

# Mobster predicted JFK 'hit': Cuban

NEWS WORLD Sept 28, 1974

WASHINGTON—An FBI informant nervously testified yesterday that the Mafia gambling chieftain in pre-Castro Havana told him in the early summer of 1963 that President John F. Kennedy was "going to be hit."

Anti-Castro exile Jose Aleman told the House Assassinations Committee that he did not then know a "hit" was underworld parlance for murder.

Aleman, an acknowledged informant for the FBI, testified that gambling czar Santos Trafficante told him in a Miami conversation in June 1963 that Kennedy "is going to be hit." The president was assassinated Nov. 22, 1963.

Aleman maintained under intense committee questioning he thought Trafficante meant the Republicans would "hit" or beat Kennedy in the next election.

Escorted at his own request from his

Miami home by U.S. marshals who ringed the hearing room, Aleman said he feared his life was in danger and that he believes Trafficante is collaborating with Fidel Castro's secret police.

Committee Chief Counsel G. Robert Blakey said the Cuban government told its investigators several months ago in Havana that Trafficante was the Mafia "Don" there until the Castro revolution.

Blakey said that Trafficante might have had an association with Jack Ruby, who shot Kennedy's suspected assassin, through Ruby's friend Lewis McWillie, who has worked in casinos in the United States and Cuba for 46 years.

McWillie said Ruby visited him in Havana where he was running a casino at the Hotel Tropicano in 1959.

McWillie, who demanded that television cameras and tape recorders be

turned off when it was his turn to testify, said he recalled seeing Trafficante in Cuba at about the same time.

The committee also produced two immigration cards obtained from the Cuban government earlier this year that indicated Ruby made two visits to Cuba at that time—from Aug. 8 to Sept. 11, and from Sept. 12 to Sept. 13.

It was the first time the possibility of two visits by Ruby to Cuba had been disclosed.

Trafficante was to have testified at the afternoon session, which was delayed for three hours because Chairman Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, had other congressional commitments.

When Stokes appeared shortly after 5 p.m. he announced "the witness has a physical condition" and would testify today.