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Odd CIA Activity in Dallas in 1963

The secret files of the House Assassinations Committee contain reports of strange CIA activities in Dallas on the eve of the John F. Kennedy assassination.

Credible witnesses have confirmed our past reports that the accused assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was in touch with anti-Castro Cubans in Dallas. One confidential report states that "in 1963, Oswald was seen leaving the Dallas office of Alpha 66." This was a Cuban commando group trained by the CIA.

A Cuban CIA operative, Antonio Veciana, also told investigators that he had been summoned to Dallas in August 1963, by his CIA contact—a mysterious man who went by the name of Morris Bishop. States a confidential summary: "When (Veciana) arrived, Bishop was accompanied by another man, Lee Harvey Oswald."

Another witness who impressed the investigators, Sylvia Odio, told them that two anti-Castro Cubans had introduced her to an American by the name of Leon Oswald. She was told that Oswald was trying "to convince anti-Castro Cuban groups . . . to kill President Kennedy." After the assassination, she recognized this American as Lee Harvey Oswald.

The House investigators don't really believe that the CIA had any part in the murder of President Kennedy. More likely, they suspect the CIA may have tried to cover up some embarrassing contacts with Oswald in Dallas.

In any case, the CIA took pains to give the impression that Oswald was in Mexico City at the time that witnesses claimed he was dealing with the CIA-guided Cubans in Dallas. Veciana, for example, told of a strange call he re-

ceived from his CIA contact after Kennedy was killed.

The CIA man, Morris Bishop, asked Veciana to contact his cousin, Builamo Ruiez, who worked for the Cuban embassy in Mexico City. Relates a confidential report: "Veciana was to relay Bishop's offer to pay Ruiez and his wife to say that they had met with Oswald in Mexico City."

This not only would have placed Oswald out of Dallas but would have thrown suspicion on the Castro government. The ruse was later called off. Instead, the CIA cited secret tapes and photographs as evidence that Oswald had been in touch with both the Cuban and Soviet embassies in Mexico City.

The CIA kept tapes of all phone calls going in and out of the two embassies. Photographs were also taken of everyone entering and leaving these embassies. On Oct. 1, 1963, the CIA notified other U.S. embassies that "an American male, who identified himself as Lee Oswald, contacted the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City."

Oswald was described in the cable as "approximately 35 years old, with an athletic build, about six feet tall, with a receding hairline." The committee files note that this "in no way physically resembles the Lee Harvey Oswald accused of assassinating President Kennedy."

The CIA sought photographs from the navy to compare with its photographs of Oswald at the Soviet embassy. Declares a committee report: "These photographs, though obviously not of the correct Lee Harvey Oswald, became the Warren Commission's exhibit 237. The CIA admitted that there

had been a mix-up but never cleared the matter up."

A CIA witness has told committee investigators, meanwhile, that the CIA's monitoring camera happened to break down on the day that Oswald allegedly visited the Soviet Embassy. But the CIA tap on the Soviet Embassy's phone produced an alleged telephone call from someone who identified himself as "Lee Henry Oswald."

The CIA witness claimed that the actual voice recording of the telephone conversation "was destroyed in routine destruction procedures approximately one week after it was received." Yet more than seven weeks later, the FBI claimed to have heard the telephone conversation that the CIA said had been destroyed. The FBI's judgment was that the voice did not belong to Oswald.

Wrote the late FBI director J. Edgar Hoover on Nov. 23, 1963: "The Central Intelligence Agency advised that on Oct. 1, 1963, an extremely sensitive source had reported that an individual identified himself as Lee Oswald, who contacted the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City inquiring as to any messages.

"Special agents of this bureau, who have conversed with Oswald in Dallas, Tex., have observed photographs of the individual referred to above and have listened to a recording of his voice. These special agents are of the opinion that the above-referred-to individual was not Lee Harvey Oswald"

The House investigators are beginning to wonder whether the CIA concocted the whole Oswald adventure in Mexico City in an attempt to conceal his real activities in Dallas.