, Papa Doc)... They financed the movement of people, the equipment, the setting up of teams, so that if it went down in Miami it would be a particular team that was unknown to the other teams. If it went down in Chicago or in Tampa or in San Antonio or in Dallas, these were totally separate financed teams, financed by different sponsors.

Twyman: But all emanating from some central group?

Hemming: All monitored from very powerful people....

Twyman: Then this powerful group goes beyond the CIA?

Hemming: Oh, yes. Oh, yes [laughs]. You won't find it printed anywhere.

Twyman: But one of the problems is that what you talk about is so *fantastic* that it becomes unbelievable.

Hemming: Unless you've been in the business, you will never understand. It's family tradecraft. It is devious. You almost have to develop a criminal mind to understand it. Most of these things were developed by the Soviets. And most of them to perfection and great remuneration. Billions of dollars by the narcotics people. They have to be the best in the business.

Twyman: The joint ventures of intelligence and narcotics in siphoning off of money for covert operations? That money must stick to some of the people's hands personally too.

Hemming: That's the only incentive. You put your ass on the line. That was one of the things I specialized in the '70s. If you're a gunrunner, you have an in at the palace level throughout the planet. If you're a dooper, you have control of the palace level in every country throughout the planet.

Twyman: You have the opportunity of getting rich too?

Hemming: Oh, yes.

Twyman: Why do you think that William Pawley committed suicide?

Hemming: Same cop [hit man] that did Bill Pawley did President Prio. This was a hit. He knew it was coming, too. He'd been convinced that his participation had gone awry and that he'd become a traitor to his own country. Anybody who takes up arms against the executive is a traitor. You attempt to assassinate a president, you're a traitor to your country. It's high treason.

Twyman: Let's go back to these meetings in Dallas with General Walker. It just seems amazing, these meetings. You were there. Vidal was there. And Bishop was there.

Hemming: Not all at once, though.

Twyman: Not all at once. And discussions were held on assassinating Kennedy. I don't think I got it clear yet what you believe the purpose of these meetings were. Were they actually to recruit you or to set you up?

Hemming: We never determined what. But we always treated them as a genuine operation when they were going down.

Twyman: But they didn't materialize? There was no agreement reached?

Hemming: No, the problem with Walker was we dealt with him during the missile crisis and then the situation we were working on in the missile crisis was disrupted by James Meredith going in to Old Miss [University of Mississippi]. So here's Walker getting himself to doing the Old Miss situation which tended to alienate the Cubans from him. Because now he was a racist. So now we had a problem even having Walker involved. We had a number of former first Special Service force people in the loop, and of course Walker had a bad reputation while he was in the Devil's Brigade as being a homosexual, and then in some of these meetings a couple of my people made rather frank comments in his living room about his boyfriends coming down the staircase and all that. So it was a situation where Walker would be the military guy that stood in front of the John Birchers (very few of the John Birchers would put their money where their mouth was), and Walker could be utilized to head up a special campaign and that the funding would come from the right wing and they would accomplish certain goals, and that was it. But as far as participation in operations, Walker excluded himself from that.

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Troyman: So you don't think he was involved in the JFK assassination?

Hemming: Oh, there's a high possibility that he was. But to that point in time we were kind of loosening our contacts with him. Our last contact with Walker was July 4, 1963 when we flew out there for a meeting.

Troyman: That's you and Vidal?

Hemming: No, Howard Davis.*

Troyman: Howard Davis and you?

Hemming: Right. And we were somewhat chagrined that Walker would be so careless when we talked to the wee hours of the morning, 'til 5:00 in the morning, and this was after a shot has been fired through his window and he doesn't even draw the drapes.

Troyman: This is right after that shot?

Hemming: Yes, this is July. And we thought, well, this is piss-poor tradecraft here because he's either a total nut and he's not keeping his cover up, because we figured he engineered the thing himself...and that if ever important people had heard by a chance remark that he spent hours, in the wee hours of the morning, with his blinds open, it would cause suspicions to go back against him as having himself engineered the attempt. And that kind of turned us off too, because he wasn't even conscious of the fact that whether you're brave or not you always draw your curtains, especially after you've been shot at. It's impolite to have your guests exposed to the risk.

Troyman: So, in those meetings, Walker talked about assassination of Kennedy?

Hemming: Not directly, no.

Troyman: Not directly. Did you have meetings with H. L. Hunt?

Hemming: Yes, these things...*the code word* at that point in time, post-missile crisis, seemed to be to hit on Fidel, don't bother about

*Howard K. Davis was Hemming's most trusted associate, perhaps his equal or senior partner. Hemming described Davis in comradely, affectionate terms, calling him "Davey." Davis, a decorated ex-Army Airborne Ranger, was a pilot flying arms to Raul Castro during the Cuban revolution and later became a pilot for an airline on the East Coast of the U.S. Davis was 33 years old at the time of the Kennedy assassination. Gary Shaw, who met Davis, describes him as quite different from Hemming in that Davis is very quiet. According to Fonzi's notes in an HSCA document that Hemming gave me, Howard Davis was Interpen's contact man with the Mafia. Davis also was coordinator with New York financier Theodore Racoosin in the Pawley-Bayo affair. Racoosin was well connected to the White House. (Warren Hinckle & William Turner, *Deadly Secrets*.)

commando operations or any of this kind of business. We'll put our money into taking out the top people in Cuba. We don't want to hear about anything else.

Twyman: But the code was Fidel equals JFK?

Hemming: Exactly.

Twyman: I'll of course want to write about all this.

Hemming: Yes, I was going to do a book two years ago, spent months with an author, just to have threats made to various publishers.

Throughout the interview, Hemming talked unhesitatingly and naturally, indicating to me that he was either very candid or had carefully outlined everything he was going to say. He used none of the profanity for which he is renowned, and was generally very articulate and responsive. This would change in the face-to-face interviews.

To deal with this flood of material, I decided to do what I've done before for reaching conclusions: *I would use for conclusions only the material that could be corroborated with other evidence.* But I would report other relevant material and let the reader use his or her own judgment as to what to do with it. For this first interview, the directly useful material boiled down to the following:

- (1) Hemming's confirmation of his statement to Dick Russell in 1992 that Felipe Vidal traveled to Dallas in the week before the assassination and attended a meeting with wealthy Dallas businessmen (the Hunts), who did not want to discuss "operational plans."
- (2) Hemming's confirmation of the white 1957 Chevrolet in which Vidal was driven to Dallas, thus further substantiating Vidal's visit with Walker and bringing Vidal into the Walker shooting incident.
- (3) Hemming's statements concerning General Walker's staging of the shooting incident in April 1963, adding believability to the suspicion that it was staged.
- (4) Hemming's acknowledgment that he knew Colonel William Bishop.
- (5) Hemming's acknowledgment that he himself attended some of these meetings in Dallas mentioned by Colonel Bishop, and also attended a meeting with John Martino,

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Vidal, Sam Giancana, Chuck Nicoletti, and Santo Trafficante in Miami in which Hoffa money was exchanged. This is consistent with Florence Martino's statements and FBI reports in the preceding chapter, as well as the evidence of Giancana's and Trafficante's involvement in the assassination. (By "consistent" I mean that *Mrs. Martino stated to the HSCA that her husband knew Gerry Hemming, and an FBI report confirmed Vidal's relationship with John Martino.*)

As the interview came to an end, I invited him to visit San Diego for an extended face-to-face interview. I offered him the option of my going to Florida or paying the expenses for him to come to San Diego. He chose to come to San Diego, saying that he hadn't seen two of his brothers (who lived in Pomona, California) for many years and would take advantage of being in California to visit them. I offered to rent him a hotel room or have him stay as a guest at my home. Hemming chose to be a house guest, saying it would give us time to talk over more extended periods.

Before proceeding with the second interview, some background on Roy Hargraves and Felipe Vidal will be useful:

Roy Emory Hargraves was born on February 14, 1940 in St. Louis, Missouri. He was only twenty-three years old at the time of the JFK assassination. Dade County, Florida police records dated March 2, 1965 describe Hargraves as "5-10" tall, white male, 165 pounds, hazel eyes and brown hair." FBI records³ show a long string of arrests starting when Hargraves was seventeen years old. The first arrest charge was "AWOL/escape from Lackland Air Force Base, confinement 9 months." More arrests and/or incarcerations continued through 1958 to 1963, for burglary, grand theft, shoplifting, vagrancy, and violation of U.S. Neutrality Act and violation of National Firearms Act. His occupation was listed as "decorator." The grand theft arrests resulted in sentencing to prison in Arizona for 2 to 3 years. He next appeared in the records arrested in June 1960 for burglary. The arrests for violation of U.S. Neutrality Act and National Firearms Act were in 1962 and 1963 after he became associated with Hemming in a patriotic crusade, CIA sanctioned, to topple Castro. In 1968/'69, Hargraves became known as the "Mad Bomber" for bombing both the SDS Peace Center and the Black Panther Headquarters in Los Angeles as part of Operation CHAOS which, according to Hemming, was an illegal CIA covert program