

Ruby, Jack 2-1-2

MEMORANDUM

MAR 30 1964

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3/19/64

TO : Members of the President's Commission

FROM : Mr. Hubert
Mr. Griffin

SUBJECT: Possible Cuban Associations of Jack Ruby

I. Associations Supported by Substantial Evidence.

Mr. Ray Robert McKeown, convicted in Houston, Texas of selling arms to Fidel Castro, has stated that in approximately April, 1959, after he had received considerable notoriety in Texas because of his arms activities and friendship with Fidel Castro, he was contacted by a man identifying himself as Rubenstein. This individual telephoned him once and met with him personally on another occasion. In one of the conversations, Rubenstein stated that he had options on jeeps which were in Shreveport, La. and that he desired to arrange a sale to Castro. On the other occasion, Rubenstein stated that he was representing a man in Las Vegas, Nevada, and that he was desirous of obtaining the release from Cuba of three men who were in prison there. Rubenstein mentioned sums of between \$5,000 and \$25,000 in these conversations. McKeown now stated that Rubenstein is identical with Jack Ruby.

Ruby has acknowledged independently that, prior to the time that Castro fell into disfavor in the United States, he had been interested in selling jeeps to Cuba. Ruby states that he contacted a man in Beaumont, Texas, whose name he recalled was Davis.

The FBI has been unable to identify anyone engaged in the sale of arms to Cuba who might be identical with the person named Davis.

Ruby also admits that he visited Lewis J. McWillie in Havana, Cuba for approximately ten days around Labor Day of 1959. He states that this was his only trip to Cuba and claims that the purpose of the visit with McWillie was to discuss gambling opportunities in Cuba. McWillie is a hoodlum who formerly lived in Fort Worth, Texas and now is an employee of the Thunderbird Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. In early 1963, Ruby purchased a pistol in Dallas for McWillie and had it mailed to Las Vegas. McWillie never claimed the pistol, and it was returned to Dallas.

The number and length of Ruby's stays to Cuba are not entirely clear. Ruby admits to having been in Cuba only once: in 1959 for about ten days. However, records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service show that Ruby flew to Havana from Miami on the night of September 12, 1959 and returned to New Orleans on September 13, 1959. Ruby has not explained this trip, unless it is the trip to which Ruby admits. In addition, Ruby is also known to have made inquiries in the fall of 1963 concerning the taking of a Caribbean Cruise; however, it is not known what efforts he made to arrange such a trip.

Ruby also has evidenced some sophistication with respect to the various political groups concerned with Cuban affairs. For example, at the press conference which District Attorney Henry Wade held in the late evening of November 22nd, Wade stated that Oswald was a member of the "Free Cuba Committee." More than one newspaper

reporter has recalled that Ruby interrupted Wade when he made that statement and pointed out that Oswald was a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee and that there was a great difference between the Free Cuba Committee and the FPCC.

On November 26, 1963, agents of the United States Secret Service were contacted by a reliable informant in Chicago who claimed that he had been contacted by certain persons interested in purchasing arms for anti-Castro Cuban groups and that the person who contacted the informant had stated "our backers are wealthy Jews and as soon as we (they) get rid of Kennedy, we'll have plenty of money." The informant later alerted Secret Service Agents to further meetings with the persons with whom he had been in contact. One of the Cubans involved in this group is a member of the 30th of November movement and another is a member of the Directory of Student Revolutionaries (DSR). The 30th of November man originally came to the United States on July 6, 1960 and went immediately to Dallas, Texas where he was employed by the C. J. Simpson Drilling Company. The owner of the company, Mr. Clarence J. Simpson, moved thereafter to Jackson, Michigan and the Cuban accompanied him. Another associate of Simpson has, since that date, returned to Dallas. The 30th of November member originally came from Las Villas, Cuba. Insufficient investigation has been conducted to establish a link between this group and either Ruby or Oswald. The Secret Service is endeavoring to establish an undercover relationship with this Cuban group and we have asked that the Commission be kept informed on activities in Chicago.

II. Rumors

Possible links among Ruby, Oswald and various Cuban groups are suggested by rumors which have not been sufficiently investigated or substantiated.

a. An untested informant in Atlanta, Georgia has stated that Ruby was involved in gun running to Cuba in the early 1950's. He has given the names of four or five persons in the United States who are familiar with these activities; however, the FBI has not made contact with any of these persons so that the statement of the informant remains unconfirmed.

The probability that Ruby was involved in illegal activities in Cuba prior to 1959 or, at least that he visited Cuba on more than one occasion, is supported by the statement of a Delta Airline employee in New Orleans who recalled that about seven or eight years ago, Ruby flew from New Orleans to Havana. This airline employee stated that he overheard Ruby telephone his club in Dallas and state that his trip to Cuba was being paid for by someone else and that no one should be advised of his whereabouts. It is possible that this airline employee is mistaken as to time and destination, since the story conforms in some reports to Ruby's admitted visit with L. J. McWillie in Cuba in 1959.

b. Two other rumors have to do with alleged activity by Ruby in Florida prior to 1958. One woman, of questionable veracity states that she resided for approximately two weeks in 1958 in a motel in Islamorada, Florida which was operated by a couple named Jack and Isabel. She states that this Jack bears a striking resemblance to

Jack Ruby. She further states that her husband told her that one night while drinking in a local bar, he learned that Jack and Isobel were involved in gun running to Cuba. The husband has not been located to confirm this story.

A second rumor comes from a man who lives in Marathon Shores, Florida. He states that one night in 1958, a boat load of Cubans came ashore at his dock and that an American placed a telephone call to Dallas to a man named Ruby. We have no record of any further investigation of that rumor.

c. Nancy Perrin, a prostitute and former employee of Ruby, states that in about 1961 she, her husband, an unknown American Army Colonel, and Jack Ruby met together in an apartment in Dallas to discuss obtaining Enfield rifles in Mexico for sale to an unidentified Cuban group. Mrs. Perrin is persistent in her story; however, numerous persons who have been interviewed as a result of her statement have attacked her veracity. A police officer who was Perrin's boy friend while she worked for Ruby has called her a psychopathic liar. A bartender, whom Mrs. Perrin says acted as a procurer for her, has made a similar attack on her. Inasmuch as Mrs. Perrin's detractors are no more reliable, on the surface, than she, further investigation is being conducted based upon her statement.

d. The rumors which place Ruby in Cuba most recently come by way of Jose Lanasa, a member of the DRE and Mr. Lenkin Lanasa states that Ruby visited Havana sometime within the last year and made contact with a man named Pruskin, aka, Pratkias, who allegedly runs a souvenir shop near the Hotel Seville in Havana. According to this rumor, Ruby

had financial interest in a tourist agency with Praskin in Havana prior to the Castro take over.

Information reported by Mr. Praskin reveals a further rumor that Ruby flew to Cuba from Mexico sometime in 1963 under a Czechoslovakia passport. Insufficient investigation has been undertaken to confirm or refute the Praskin and Czech passport rumors.

e. A woman in a small town near Pittsburgh, states that she found a Seaboard Railroad ticket and an advertising circular in her bushes sometime during the latter part of October. This ticket which she has turned over to the FBI, is a one-way passage from Miami to Washington. She claims that the advertising circular bore the names Oswald, Jack Ruby, Rubenstein, Dallas and what appeared to be a telephone number on it. She states that when she first found these papers, she believed that they may have been associated with her estranged husband. Her daughter has confirmed that the mother did find such a paper. It now seems that the railroad ticket comes from a next door neighbor by the name of Fernandez who had moved to Pennsylvania from Miami in the fall of 1963, after having fled Cuba in about 1961. Fernandez was a wealthy newspaper publisher in Cuba, publishing among other things, a daily newspaper in Las Villas, Cuba. The son-in-law of the informant has attempted to discredit the statements of his wife and mother-in-law. Doctor Fernandez, of course, claims no knowledge of the advertising circular although he admits that the railroad tick probably belonged to his 19 year-old son.

f. Two other rumors of a more general nature emanate from Chicago and Puerto Rico. A Puerto Rican treasurer official, Leopoldo Ramos Lucas, reports that he was threatened shortly after the assassination by a Cuban woman who claimed that the same people who got Kennedy would get him. Further investigation of this rumor has not been initiated.

A Chicago newspaper reporter states that he learned from the Chicago police and various other sources that an anti-Castro Cuban Committee was active in Chicago in attempting to obtain arms for use against Castro and these anti-Castro Cubans had underworld ties and might have been involved in the assassination of President Kennedy.

III. Other Possible Tie-ins.

The most promising links between Jack Ruby and the assassination of President Kennedy are established through underworld figures, anti-Castro Cubans, and extreme right-wing Americans.

Ruby is most directly linked to Oswald through Earlene Roberts, the housekeeper at the 1026 N. Beckley address which Oswald occupied immediately prior to the assassination of President Kennedy. Earlene Roberts is the sister of Bertha Checks, a friend of Jack Ruby. In 1959, two Cubans are known to have resided in a rooming house owned by Mrs. Checks. Mrs. Checks is married to an ex-con. In the 1950's, Jack Ruby asked Bertha Checks to invest several thousand dollars in a night club operation with him. She declined. Most recently, she met Ruby on November 18 at which time she claims she discussed investing money again with Ruby in a night club operation. An occupant of the

is an organizer for the John Birch Society. Earl Ruby is also known to have sent a telegram to Havana, Cuba on April 1, 1962. When questioned about this by the Internal Revenue Service, he became noticeably agitated and was unable to give an explanation of the nature of the telegram.

On November 21, Jack Ruby is known to have visited the office of Lamar Hunt, wealthy Dallas oil man, believed to be identical with the H. L. Hunt active in extreme right-wing political activities. Ruby gives an innocent explanation for his visit and Hunt has no recollection of the call. When Ruby was arrested, approximately six radio scripts prepared by H. L. Hunt were found in Ruby's automobile. In addition, on the evening of November 22, Ruby is reported to have displayed a pamphlet written by H. L. Hunt to members of radio station KLIIF. Details have not developed on these various right-wing activities, and we do not suggest that Ruby was necessarily involved actively with any of these people or was a co-conspirator with them. We do believe, however, that the above evidence indicates that Ruby was interested in and acquainted with extreme right-wing groups prior to the assassination of President Kennedy.

rooming house at 1026 N. Beckley, Mr. John Carter, was dating a barmaid at Jack Ruby's Carousel Club shortly before the assassination.

On approximately November 10, Jack Ruby is known to have placed long distance telephone calls to Barney Baker, a known muscle-man for James Hoffa in Chicago, and to Frank G. Oldstein, a professional gambler in San Francisco. At about this time, he met in Dallas with Alex Gruber, a former Chicago associate now living in Los Angeles and Lawrence Meyers, a Chicago salesman who later was in Dallas from November 21 to November 25. Ruby and all of these persons have been interviewed and they claim that this association and the telephone calls were innocent. Further investigation is being conducted.

Earl Ruby, the brother of Jack Ruby, is known to be acquainted with the following persons of Spanish background in Chicago: Anesi Umbarto, Mario Umbarto, and Rosalita Scorta. The nature of this relationship and background on these men has not been fully developed as yet.

On November 1, 1963, Earl placed a call (apparently on Jack Ruby's behalf) from Detroit to the Triangia Mfg. Co., Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and immediately reported to Jack in Dallas. Earl Ruby is known to have placed a telephone call to the Welsh Candy Co., owned by the founder of the John Birch Society in May, 1963. He has not been questioned on this call. When Jack Ruby was arrested, the name Thomas Hill, his address, post office box, and telephone number were found in an address book belonging to Ruby. Thomas Hill