

UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE  
TREASURY DEPARTMENT

ORIGIN Chief's Office OFFICE Miami, Florida

FILE NO. CO-2-34,030

TYPE OF CASE Protective Research	STATUS Closed	TITLE OR CAPTION Person Identified:
INVESTIGATION MADE AT Miami, Florida	PERIOD COVERED April 24 - May 5, 1964	Name : Sylvia Odio Address: Dallas, Texas
INVESTIGATION MADE BY SA Ernest I. Aragon		

DETAILS

SYNOPSIS

Inquiries in Miami leading to the identity and current whereabouts of Father Walter MacHann have been unsuccessful. Juan Martin and "Leopoldo" have not been identified by sources in Miami. Personal interview of Rogelio Cisneros Diaz disclosed he went to Dallas, Texas, in June, 1963, and contacted Sylvia Odio for the purpose of being introduced to an Uruguayan for the purchase of small arms. Re-interview of Rogelio Cisneros Diaz revealed that the Uruguayan is definitely identified as Juan Martin.

(A) INTRODUCTION:

Reference is made to report submitted by the reporting agent dated April 24, 1964. Further reference is made to long distance telephone call from Inspector Thomas J. Kelley, Chief's Office, on May 4, 1964, requesting further investigation in this case.

(B) GENERAL INQUIRIES:

On April 27, 1964, Monsignor Fitzpatrick, Catholic Diocese of Miami, was reinterviewed relative to Father Walter MacHann, of Polish extraction. Monsignor Fitzpatrick searched his official Catholic Directory, which has the names of all Catholic priests working in the United States, and the name of Father Walter MacHann did not appear in the Directory. Monsignor Fitzpatrick emphasized that if Father Walter MacHann were assigned to the Miami Diocese he would know of him.

On the same date I personally interviewed Sister William, Director, Centro Hispano Catolico (Catholic Spanish Center), 130 NE Second Street, Miami, Florida, which assists all needy persons of Latin origin, including Cubans, relative to Father Walter MacHann, and she stated Father Walter MacHann was not known to her.

DISTRIBUTION Chief Miami	COPIES Orig & 1 2cc	REPORT MADE BY <i>Ernest I. Aragon</i>	DATE
		Ernest I. Aragon SPECIAL AGENT	5-5-64
		APPROVED <i>John A. Marshall</i>	DATE
		John A. Marshall SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	5-5-64

(CONTINUE ON PLAIN PAPER)

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 16-61800-1

COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 2896

Having the wrong name made it easier not to find Father "MacHann". He was in New Orleans, interviewed by Secret Service Inspector Tom Kelley.

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Sister William suggested that if Father Walter MacHann was believed to have come from Dallas, Texas, that inquiry of the Catholic Chancery, 2122 Kidwell Street, Dallas, Texas, might disclose further information regarding Father MacHann.

Discreet and extensive inquiries among Cuban sources in Miami leading to the identities of Juan Martín and "Leopoldo" had been unsuccessful to date.

In accordance with long distance telephone call from Inspector/Kelley on May 4, 1964, Rogelio Cisneros was personally interviewed at his residence, 347 NE 36th Street, Miami, Florida. He further identified himself as Rogelio CISNEROS Diaz, an officer of JURE at Miami, Florida, and added that the name "Eugenio" is his designated "war" name. He stated that the JURE office in Miami is located at 1878 West Flagler, Miami, Florida.

Mr. Cisneros said he went to Dallas, Texas, from Miami, Florida, in June, 1963, and had travelled there alone, by plane. Mr. Cisneros fixed the date of his travel to Dallas as June, 1963, by associating other events.

Mr. Cisneros said that when he travelled to Dallas their JURE office in Dallas was already in operation, having been established in May, 1963.

Rogelio Cisneros stated he went to Dallas, Texas, specifically for the purpose of contacting Sylvia Odio who was to introduce him to a person in Dallas who was interested in selling them small arms. Cisneros said he contacted Sylvia Odio only once, and at that time he was accompanied only by Jorge Rodriguez Alvarada, their Dallas delegate, and no one else.

Mr. Cisneros said he does not know Leopoldo, adding that Leopoldo is not common as a Cuban name, and that so far as he knew, Leopoldo was not a member of JURE in Dallas. He further stated he did not know Leon, either as an individual, or as a member of JURE of Dallas.

Francisco Gutierrez, a Dallas member of JURE at the time Rogelio Cisneros went there in June, 1963, when interviewed, also stated he did not know Leopoldo nor Leon.

Rogelio Cisneros related that the man to whom Sylvia Odio introduced him was believed to be an Uruguayan who was well known to Sylvia Odio from previous contact in Cuba. Cisneros said he did not approve of the Uruguayan's tactics and had discontinued further negotiations with him. Cisneros added he did not recall the Uruguayan's name and indicated it might be Leopoldo, but emphasized he could not be certain.

COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 2896—Continued

The name of the arms dealer was beyond recollection, until the Cubans knew the Secret Service knew him. This traffic in weapons was in violation of U.S. law and declared national policy.

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The above information was made known to Inspector Kelley by means of long distance telephone call on May 5, 1964.

After speaking with Inspector Kelley the reporting agent recontacted Rogelio Cisneros by telephone and the name of Juan Martin was mentioned to him. Cisneros spontaneously exclaimed that Juan Martin was the name of the Uruguayan who had been introduced to him by Sylvia Odio. This was confirmed by Francisco Gutierrez.

Cisneros then related that Juan Martin operates a well established wash yourself laundry believed to be known as "Dixie", located near one of the biggest or principal bowling alleys in Dallas, situated on one of the main streets. He stated he had made only one contact with Juan Martin at the laundry and, although he was not familiar with Dallas, the location of the laundry was clarified for him by Francisco Gutierrez, who was more familiar with the City of Dallas.

(J) CONCLUSION:

Unless otherwise directed, the investigation of this matter at Miami is considered closed.

COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 2896—Continued

Before this report was written, the Secret Service had interviewed the priest. Five days earlier, as the next document shows, the same Inspector Kelley to whom Agent Aragon phoned, had seen him in New Orleans.

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TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20220

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

May 5, 1964

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Mr. J. Lee Rankin  
General Counsel  
President's Commission on the  
Assassination of President Kennedy  
200 Maryland Avenue, N. E.  
Washington, D. C.

Attention: Mr. Slawson

Dear Mr. Rankin:

Reference is made to your letter of April 22, 1964.

Reverend Walter J. McChann was interviewed April 30, 1964, by Inspector Kelley. He is a 26 year old priest presently attending Loyola University, New Orleans, and is a lifelong resident of Dallas, Texas. He spent a number of Summer vacations in Mexico and has a fair command of the Spanish language, and has acted as the chaplain of the Cuban Catholic Committee of Dallas since 1961. The Committee contacted employers in an attempt to find places for Cubans to work. It organized religious and social functions in order to make Dallas a friendly place for the Cubans who were sent there. In 1961 the organization had no funds and solicited funds among the people of Dallas.

In March 1962 the Cuban Catholic Committees held a meeting in Miami which Father McChann attended. At that time the Catholic Relief Service set up a revolving fund for the Cubans in Dallas to furnish them relief until jobs could be found for them. A resettlement office was opened in Dallas and Father McChann was given the responsibility for the conduct of the office. Joaquin Insua, a Cuban, who was hired to take care of the office is still an officer in the Cuban Relief Committee at Dallas. Father McChann stated that he never attended any of the political meetings of the Cuban groups that were represented by the Cubans in

Had the Secret Service conducted a real investigation, beginning at even this late date, had the priest, who had been spiritual adviser to the Dallas Cuban refugees, been asked the questions he should have been asked and wasn't, a vast amount of evidence of Cuban involvement in the assassination would have resulted. This includes threats to kill the President when he visited Dallas, proof of which still exists. Had a real investigation been made, the Report and its false conclusions would have been impossible. My sources were readily available to the government but were ostentatiously and persistently avoided.

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Mr. J. Lee Rankin

Dallas, although he was often cajoled and entreated to attend them. He felt that it was a better policy for him to remain aloof from the differences of opinion that occurred among the various Cuban groups represented by the Cuban population.

Father McChann stated that during his work with the Committee he came to know Mrs. Connell who was interested in assisting in the work of the Committee, and who was especially interested in the welfare of Mrs. Sylvia Odio, in view of Mrs. Odio's mental condition.

He acknowledges knowing Mrs. Eugene Link, Albert Tamaya, Marcella Insua and Hector Isquerivo, all of whom he met during his work with the Cuban Catholic Committee. He also acknowledges knowing Colonel and Mrs. Castor. He said Colonel Castor is a retired Army Colonel. Mrs. Castor seemed generally interested in the plight of the Cuban refugees, but that he always felt that Colonel Castor was "playing the role of an intelligence officer" in his contacts with the Cubans; that he seems to be more interested in their political beliefs than their economic plight or their social problems in the new country. He stated that he was introduced to John Martin (Juan Martin) whom he described as a Latin but not a Cuban. He stated that Mr. Martin came to Mrs. Sylvia Odio's apartment one evening while he was there. Mr. Martin did not stay very long and after he had left Mrs. Odio stated that Mr. Martin represented a Cuban group or was doing a job for a Cuban group in Dallas. Father McChann was under the impression that Martin had an apartment or a house in Dallas, but that he did not live in Dallas and had a family in some other city. He stated that this was his only contact with Martin but that Martin was apparently well known to Mrs. Odio.

Father McChann said that while he was interested in the Cuban groups in Dallas he was contacted about four or five times by Wallace Heitman of the Dallas Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He first made a contact with Heitman when it came to his attention that one of these Cuban refugees was extorting money from some other Cubans, was making false promises to the Cubans, was a disruptive influence in the Cuban community and was considered by Father McChann to be a "political Cuban" rather than a Cuban who was interested in

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There are a number of John Martins in this story. Reference here seems to be to the arms man. With the early and regular contact between the priest and the FBI, there is even less excuse for the full story not being investigated. With all the many indications the bullet "found" at Parkland Hospital was planted, how strange it is that the FBI had no interest in this "political Cuban", the extortionist and disrupter, employed at the hospital at that time and enjoying the run of the place. He had the character required and the opportunity. I am informed he also left Dallas after the assassination. See WHITEWASH, "The Number of Shots".