

Chapter 5: Cuba

He may be a bastard, but he's our bastard.

F.D.R., of Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar¹

Phase 1: Mid 1959 to April 1961

Phase 2 (Operation Mongoose): November 1961 to October 1962

Phase 3: Dec 1963 --

Prio, Batista

Control of Cuba was wrested by the United States from Spain at the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898, and the United States kept strict military and political control of Cuba throughout the early part of this century. The Platt Amendment to the Cuban constitution of 1901 provided the recognition that even within the Cuban legal framework, the American government reserved to itself the right to intervene militarily in Cuban affairs as it saw fit. Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar, a sergeant in the Cuban army, became strongman in 1933, and was later elected president. He was voted out of office by Ramon Garu San Martin in 1944, who was in turn defeated by Carlos Prío Socarrás four years later. Batista took control back in 1952 before the scheduled elections, which were cancelled.

Batista's conception of government was extremely hospitable to American organized crime. Though Cuban officials could expect generous and regular payment from the American mobsters, they made it possible for the Americans to establish a number of successful casino operations in Havana during the 1950s. These included:

- Hotel Havana Riviera (Meyer Lansky), run by Dino and Eddie Cellini from Ohio
- Sans Souci, purchased by Santo Trafficante, Jr., from Gabriel Mannarino (Pittsburgh)
- Tropicana (owned by Lansky), operated by Lewis McWillie

The challenge to Fulgencio Batista's regime in Cuba in the late 1950s came from several distinct sources. Batista's second administration had begun in a coup staged on the 10th of March, 1952, when the government of Carlos Prío Socarrás was overthrown. Prío had himself become fabulously wealthy during his eight years in office; he had accumulated between \$50 and \$100 million, and his party, the Auténticos, had become the official party of corruption. In exile, Prío lived in Miami, in the penthouse of the Vendome Hotel, which he owned. In 1956, he entered into an agreement with Fidel Castro, a 30 year old revolutionary, to finance Castro's efforts to overthrow Batista. He had already at that time entered into a separate agreement with Rafael Trujillo, the dictator of the Dominican Republic, for an invasion of Cuba, of which Castro was apparently not aware.

¹ I thought it was of Somoza -- but cf. *The Missiles of October*, Robert Smith Thompson, p. 55.

Castro, 1956-1959

Castro and the men of his 26th of July revolutionary movement attacked a military barracks at Santiago, Cuba, on July 25, 1953, but were quickly rounded up. Castro was imprisoned, but released in 1955; a year later, he and his men made their way back to Cuba, only to be nearly wiped out by an ambush of government soldiers. Castro and the 16 men who escaped the ambush set up camp in the Sierra Maestra, where Castro found himself granting an important series of interviews to a *New York Times* reporter, Herbert Matthews. It was a paeon of praise.

Among those who helped Cuba during his pre-1959 days in the mountains were

- David Ferrie,
- Gerry Patrick Hemming,
- Garrett Trapnell,² as well as
- Frank Fiorini Sturgis.
- Antullo Ramirez Ortiz was also involved in smuggling arms to Castro during this period.³

Norman "Roughhouse" Rothman, one of Santos Trafficante's close associates, "coordinated the smuggling of arms to Castro."⁴ Jack Ruby was involved in this as well. "The available evidence indicates that Ruby helped in Rothman's gun smuggling. After Ruby captured national attention in 1963, two women came forward to identify him to the FBI as a man they had met in June 1958, in the Florida Keys. They were introduced to Ruby by the brother of one of the women, a confirmed Cuban gunrunner. The women were told that "Jack" was going to "run some guns to Cuba." One of them told the FBI that "Jack had a trunk full of guns," and that she was told that "more guns were hidden in the marshes which would be sold to the Cubans." The other woman recalled that she was led to believe that "Jack," who owned a nightclub in Dallas, was a member of the "syndicate".

Another informant, Blaney Mack Johnson, reported to the FBI that Ruby was "active in arranging illegal flights of weapons from Miami to Castro forces in Cuba," and he reported that Ruby was a part-owner of two airplanes that were used in these arms deals. According to Johnson, Eddie Browder was involved with Ruby in these dealings. Browder was close to Norman Rothman, according to court documents.⁵

2 ²See Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, p. 410ff.

3 ³ Ortiz was later jailed in Cuba for hijacking an airliner to Cuba, then released in 1975 to the United States; he wrote a manuscript describing files he claims to have seen in Cuba purporting to support the notion that Oswald had been working for the Kremlin.

4 ⁴William Scott Malone, *The Secret Life of Jack Ruby*, *New Times*, Jan 23 1978. Malone, incidentally, is not a partisan of a view that sees a conspiracy in the assassination of President Kennedy.

5 ⁵William Scott Malone, *The Secret Life of Jack Ruby*, *New Times*, Jan 23 1978. He also reports that Browder was an associate of Frank Sturgis.

Gerry Hemming (see Chapter Two, fn. nn) reported on his knowledge, or belief, regarding Ruby's involvement in arms dealing, in an interview with Dick Russell. "From what I understand," Hemming indicated, "Ruby was around way back in 1947 when Calude Adderley -- the Hiroshima pilot -- got involved in a plan to bomb Havana. He also had a connection to an intelligence-Mob type in Mexico who was running the operation. They all got hauled into Federal court, arms and equipment were confiscated, and someone told me that Ruby had some kind of involvement. And you can figure Ruby was acquainted with some of the people involved in the Kennedy operation in Shreveport, New Orleans, and Texas. He worked with the Chicago mob and some Pittsburgh boys, and was in good with the Lansky people down in Havana."⁶

Fidel Castro entered Havana, a liberating hero, on January 8, 1959; Batista flew out of Havana on the preceding January 1; Meyer Lansky fled Havana the same day.⁷

The Mafia and Cuba

◆ Castro had decided soon after taking power in early 1959 to eliminate the powerful Mafia influences in Havana.

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◆ Trafficante's imprisonment and escape from jail in Havana.

◆ Jack Ruby

Ruby paid at least two visits to Cuba in 1959, when he visited Lewis McWillie; McWillie paid for the trips at the time. The first trip was in April. On the second, he reportedly offered \$25,000 to Robert McKeown, an arms merchant who was known to be close to Castro. An FBI report indicates that Ruby had identified the money as coming from Las Vegas gambling interests. Ruby requested McKeown's help in releasing three prisoners in Castro's jails. Several weeks later, Ruby met with McKeown again, and offered several hundred jeeps as part of the same deal.⁸

Another account describes the events from a slightly different perspective. After Ruby's first visit to Cuba, Ruby approached McKeown with what Ruby said was a "life and death matter." He said that there was \$5,000 in it for McKeown for each of the three prisoners who was released.⁹ In mid to late 1959, Ruby met McKeown in the latter's store in Houston, and told him that he wanted to include in the deal with Castro some jeeps in Louisiana on which he has had an option. "Ruby offered McKeown \$25,000 for a letter of introduction to Fidel Castro which

6 ⁶Dick Russell interview of Gerry Patrick Hemming, *Argosy*, April 1976.

7 ⁷Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, p. 519.

8 ⁸Moldea, *The Hoffa Wars*, p. 134.

9 ⁹William Scott Malone, *The Secret Life of Jack Ruby*, *New Times*, Jan. 23 1978.

would 'clearly indicate that the bearer was responsible and reliable.'"¹⁰ Shortly thereafter, Ruby visited Cuba [date?].

Two indications that Ruby met Trafficante in a Cuban jail are the following: (1) According to a HSCA memo, McWillie said Ruby met Trafficante in jail in 1959. (2) ...story about John Wilson-Hudson who reported knowing a gambler named Santos, visited by an American gangster-type named Ruby.¹¹ In addition, Gerry Patrick Hemming has said that Ruby was at the home of Captain William Morgan, a hero of Castro's revolution, involved in a meeting involving the efforts to free Trafficante.¹² Others who visited Trafficante there were Sam Giancana and Johnny Rosselli.¹³

As for the release of three of prisoners in Castro's jail, Santos Trafficante, Loren Hall, and Henry Saavedra were ordered released on July 8, 1959. Trafficante was released in fact some time in September.

The FBI was kept informed of his activities during this period. Special Agent Charles W. Flynn, FBI agent of the Dallas office, contacted Ruby on March 11, 1959, to inquire as to whether Ruby would agree to be an FBI informant. Ruby agreed to this. (This information was furnished to the Warren Commission five years later, but was only made public in 1975). Ruby and Flynn met on April 28 again. Perhaps in connection with this informant relationship with the FBI -- or perhaps not -- Ruby bought five hundred dollars' worth of miniature tape-recording equipment. "[O]n April 27, 1959, the day before he was to meet with agent Flynn, Ruby rented a safe deposit box, perhaps as a repository for the tapes he intended to make. Before and after every trip to Cuba, Ruby would enter his safe deposit box and then visit his FBI contact. In total, the FBI dealt with Ruby on nine occasions between March 11 and October 2, 1959, during the height of his Cuban activities....Flynn denies any knowledge of Ruby's safe deposit box, his expensive spy equipment, his trips to Cuba, or his association with Trafficante and McWillie....[though] Flynn told a reporter several years ago that Ruby *did* tell him of at least one of his Cuban excursions.."¹⁴

Ruby was back in Cuba September 5-7 at the Tropicana; he flew to Miami, and returned to Havana on September 12, and then flew to the mainland [New Orleans -- but check that, it's not in Malone's story; JG] on the 13th.

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10 ¹⁰William Scott Malone, The Secret Life of Jack Ruby, *New Times*, Jan. 23 1978.

11 ¹¹William Scott Malone, The Secret Life of Jack Ruby, *New Times*, Jan. 23 1978.

12 ¹²William Scott Malone, The Secret Life of Jack Ruby, *New Times*, Jan. 23 1978.

13 ¹³William Scott Malone, The Secret Life of Jack Ruby, *New Times*, Jan. 23 1978.

14 ¹⁴William Scott Malone, The Secret Life of Jack Ruby, *New Times*, Jan. 23 1978.

Lewis McWillie was a gambler and gambling establishment operator working in Dallas before moving to Cuba in the summer of 1958. In Havana, he worked for Norman Rothman as a pitboss at the Sans Souci, which belonged to Trafficante and several mobsters from Pittsburgh, including Johnny Rocco and the Mannarino brothers.¹⁵ In September, he left the Sans Souci to go to the Tropicana casino. McWillie has acknowledged knowing Norman Rothman, but denied knowing Trafficante, Meyer Lansky, or Jake Lansky. An FBI report indicated that "McWillie solidified his syndicate connections through his associations in Havana, Cuba, with Santos Trafficante...Meyer and Jake Lansky; Dino Cellini and others who were members or associates of 'the syndicate'".¹⁶

Disillusionment with Castro; establishment of CRC, MRP.

An initial honeymoon period of cordial relations between Castro and the American government was ended on May 17, 1959, when a law was passed in Cuba authorizing the government to reappportion land from wealthy (and often foreign) landowners to local farmers.

Dec. 11, 1959: memo from Col. King to Allen Dulles proposing the elimination of Castro.¹⁷

Jan 13, 1960: Dulles presents the Cuba project to the National Security Council. Thus began Operation 40. [December 11, 1959: **DCI Allen Dulles writes to President Eisenhower:** *thorough consideration must be given to the elimination of Fidel Castro.*]

March 9, 1960: Col. King presents a proposal to the Task Force.

March 17, 1960. Eisenhower signs an NSC directive for the creation of a Cuban opposition to Castro outside of Cuba. This led to the creation of the FRD in Miami by Hunt. (see just below)

April 1960: International Anti Communist Brigade organized (Frank Sturgis).

15 ¹⁵Loren Eugene Hall worked there as well. Hall was apparently close to Trafficante, having been imprisoned and released along with Trafficante by Castro. After his return to the U.S., Hall was involved with two mercenary groups, Interpen and the International Anti-Communist Brigade, working there side by side with Frank Sturgis. Hall's name emerges directly in the Kennedy assassination case in connection with the Warren Commission's attempt to deal with the Silvia Odio testimony. As we shall see in Chapter 6, Silvia Odio, a Cuban exile living in Dallas, was visited before the assassination by two Cubans and an American identified as Lee Harvey Oswald; Oswald was described as being a former Marine ready to kill President Kennedy. Loren Eugene Hall told the Warren Commission that he was one of those three men, and none of them were really Lee Harvey Oswald. This is only the start of the story, though; see the discussion below.^a

16 ¹⁶William Scott Malone, *The Secret Life of Jack Ruby*, *New Times*, Jan. 23, 1978, p. 50.

17 ¹⁷Church committee report; get page.

Is this correct: December 1960: the CIA upgrades the military scale of the Cuban invasion, with the approval of the Pentagon. NSC approves Operation Pluto, which called for military support for an invasion of Cuba on the south shores.

On January 3, 1961, President Eisenhower severed diplomatic relations with Cuba. The plans for assassinating Cuba, which we will discuss in detail below, were now just getting underway. On January 10, the *New York Times* revealed the existence of the Cuban exiles' training in Guatemala. Any agreement to turn power over to Prío had been long forgotten, and American interests and those of organized crime were quickly disillusioned with the prospect of Castro's new style of administration. Richard Nixon, still vice-president, met with Mario García Kohly, and assured him that he would be the president of the next administration in Havana. Nixon emphasized that the United States was not going to permit Castro to remain in power.

January 28, 1961: Kennedy gets his first Pentagon briefing on the Cuba invasion plans, in general terms; a month later, at the end of February, JFK's staff gets more information, and alerts him to it. Kennedy says Trinidad should not be the point of invasion, because US involvement would be too obvious. The Pentagon proposes the Bay of Pigs as an alternative. This becomes known as Operation Zapata.

◆ Early CIA preparations

The CIA had early on begun preparations for a forced departure from Cuba when Castro came to power. The preparations included a major expansion of the CIA station in Miami, to the point where JM/WAVE (as the Miami station was officially designated) was the largest CIA station in the world. The second front of preparation was the establishment of a "stay behind" underground in Cuba. Among the Cubans involved in this were:

- Antonio Veciana, who would later form the militant Cuban exile group Alpha 66, after he fled Cuba for the United States (date).
- William Morgan
- Luis Toroella,¹⁸ who became head of a CIA Cuban exile group in Chile called AM/BLOOD. Toroella was captured and executed in 1961 (date).¹⁹
- [Frank Sturgis]; discuss Operation 40, an assassination squad established by the CIA; Joaquin Sanjenís was head of operations for Operation 40.

CIA-Maheu-Roselli contacts: early assassination plots

◆

The 1975 Interim Report of the Senate Intelligence Committee reported that the first plan to assassinate Castro was organized by Dulles and J.C. King, and supervised by Vice President

18 ¹⁸Evica 117, who cites Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo for Morgan, Veciana, and Toroella.

19 ¹⁹Evica 120

Richard Nixon. The Mafia was not involved in this operation, which was to involve an invasion of trained Cuban exiles as well.²⁰ [is that right?]

While this first government-sponsored assassination attempt may not have involved the Mafia, there is reason to believe that the Mafia had beaten the CIA to the punch. Shortly after Trafficante's imprisonment by Castro in April, 1959, several members of the organized crime syndicate, including Norman Rothman, contacted Frank Sturgis, and according to Sturgis, offered him sums varying between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000 to assassinate Castro. While Sturgis did not accept the contract, he informed his CIA supervisor in Havana, and it was shortly after this that the CIA plans began.²¹ [Is that chronology correct? what is the first evidence of CIA involvement?]

Returning to the CIA plans. As we noted above, there was a memo dated Dec. 11, 1959, in which the head of the Western Hemisphere Division, Col. J. C. King, broached the subject of an assassination attempt on Castro: "Thorough consideration [should] be given to the elimination of Fidel Castro. None of those close [to] Fidel, such as his brother Raul or his companion Che Guevara, have the same mesmeric appeal to the masses. Many informed people believe that the disappearance of Fidel would greatly accelerate the fall of the present Government."²²

In 1975, the Church Committee noted that "[i]t is possible that outright murder was not the first option discussed, since there is evidence that from March to August 1960 the CIA tried to send an LSD-like chemical to be used against the Cuban leader --via an invisible spray--to undermine Castro's charismatic appeal by sabotaging his speeches."²³

Charles Siragusa of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics has recounted a story often repeated in chronicles of this period.²⁴ Siragusa was the liaison to the CIA at that point, and during the summer of 1960, he reports that a CIA officer told him they were forming an assassination squad, and since Siragusa had contacts with the underworld, they asked him to put such a team together to "hit" some foreign leaders; the Agency was prepared to pay a million dollars "per hit". Siragusa reports that he said, "This is peacetime. If we were in war, maybe I could do it, but not like this; I just couldn't do it."

◆ Hoffa and the Castro attempt

There is evidence that an assassination effort was undertaken even earlier than the sequencing above suggests. Jimmy Hoffa, head of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, was approached by the CIA in 1959 or 1960 and asked to act as liaison with organized crime leaders in an effort to depose Fidel Castro, according to Charles Crimaldi, a contract killer for the Chicago

20 ²⁰*Mafia Kingfish* 303

21 ²¹William Scott Malone, *The Secret Life of Jack Ruby*, *New Times* Jan 23, 1978, p. 49.

22 ²²Church Committee Report ("Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders, Report No. 94-465, p. 92, cited in *The Hoffa Wars*, Moldea, p. 126.

23 ²³*Hoffa Wars*, Moldea, p. 127, citing Church Committee report, p. 72.

24 ²⁴Jack Anderson Jan 4, 1978, and *The Hoffa Wars*, Moldea, p. 127f.

mob turned government informant.²⁵ Apparently through Hoffa -- though this is not certain -- a number of mob figures were approach and asked to cooperate with the CIA, including Russell Bufalino and his partners Salvatore Granello and James Plumeri (Granello and Plumeri were members of the Lucchese group, and they had participated in establishing Teamsters Local 320 in Miami).²⁶

- ◆ Late summer of 1960 - early 1961- CIA/Mafia assassination efforts
[O'Connell, Dulles, Sheffield Edwards]

O'Connell contacted Robert Maheu, a former FBI agent running a private investigation service under heavy retainer to the CIA (Maheu was also working almost full time for Howard Hughes at this point.)

Following O'Connell's orders, Maheu contacted Johnny Roselli in Los Vegas, offering him \$150,000 for the contract for the hit on Castro.²⁷ Hinckle and Turner note a meeting in September 1960 with Maheu and Rosselli, at the Brown Derby in Beverly Hills. In any event, Roselli said he would not take any money for the deal, other than to have his expenses covered. The details of the hit were then left to Roselli. Roselli had a second meeting, with O'Connell (using the pseudonym "Jim Olds") on September 14, 1960, to satisfy Roselli that this was indeed a project of the U.S. government; they met at the Plaza Hotel, during Castro's visit to New York. Shortly thereafter, in late September, Maheu asked Roselli to ask Sam Giancana to request Santos Trafficante, Jr., to help in the assassination attempt.²⁸

There was then a meeting in November, 1960, at the Fountainebleau in Miami Beach, according to Michael Drosnan (*Citizen Hughes*); elsewhere, the literature leaves a gap until the next meeting, on March 11 (or 13, according to Hinckle and Turner). This later meeting in Miami, at the Fountainebleu Hotel, found Maheu, Sam Giancana, John Roselli, and Santos Trafficante, Jr. This was the meeting at which Maheu passed on to Trafficante some poison pills that an associate of his was supposed to get to Castro -- although eventually the effort failed, and the

25 ²⁵Charles Crimaldi, as told to John Kidner, *Crimaldi: Contract Killer* (1976, 218, cited in Moldea, *Hoffa Wars*.)

26 ²⁶*The Hoffa Wars*, Moldea, p. 129f.

27 ²⁷Hinckle and Turner [*Fish is Red*, 29] indicate that the meeting took place at the Brown Derby in Beverly Hills, Sept. 1960; Moldea reports this as well. Maheu apparently knew Rosselli through Edward Bennett Williams. Maheu had been hired to serve Rosselli with a subpoena, and Williams helped Maheu get a reservation in Los Vegas, but it turned out that it was Rosselli himself who was Bennett's contact and thus Maheu's host. Maheu took the trip and met Rosselli, but decided he couldn't take advantage of the situation, and did not serve the subpoena.

28 ²⁸Hinckle and Turner [36] indicate that at the second meeting, Roselli unbidden brought Giancana and Trafficante, without giving their real names, and Maheu found out their identities when he saw their photos in the Sunday paper -- which he then showed to O'Connell.

pills were returned.²⁹ According to Hinckle and Turner, Joe Shimon, working with Maheu, was also present. According to Furiati, based presumably on Cuban intelligence records, the meeting was held on March 11 1961, and the meeting included Antonio Varona, who took the poison pills plus ten thousand dollars. The next meeting has O'Connell, Rosselli, and Varona. O'Connell does not know at this time that Varona is already working for the Agency through E. Howard Hunt's FRD/CRC, but he approves of him (nonetheless), and sends that evaluation back to Bissell, who in turns gives the green light on this assassination effort.

See *ZR Rifle* by Claudia Furiati, p. 26ff. Following her narrative, the next meeting was at the end of March 1961, in Havana. Varona called Alberto Cruz Caso in Havana by phone, and instructed him to send someone to Miami by commercial airline flight to pick up the poison. The plot was to use the poison in food prepared at the Peking restaurant or at the Havana Libre Hotel. But the instructions were not to use the poison until the CIA gave the go-ahead signal. Now this is April 1961; and the CIA puts the CRC leaders, including Varona, in quarantine (see below) and so the signal never comes. (April 13, 14), because though Maheu gives the signal to Rosselli, Rosselli in turn can't find Varona anywhere.³⁰

Meanwhile, Bissell and Edwards briefed DCI Allen Dulles and DDCI Gen. Charles Cabell, and a few days later, they in turn briefed VP Richard Nixon on the plan to work with the Mafia on the assassination.

- Marita Lorenz: date? poison capsules in a cold cream jar, goes back to Castro after being saved by Frank Fiorini, etc. Sturgis supported the statement originally before their falling out.³¹
- October 1960: CIA impregnates cigars with botulinium to be transferred to Castro.³²

◆ October-November 1960: Presidential campaign and elections

In the debates between Nixon and Kennedy, Kennedy used the Castro issue to berate Nixon and Eisenhower -- chastising them for not taking more serious measures against Castro, at a point when he certainly knew about the preparations for the invasion, and he knew, as well, that Nixon could not responsibly answer these charges. Nixon later wrote,³³ "There was only one thing I could do. The covert operation had to be protected at all costs. I must not even suggest by implication that the United States was rendering aid to rebel forces in and out of Cuba -- in

29 ²⁹Davis, *Mafia Kingfish*, 86f. Apparently Joe Shimon was also present at this meeting. Carlos Marcello apparently was not directly involved in this activity, although in 1979 he told Joseph Hauser, a federal undercover agent, that he was (Davis 87)

30 ³⁰ (*ZR Rifle*, p. 27ff). This is pretty much the standard story in the literature, including *The Fish is Red*.

31 ³¹This is mentioned in Schlesinger, 518, and he cites Paul Meskill, "CIA sent bedmate to kill Castro in '60" in the *New York Daily News*, June 13, 1976.

32 ³²Church Committee, *Assassination Plots*, p. 76-77, cited in Schlesinger, p. 518.

33 ³³*Six Crises*, RMNixon

fact, I must go to the other extreme; I must attack the Kennedy proposal to provide such aid as wrong and irresponsible because it would violate our treaty commitments."

◆ *Kennedy wins the elections...*

When Kennedy was briefed by Dulles and Bissell on November 18, 1960, the CIA officers explained to Kennedy that they had a plan to invade Cuba, but they did not mention the agreement between Nixon and Kohly, nor the assassination plot -- and certainly not the involvement of the Mafia in the latter. Kennedy told them to put a hold on the Cuba invasion.

Manuel Artime was placed in charge of the militia -- the training bases in Nicaragua and Guatemala -- where the Cubans were champing at the bit, not aware of the growing uncertainty of the invasion.

◆ US breaks diplomatic ties with Cuba: January 3, 1961.

According to Morrow, by late February, William Wieland and the CDC faction of the Cuban exiles had told Kennedy about the involvement of the Mafia in the larger Cuba gameplan. The Kennedys' reaction was to place the invasion plan on ice, and to increase the pressure on the Mafiosi, including Carlos Marcello, who was arrested 12 days before the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Again according to Morrow, with Marcello's arrest and disappearance, Kohly felt it necessary to enter into a new arrangement with Meyer Lansky and Santos Trafficante, an arrangement according to which they would have their casino rights back in Cuba when Kohly became president.³⁴

On April 10, Bissell had a meeting with Kennedy, and revealed to him that the planned invasion was also a cover for a second incursion into Cuba, and that this second was a close-up look to see what state the Russian missiles were in that had apparently been brought to Cuba. There would be a diversionary invasion associated with this second project as well, one that was being organized by Nino Diaz, who had been trained by Sergio Arcacha Smith, *and this group would be operating out of Guy Banister's office in New Orleans*. This flight would be flown by David Ferrie, and would include Robert Morrow as well³⁵.

Morrow suggests that Kennedy's absolute decision not to aid the Bay of Pigs soldiers with air support was due to an intimidation by Adlai Stevenson, the U.N. ambassador, who had been greatly embarrassed by being caught lying -- or having been lied to be the president -- in connection with a phony story linked to the defection of a Cuban military pilot named Zuniga. [Morrow 50]

Bay of Pigs invasion

◆ Original plans under the direction of Richard Nixon

◆ Plan was passed on to the Kennedys with the backing of General Eisenhower.

34 ³⁴This agreement, according to Morrow, was reached in Kohly's Washington home and in the offices of C.H. "Jim" Polley, who worked with Lansky and Trafficante.

35 ³⁵*Fish is Red*, 17.

"When Eisenhower and Kennedy met the day before the inauguration, 'President Eisenhower said with reference to the guerilla forces which are opposed to Castro,' as Clark Clifford, who accompanied Kennedy, recorded his words, 'that it was the policy of this government to help such forces *to the utmost*. At the present time we are helping train anti-Castro forces in Guatemala. It was his recommendation that his effort be continued and accelerated' (Clifford to JFK, January 24, 1961...)."36

Robert Kennedy described his brother's decision to accept the earlier administration's plans for invasion. The invasion was championed by Allen Dulles, DCI, and by Richard Bissell, Director of Plans, as well as by General Lyman Lemnitzer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs; they were "trusted by his predecessor; so he thought that he could trust them and when they said it was much more apt to succeed than Guatemala [in 1954], when the military looked it over and said it was a good plan, then he went ahead."³⁷ President Kennedy was also concerned that if the plan had been cancelled, invidious comparisons would be drawn between his administration's courage and that of the preceding administration. In addition, "a highly decorated Marine colonel brought in an ecstatic report on the Brigade's military prowess" just before the operation. "This, Robert Kennedy thought, 'was the most instrumental paper in convincing the President to go ahead.'"38

- ◆ Kennedy said, in a press conference (on April 12?)³⁹ shortly before the Bay of Pigs invasion: First, I want to say that there will not be, under any circumstances, an intervention in Cuba by the United States armed forces. The government will do everthing it possibly can, I think it can meet its responsibilities, to make sure that there are no Americans involved in any actions inside Cuba...The basic issue in Cuba is not one between the United States and Cuba. It is between the Cubans themselves. I intend to see that we adhere to that principle and as I understand it this administration's attitude is so understood by the anti-Castro exiles from Cuba in this country.

- ◆ : ***The Santa Ana Diversion:***

"A week before the invasion a peeling banana boat named the Santa Ana flying a Costa Rican flag slipped her moorings at the Algiers naval base on the Mississippi River below New Orleans and steamed into the Gulf of Mexico. On board were [Higinio] Nino Diaz, who had fought with Raul Castro in the Sierra, a CIA adviser -- an American ma-

36 ³⁶Arthur Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 477f.

37 ³⁷Recorded interview of Robert Kennedy by John Bartlow Martin, March 1, 1964, II, 17, JFK Oral History Program, cited by Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 477.

38 ³⁸Ibid.

39 ³⁹*NYTimes*, April 13, 1961, cited in Smith Thompson, p. 117

rine of Portuguese descent named Curly Sanchez -- and 168 exile troops. In her hold was a "cargo" of arms and ammunition. Destination: Baracoa, a town on the Oriente coast near the Guantanamo naval base.

"The Santa Ana had been leased by the CIA for \$7,000 a month, plus a guarantee of \$100,000 against damage. Diaz and his Movement for the Recovery of the Revolution (MIRR) expeditionary force had been trained in a wilderness camp north of Lake Pontchartrain [*see Chapter 6 -- JAG*]. Their mission, as afterward described in published accounts, was to launch a diversionary strike in the Baracoa vicinity to lure Cuban military units away from the Bay of Pigs.

"But Diaz's men were outfitted with the distinctive uniforms of Castro's rebel army, indicating that their real purpose was a deception of some nature. Recently information has surfaced that the CIA did in fact intend to mount a fake attack on Guantanamo that would make Castro look like the aggressor and justify direct American intervention. U.S. Marines were off Cuba ready to land if the ploy worked. This -- in addition to the twin assassination plots -- was the "something else" the agency hoped for to make the invasion work [and which was hidden from President Kennedy -- JG.]

"The information came out when former CIA employee James B. Wilcott testified in 1978 before a congressional committee. Wilcott, who had served in Tokyo, Washington, and Miami from 1957 to 1966, said the Guantanamo deception was widely discussed by agency personnel at the time. It was conceived, he said, after it became clear that there would be no popular uprising in support of the invasion. "The original invasion plans were then changed to include the creation of an incident that would call for an all-out attack by the U.S. military," he testified. "Kennedy was not to know of this change, and it was not discussed at the November 1960 meeting of the invasion briefing."

"According to Wilcott, 'one such plan was to somehow get Castro to attack Guantanamo by making him believe that rebels were attacking from there. Another was to interpose a ship in a rebel attack and get it blown up. This was said to have been discarded when ONI [Office of Naval Intelligence] got wind of it and became very angry...Just prior to the Bay of Pigs, and some said even earlier, the military intelligence community had been antagonistic to CIA since they were not let in on the invasion as they thought they should have been.'" ⁴⁰

"The night the invasion fleet sailed, the Santa Ana arrived off its landing zone near Baracoa after the long trip from New Orleans. Nino Diaz's men donned their Cuban Army uniforms. But a party that was sent ashore to reconnoiter returned with accounts of strange lights, cigarettes glowing in the dark, and unexpected auto traffic. Diaz, never known for his daring, decided against a landing by his troops. The CIA adviser on board, Curly Sanchez, engaged him in heated argument. But Diaz was the captain. He ordered the Santa Ana out to sea to await the next night." ⁴¹

[Sunday night of Bay of Pigs] "As night fell over Oriente, Nino Diaz again

40 ⁴⁰The Fish is Red, Hinckle and Turner, pp. 80-81

41 ⁴¹The Fish is Red, 84

42

eased the Santa Ana toward shore. The previous night a second attempt at landing had been begun and, in the words of the CIA adviser aboard, 'aborted primarily because of bad leadership.' This time the scouting party returned to the ship with reports of jeeps on the roadways, undoubtedly the soldiers Castro had rushed to the area after hearing of ship sightings on Friday night. Diaz radioed Base Tide that it would be suicidal to land. He was ordered to proceed. He refused. The orders were changed for the Santa Ana to head for the Bay of Pigs and wait offshore for landing instructions. The CIA had lost its planned excuse to send in the Marines, who were aboard ship nearby."

"The munitions in the Santa Ana's hold had been procured by Arcacha and Banister. A week earlier Arcacha and two CIA contract employees, David Ferrie and Gordon Novel [who will both become much more important later in this story -- JAG], had picked them up at a Schlumberger Well Services Company bunker outside New Orleans. Novel later described the bunker as 'a CIA staging point for munitions destined to be used as part of the abortive Bay of Pigs attack.' The munitions were stored temporarily at Novel's and Ferrie's residences -- and [Guy] Banister's office [a former FBI agent, and close collaborator with the CIA who will reappear in the next chapter and later]. A close friend of Banister's recalled seeing numerous wooden crates stenciled 'Schlumberger' in the office. 'Five or six of the boxes were open,' he said. 'Insider were rifle grenades and land mines and some little missiles I had never seen before. When a friend warned Banister that possession of the munitions might bring trouble, Banister said, 'No it was all right, that he had approval from somebody. He said the stuff would just be there overnight, that somebody was supposed to pick it up. He said a bunch of fellows connected with the Cuban deal asked to leave it there overnight.'"

"The Santa Ana mission failed when the rebel imposters got cold feet about attacking U.S. forces directly, which would have provided a pretext for full scale American intervention."

[add two more paragraphs here from p. 88 of The Fish is Red]

- According to Robert Morrow, during the invasion, Morrow was flown in to Cuba on a CIA mission piloted by David Ferrie to look for missiles or installations. Morrow, an electronics technician, was supposed to look for certain specific instrumentation signals.
- E. Howard Hunt, Jr., did not trust Manolo Ray, who had been made part of the government-in-exile team, and fearing a serious leak, he urged that the leaders be put under house arrest, in effect, which was done. The top six leaders met with Frank Bender at the Lexington Hotel, and they were then brought to Opa-Locka and locked up.

43 Fish is Red, p. 88

44

45 The Fish is Red, Hinckle and Turner, p. 204.

46 See The Fish is Red, and Give us this Day, pp. 184f [check the latter]

- The actual landing and invasion. See: Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, pp. 478-480.
- Meanwhile, the Mob is waiting for the invasion to work. In the Bahamas, Joe Rivers, a Lansky lieutenant, was waiting. Georgie Levine and Sally Burns, and Russell Bufalino and James Plumeri were waiting on a boat with a CIA man, waiting to go in and dig up the \$750,000 they had buried in Cuba before their departure.⁴⁶
- Jack Hawkins was the American military commander of the invasion. His nom de guerre was Colonel Frank (he is mentioned on p. 65 of *The Fish is Red*, but not identified as Hawkins; the identity is explained in *Operation Puma*, by Edward B. Ferre (1975/1982).
- On April 15, two pilots from the invasion team flew into Miami, and claimed falsely to be from the Cuban Air Force, having defected from there. This was picked up by the American media, and proposed by Adlai Stevenson at the UN. Hal Hendrix, "a CIA 'asset' who years later, while on the payroll of ITT, was implicated in the overthrow of the Allende government in Chile [they cited Sampson's book on ITT]" wrote on April 15 "it has been clearly established now that there will be no mass invasion against Cuba by the anti-Castro forces gathered at bases in Central American and this country. *The News* has stated this for several months."⁴⁷
- Sunday noon was the time to decide to go ahead with the invasion -- or not. But there were two B-26s left undestroyed on the ground among Castro's air force, the U2 photos showed, and three T33s, in Santiago.
- According to Hunt (cited in *Fish is Red*), there was a request for a second air strike only after it was noticed that several aircraft remained. General Cabell showed up at CIA on Sunday, and he said that only one round of air strikes was approved. An officer at CIA said No, that no limit on the number of strikes had been set -- what was approved was the effort to eliminate the Cuban air force, but Cabell said no. Cabell checked with Rusk, who checked with Kennedy. Kennedy was beginning to get feedback (hot feedback) on the false defection story the day before, and he eventually said No to a second air strike.

On the night of April 16, the invasion went ahead. According to Morrow, it was Cabell who visited the control center at Langley, and who stopped the second wave of air flights that would have finished off the Cuban air force; Cabell stopped the flight, and then despite his efforts, could not get confirmation from Kennedy or from Dean Rusk that this was to be approved.

Again according to Morrow, when Kohly found out that there would not be sufficient air support, he contacted his troops in Cuba and told them to stay away, rather than get massacred.

◆ *Excursus on Trujillo assassination:*

On May 30, a little over five weeks after the Bay of Pigs invasion, Rafael Trujillo was assassinated in the Dominican Republic. Oscar del Valle García has claimed credit for that hit, ac-

47 ⁴⁶*The Fish is Red*, p. 78

48 ⁴⁷*The Fish is Red*, 65f.

ording to Robert Morrow.⁴⁸ Following that assassination, del Valle García was in touch with Antonio Veciana, another Cuban exile leader, in Miami, as Veciana has confirmed.

- ◆ The post-mortem, handled by Robert Kennedy, with the heavy hand of Allen Dulles. Kennedy set up a post-mortem committee to investigate just how many things had gone wrong, and why. He brought General Maxwell Taylor in from out of retirement, and he placed Robert Kennedy on this Cuba Study Group as well, along with -- astonishingly -- Allen Dulles and Admiral Arleigh Burke. The CSG met during April and May of 1961 (just as the Justice Department was getting seriously involved with civil rights in the South).

Robert Kennedy concluded that the Pentagon's input to the operation was thoroughly inadequate. "The plan as [the Pentagon] approved it would have been even more catastrophic than the one that finally went into effect."⁴⁹ RFK found "no explanation as to how [the Cuban Expeditionary Force] could possibly hold this beachhead for a long period of time. How would they get all the ammunition ashore by daybreak. How would they keep their airport from being knocked out. How would they keep soldiers from coming through the swamp after them."⁵⁰

- ◆ Dulles, Cabell, Bissell ousted by Kennedy. Dulles fired 28 November, 1961.

Bissell was replaced as director of Plans by Richard Helms. Thomas Powers has suggested⁵¹ that Bissell was dismissed not merely for the disaster that the Bay of Pigs invasion had been -- but also for failing to eliminate Castro, that is, for failing to carry out the Kennedy brothers' request during the fall of 1961. In December, the Cuba activities were removed from Bissell's

49 ⁴⁸SMD, 56f. Not surprisingly, Arthur Schlesinger's account, which consistently pictures all of Kennedy's actions in the best possible light, suggests that "the Dominicans who killed Trujillo [that] day did so for Dominican reasons with Dominican weapons" (529), after arguing that while Kennedy was pleased by the thought of Trujillo's removal, he had not approved American involvement in a wet affair to remove Trujillo.

50 ⁴⁹June 1, 1961 memorandum of Robert Kennedy to John Kennedy, cited on p. 481, Arthur Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*.

51 ⁵⁰Notes by Robert Kennedy, June 1 and 11, cited by Schlesinger, op. cit., 481.

52 ⁵¹Thomas Powers, *The Man who Kept the Secrets*, 167. As Hinckle and Turner note, "Bissell was chewed out in the Cabinet Room of the White House by both the President and the Attorney General for, as he put it, sitting on his ass and not doing anything about getting rid of Castro and the Castro regime." (p. 106).

hands, and placed in Helms'; effective action was expected immediately⁵² The result was the creation by Helms of Operation Mongoose.

December 2, 1961: Castro declares publicly that he is a Marxist-Leninist Communist.

1961: Operation Patsy (Candela)

During the second half of 1961, the CIA maintained two active anti-Cuban efforts, foreshadowing the massive Mongoose project to begin at the end of the year. The first was Operation Patsy (or *Operación Candela*), an effort to assassinate Fidel and Raul Castro on July 26, 1961, with CIA liaison through Nino Díaz. The operation was run by Alfredo Izaguirre de la Riva, and with what he understood to be Agency approval, he planned an attack on the American military base at Guantánamo simultaneously, giving the American government credible grounds for attacking Cuba at the same time. Izaguirre, however, was arrested by the Cubans four days before the day set for the operation.⁵³

Hinckle and Turner also discuss a network named AMBLOOD active during this period, including one Luis Toroella. This network had cooperation with Ecuadorian military intelligence. The network was rounded up on or before September 24.

According to Hinckle and Turner, this operation actually came from the Office of Naval Intelligence. One of the assassins was Luis "El Gordo" Balbuena, who had long worked for ONI. He knew Fidel and Raul personally, and had worked for the 26 July movement. Another assassin was Alonzo Gonzáles, who was an Episcopalian priest. Gonzáles disappeared without a trace, while Balbuena had to come back to Guantánamo, seeking refuge.

Operation Liborio

Operation Liborio was organized by Antonio Veciana Blanch, under the operative control of "Maurice Bishop," that is, David Atlee Phillips. This operation included another attempt on Castro's life, planned for October 4, 1961. Veciana left the country the day before, fearing for his life because of something a cousin of his, Guillermo Ruiz, told him -- Ruiz was a G-2 (State Security) officer. The plot was foiled by the Cubans on October 3, and one of the conspirators was arrested on a farm where he was in hiding that belonged to Amador Odio, who was himself arrested as well.⁵⁴

1961-1962: Operation Mongoose; JM/WAVE in Miami

53 ⁵²ibid, and also p. 174.

54 ⁵³Claudia Furiati, *ZR Rifle*, p. 36, citing a report of Cuban State Security Department (G-2) on "Patty-Candela" and "Liborio," 1961.

55 ⁵⁴Furiati, *ZR Rifle*, p. 37f. and Fonzi. See also Hinckle and Turner, p. 107.

JM/WAVE was the codename -- the CIA's cryptonym -- for the CIA station in Miami that was responsible for the Cuban effort, a station which grew to be the largest CIA station in the world in the early 1960s, with an annual budget estimated at \$500 million. JM/WAVE was run by a young CIA officer named Ted Shackley, whose career over the next 25 years has included a large number of the most significant (and in the view of some, the most scandalous) episodes in the underworld of international parapolitics. Harvey had been Chief of Station in Berlin, and Shackley had worked in Germany in the CIA during this period, first in Nuremberg, and then in Berlin.⁵⁵ Shackley was appointed to the project by William Harvey in February of 1962. A top aide to Shackley was Thomas Clines, and head of operations was David Sanchez Morales.⁵⁶ The second man in charge under Shackley was Gordon Campbell.⁵⁷

[Within the CIA, Bill Harvey was in charge, and the task force was known as Task Force W, which was located in the basement of CIA at Langley, VA.⁵⁸ 400 CIA officers were eventually assigned to the group.⁵⁹]

On September 6, 1961, Goodwin wrote in a memo to President Kennedy of a campaign aimed "toward the destruction of targets important to the conomy, e.g., refineries, plants using U.S. equipment, etc."⁶⁰ On October 23, 1961, Schlesinger observed in a note to himself, "At bottom, there is a conflict between operational interests and diplomatic interests. CIA wants to subordinate everthing else to tidy and manageable operations; hence it prefers compliant people like Sanjenís [of Operation 40] to proud and independent people, like Miró [Cardona]."⁶¹ On November 4, 1961, Robert Kennedy noted⁶² that "My idea is to stir things up on island with espionage, sabotage, general disorder, run & operated by Cubans themselves with every group but Ba-tistaites and Communists. Do not know if we will be successful in overthrowing Castro but we have nothing to lose in my estimate."

In the National Security Council, President Kennedy had the Special Group (also called the 5412/2 Committee, and later called the 40 Committee), consisting of Maxwell Taylor, McGeorge Bundy, Alexis Johnson, Roswell Gilpatrick, Lyman Lemnitzer, and John McCone;

56 ⁵⁵*Blond Ghost*, by David Corn, 1994.

57 ⁵⁶Fonzi 1993, 371. Hinckle and Turner simply note, "A big, vile-tempered New Mexico Indian named DAve ran the operations branch with a heavy hand." p. 114f.

58 ⁵⁷Hinckle and Turner, p. 114.

59 ⁵⁸*Wilderness of Mirrors*, p. 129.

60 ⁵⁹*Wilderness of Mirrors*, p. 131.

61 ⁶⁰Cited in Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 511.

62 ⁶¹Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 512.

63 ⁶²The note is apparently to himself; it is cited in Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, p. 512.

the Group met regularly on Tuesdays at 2:00. It met later in the afternoon as the Special Group (Augmented), which included Robert Kennedy (see Chapter 3, section xx).⁶³ (It was towards the end of November 1961 that President Kennedy had established the Special Group (Augmented) within the NSC, which would have as its charge the growing effort to overthrow Castro in Cuba, the effort known as Operation Mongoose; General Edward Lansdale was in charge of the Special Group (Augmented).⁶⁴ [Background on Lansdale] Overall responsibility for the post-Bay of Pigs anti-Castro operation was given by President Kennedy to General Edward Lansdale on January 20, 1962⁶⁵. The Cuban Task Force also included George Ball, Richard Goodwin from the White House, and Richard Bissell.⁶⁶

The original Mongoose plan called for a careful schedule according to which Castro would be overthrown in October 1962;⁶⁷ it read the following way: (date?)

- I. Action. March 1962: Start moving in.
- II. Build-up. April-July 1962. Activating the necessary operations inside Cuba for revolution and concurrently applying the vital political, economic, and military-type support from outside Cuba.
- III. Readiness. 1 August 1962. Check for final policy decision.
- IV. Resistance. August-September 1962. Move into guerrilla operations.
- V. Revolt. First two weeks of October 1962. Open revolt and overthrow of the Communist regime.
- VI. Final. During month of October 1962. Establishment of a new government.⁶⁸

According to Robert Smith Thompson -- who is not too clear on his documentation -- the Lansdale project was reduced to a "program for gathering of intelligence" on January 26, 1962, while it was revived two months later, in mid-March.

64 ⁶³Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 513. In between, it was the Special Group (Counterinsurgency), which also included Robert Kennedy; see Chapter 3. However, Thomas Powers (*The Man who Kept the Secrets*) says that the Special Group (CI) met regularly, once a week, starting at 10 p.m. "After an hour or two, half the members would leave and the remainder would convene a meeting of the Special Group Augmented. When that ended the three members of the Special Group for overseeing covert operations would hold its meeting..." (171).

65 ⁶⁴Powers, *The Man Who Kept the Secrets*, 171

66 ⁶⁵Robert Smith Thompson, *The Missiles of October*, p. 137.

67 ⁶⁶ Arthur Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, 511.

68 ⁶⁷Powers, *The Man who kept the secrets*, 172.

69 ⁶⁸Robert Smith Thompson, *The Missiles of October*, p. 140, citing NSA 00178 and 03272.

February 3, 1962, a commercial embargo on Cuba was instituted by the Commerce Department.⁶⁹ Cuba was thrown out of the Organization of American States on February 12, 1962, at the Punta del Este meeting, following heavy lobbying by the United States. In April, Operation Quick Kick gave the American armed forces the opportunity to practice an invasion, using the Puerto Rican coastline facing Cuba.⁷⁰

The Cuban Task Force W, within the CIA, was now headed by William K. Harvey; he helped Shackley get JM/WAVE up and running.⁷¹ But Shackley, as an Agency operative, and Lansdale, as a military man, never got along, and mistrusted each other.⁷²

Second phase of Mob-CIA cooperation: April 1962:

Jim O'Connell and Johnny Roselli transfer \$5,000 worth of materiel to Tony Varona's men. Harvey had gotten the green light from Richard Helms, the new DDO, for a continuation of the Mafia connection, though Helms acknowledged later that he had not gotten the go-ahead from anyone for that -- most especially John McCone, the new DCI.⁷³ But Harvey decided to work that angle only with Roselli, and to leave Giancana and Maheu out of the picture, because of their involvement in the McGuire bugging incident.⁷⁴ (According to Moldea, it was Helms who ordered Harvey to work with Rosselli and cut ties to Giancana and Maheu.⁷⁵)

April 21, 1962: Harvey brought the four poison pills agreed upon to Miami and transferred them to Roselli, who in turn gave them to Tony Varona. It was agreed that Raul Castro and Che Guevara would also be targets of this assassination effort.⁷⁶ The capsules were brought to Cuba by Alejandro Vergara, a Spanish diplomat reportedly working for the CIA.⁷⁷ In early May, Vergara passed the poison to Albert Cruz Caso; they agreed to focus on the Havana Libre Hotel as

70 ⁶⁹Furiati, *ZR Rifle*, p. 42.

71 ⁷⁰Furiati, *ZR Rifle*, p. 43.

72 ⁷¹*Fish is Red*, 123. Schlesinger, p. 514, notes that the Task Force W was the specifically CIA end of the operation, not the entire operation, which was known as Mongoose.

73 ⁷²*The man who knew too much*, p. 245 and passim. See also Schlesinger, *Robert Kennedy*, p. 515, who cites interview material with Lansdale about Harvey. As noted in Chapter 3, Harvey ended up detesting Robert Kennedy "with a purple passion" at least in part because of Kennedy's lack of support for Harvey's cowboy attitude towards sabotage efforts in Cuba.

74 ⁷³*Fish is Red* 124

75 ⁷⁴*The Fish is Red*, p. 124.

76 ⁷⁵Moldea, *The Hoffa Wars*, p. 135.

77 ⁷⁶*Fish is red* 124

78 ⁷⁷Furiati, *ZR Rifle*, p. 47.

the best place to try to poison Castro. They engaged three employees there in the project; they were to wait for a visit by Castro to slip the poison in his drink. Only once did an opportunity arise for one of the three to poison Castro -- in March of 1963, but the capsules had frozen and would not blend properly at the moment when Castro's drink was being prepared.⁷⁸ Castro walked away.

◆ Trafficante met with José Alemán, Jr., late in the summer of 1962.

Alemán was looking for funding for a condominium project in Miami, and thought that Trafficante's connections with Jimmy Hoffa could help bring in some Teamsters money.⁷⁹ The meeting took place in Alemán's Scott Bryant Hotel. Alemán later reported (to the FBI,⁸⁰ in fact) that Trafficante expressed grave concern about the way that the Kennedy brothers were treating Hoffa. Alemán demurred, and said that Kennedy was well-liked, and was likely to be reelected. Trafficante said, "No, José, you don't understand me. Kennedy's not going to make it to the election. He is going to be hit."⁸¹ Alemán's impression was that Hoffa would be involved in the hit.

◆ The Kennedys learn about the CIA-Mafia alliance

In the spring (May 7, 1962⁸²), the FBI learned about the pact between the CIA and the Mafia. Sam Giancana was jealous that his girlfriend Phyllis McGuire was having an affair with Dan Rowan, and he had Maheu put a bug placed in Rowan's room. A maid found it, and it made it to the FBI. Hoover, of course, was delighted to learn of all this, and reported it to Robert Kennedy and John McCone. Kennedy was enraged, and demanded an immediate briefing. Helms directed Sheffield Edwards and Lawrence Houston, the CIA counsel, to provide this briefing, and they did; however, they simply lied to Kennedy, and said that all cooperation between the Mafia and the CIA, and all attempts on Castro's life, had ended a year before, in May of 1961, i.e., right after the Bay of Pigs. Helms even went so far as to have an internal memorandum drawn up to state that the CIA had ended its cooperation.

Hinckle and Turner recount the story thusly: At some point around May 1962, Bobby Kennedy demanded to see Sheffield Edwards to ask him about the information that he had received

79 ⁷⁸Furiati, *ZR Rifle*, p. 48.

80 ⁷⁹Alemán was a cousin of García Banyo, who had helped Trafficante escape from jail in Cuba.

81 ⁸⁰Alemán reported to agents George Davis and Paul Scranton, who reported to their superior, Wesley G. Grapp, in Miami.

82 ⁸¹Davis, *Mafia Kingfish*, 112. See Washington Post 5/16/76 (cited in Mark North), and HSCA V 310, 317, 319 (also cited in Mark North). As Blakey/Billings point out (p. 281), Alemán confirmed this story to the HSCA in March of 1977, but he retracted it in 1978, saying no longer that it was a clear threat to Kennedy's life, but rather that Kennedy would be "hit by a lot of votes," whatever that might mean. Alemán made it clear that he feared for his life at the time.

83 ⁸²Date given in Morrow, *The Senator Must Die*, 60

from J. Edgar Hoover that the CIA was involved in assassination plots with the Mafia. This had come to Hoover's attention because they were going to move against Maheu in the Las Vegas phone bugging affair, while Maheu claimed involvement in affairs of national security. Edwards specifically told Robert Kennedy at that time that the assassination program had been terminated. Edwards even went so far as to write up a memo for the files in which he noted, falsely, that Harvey was dropping his involvement in assassination plans, a point which made Harvey very angry at the time of the 1975 Senate Intelligence Committee interviews.⁸³

◆ Other efforts in Cuba in early 1962.

Juan Manuel Guillot Castellanos worked with the MRR (Manuel Artime's organization), and was arrested in Cuba on May 29, 1962, which allowed the Cuban government to learn about various terrorist plans that he was helping to prepare for, including attacks on several cities and on coastal locations. Detachments were to be coming from the Florida keys, with militants trained by the International Anti-Communist Brigades of Frank Sturgis and Pedro Díaz Lanz.

◆

Reports came back to Harvey during the May to September period that the poison pills, and the assassination squads, were in place in Cuba.⁸⁴ In a meeting of the Operation Mongoose team on August 10, 1962, the proposal to eliminate Castro was discussed openly and strongly favored by members of the Pentagon and the CIA.⁸⁵ According to Lansdale, "At the time, we were getting intelligence accumulating very quickly of something very different taking place in Cuba than we had expected, which was the Soviet technicians starting to come in and the possibilities of Soviet missiles being placed there."⁸⁶

DRE: a raid in late August 1962 into the harbor of Havana, shelling a theater where Castro had spoken frequently.⁸⁷

On September 5, 1962, Schlesinger sent a memo to President Kennedy warning of what he thought was an ill-advised project to support an uprising in Cuba scheduled to take place within a few weeks. Kennedy responded that he knew of no such planned uprising, but that he would check with the CIA.⁸⁸

In early October, 1962 (just prior to the Cuban Missile Crisis), Robert Kennedy called for greater involvement in sabotage activities through the Special Group (Augmented) at the NSC;

84 ⁸³*Fish is red*, 126

85 ⁸⁴*Fish is red*, 126

86 ⁸⁵*The Man who knew too much*, 244

87 ⁸⁶*The man who knew too much*, 244, citing the Senate Assassinations report, p. 167

88 ⁸⁷Fonzi 1993 p. 57

89 ⁸⁸*The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 246, citing Beschloss, *The Crisis Years*, p. 412.

the Group called for "new and imaginative approaches with the possibility of getting rid of the Castro regime."⁸⁹

Khrushchev cited a message from Robert Kennedy, delivered through Anatoly Dobrynin,

Even though the president himself is very much against starting a war over Cuba, an irreversible chain of events could occur against his will. That is why the president is appealing directly to Chairman Khrushchev for his help in liquidating the conflict. If the situation continues much longer, the president is not sure that the military will not overthrow him and seize power. The American Army could get out of control.⁹⁰

October 1962: Cuban missile crisis

On June 10, 1962, after prolonged discussions with Fidel Castro and with his own advisers, Khrushchev decided to strengthen the Russian forces in Cuba, and to install medium range ballistic missiles there.⁹¹ By July 15, the indications were that the materiel was steaming across the Atlantic.⁹²

A number of sources of intelligence were bringing indications of a build-up of advanced missile technology in Cuba, including reports from the DRE underground in Cuba. Beginning in July and continuing for several months after that, French intelligences sources inside Cuba were reporting the presence of Soviet technicians and Soviet missiles.⁹³ An Airgram addressed to the CIA from the American embassy on August 31, 1962 reported Soviet troops in Cuba and thousands of Soviet technicians.⁹⁴ Reports from Kohly's underground in Cuba reported Soviet IRBMs, and these went to the White House, but there was no response. Nagell⁹⁵ believes that they started being delivered in late June or early July. De Vosjoli,⁹⁶ likewise, received reports beginning in July of Soviets bringing in missiles. But it was the CIA's U-2 photographs of the missiles on October 15, 1962, which was the immediate cause of the real crisis of October.

90 ⁸⁹City in Schlesinger, p. 517, from Church Committee, *Assassination Plots*, p. 147.

91 ⁹⁰Cited in Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, p. 246, citing James G. Blight and David A. Welch, *On the Brink* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1990), p. 264.

92 ⁹¹Robert Smith Thompson, *The Missiles of October*, p.156.

93 ⁹²Thompson, *The Missiles of October*, p. 156

94 ⁹³*Lamia*, 295-296.

95 ⁹⁴Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 234.

96 ⁹⁵Russell, 243.

97 ⁹⁶*Lamia*, p. 295ff.

By October 1962, the British had overflight intelligence that led to this conclusion, which they passed on to Washington.⁹⁷ By October 10, 1962, Senator Kenneth Keating said publicly that he believed that offensive missiles were in place in Cuba. Several days later, U-2 overflight photos revealed Soviet missiles on Cuban soil. Martínez continued during this time to pilot raids against the Cuban coastline.

On October 22, President Kennedy took to the airwaves and announced a total blockade of Cuba as a response to the provocative steps that Russia had taken in placing offensive missiles in place in Cuba. This was the beginning of the showdown that has come to be known as the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The hawks during the crisis were Dean Acheson, Maxwell Taylor, the Joint Chiefs (except for Shoup), McCloy, Nitze, Dillon and McCone, while the doves were McNamara, Gilpatric, Ball, Llewellyn Thompson, Sorensen, Stevenson, and Lovett.⁹⁸

To the Kennedys' surprise, consternation, and deep anger, Bill Harvey continued during this period to send coastline raiding teams into Cuba, as many as 60 agents.⁹⁹ Robert Kennedy's reaction was great anger.

At that time, it was apparently clear to the President that there was a strong contingent in both the Pentagon and the CIA that would be satisfied with nothing less than a major incursion into Cuba to get rid of the offensive missiles and, at the same time, a complete cleaning out of the Castro regime. The more serious the crisis became, Kennedy realized, the more likely it was that inaction on his part would lead inexorably to a situation in which the military decided to take matters into their own hands.

Bill Harvey was summarily removed from Operation Mongoose after his cowboy stunting during the Crisis, and he was replaced by Desmond FitzGerald. Operation MONGOOSE per se was disbanded,¹⁰⁰ but FitzGerald's efforts to eliminate Castro did not abate. FitzGerald, for example, backed a plan to have James Donovan present Castro with a diving suit contaminated with various biological agents. FitzGerald, according to one Agency source cited in Fonzi 1993, was a strong supporter of David Atlee Phillips' cowboy grandstanding.

Return of the Bay of Pigs exiles

After the Missile Crisis, the United States agreed to arrange for payment to Cuba in kind for the release of the Bay of Pigs prisoners, an operation that was orchestrated by James Donovan, acting outside of the official channels of administration. (See Schlesinger for a detailed account). On December 29, a crowd of 40,000 rallied at the Orange Bowl in Miami, and they heard Kennedy say that "I can assure you that this flag [a flag that Manuel Artime had given Kennedy] will

98 ⁹⁷Morrow *The Senator Must Die*, p.46.

99 ⁹⁸Schlesinger *Robert Kennedy* p. 546.

100 ⁹⁹*The man who knew too much*, 247.

101 ¹⁰⁰Russell, p. 290

be returned to the Brigade in a free Havana." ?Rumors of a bomb at that rally? See Russell, p. 266.

- Enrique "Harry" Ruiz-Williams:
Jim Hougan notes that

Ruiz-Williams was perhaps the leading spokesman for those anti-Castro Cubans who had been imprisoned on the Isle of Pines following the CIA's unsuccessful invasion of Cuba. After the prisoners' negotiated release in December 1962 it was Ruiz-Williams who represented them in talks with the U.S. government. At the time, the Kennedy administration was equally concerned with resettling and controlling the men, while continuing also to mount covert operations against Cuba under the rubric of Second Naval Guerrilla. Roughly half of the veterans were inducted into the Army at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, where they were given special military training. The remaining veterans, men such as Watergate burglar Eugenio Martinez, were either "pensioned off" or placed under contract to the CIA. [fn: Some of the men who played important roles in the government resettlement operation were Joseph Califano (later attorney for the DNC), who was special assistant to Secretary of the Army Cyrus Vance in 1963; Alexander Butterfield and Alexander Haig (respectively, the custodian of the presidential taping system and deputy to Henry Kissinger), who were military assistants to Califano; and private investigator A. J. Woolston-Smith...].

According to Ruiz-Williams, Hunt and McCord were his handlers during the time that he worked as a CIA contract agent with the Second Naval Guerrilla operation. Hunt was Ruiz-Williams' liaison to CIA headquarters, while McCord performed the same function with respect to the brigade veterans at Fort Jackson....There were...:"dozens of meetings and countless telephone discussions" between himself and the two CIA men, with the meetings taking place in Washington and New York."¹⁰¹

1962-1963 Continuing hostilities

The Cuban Missile Crisis led to the appearance of an agreement between the U.S. and the Soviet Union that would include a cessation of attacks on Cuba by the CIA, but this was contradicted by actual U.S. policy. In the spring of 1963, the Standing Group on Cuba authorized ongoing attacks on Cuba, and this policy was ratified by President Kennedy on June 19, in a deci-

102 ¹⁰¹Jim Hougan, *Secret Agenda*, p. 20-21, citing also *The Fish is Red*.

sion that extended the range of targets in Cuba that were to be considered suitable so as to include property that had belonged to American concerns before the Castro revolution.¹⁰²

The ongoing concern with active intervention in Cuba appears not to have been known to the general Cuban exile community. Kennedy visited the exile militia returned by Castro after the Cuban Missile Crisis, and according to some accounts, the exiles' welcome was chilly, despite Kennedy's assurances that they would be returned to a free Havana -- a chilliness due to the belief that Kennedy had made a no-invasion pledge to Khrushchev and Castro in return for the removal of the missiles in Cuba.

Indeed, the Coast Guard, Customs, and the FBI did step up their efforts to prevent a number of exile groups from making unauthorized raids on Cuba throughout the spring of 1963; this apparent appeasement on Kennedy's part was the cause of Miró Cardona's resignation from the leadership of the CRC, noted earlier; Antonio Macea took over the position. On May 1, the U.S. government halted its funding of the CRC;¹⁰³ Macea in turn stepped down as leader of the CRC, and was replaced by Antonio de Varona.

Manuel Artime was invited by Robert Kennedy to a skiing weekend in New Hampshire in mid-January, 1963. Kennedy reportedly gave Artime his word that the U.S. would provide Artime with weapons and necessary material to undertake an invasion of Cuba if it were conducted from a base outside of the United States. He came to feel later, however, that that promise was betrayed.¹⁰⁴

....

March - May 1963:

British police, tipped off by the State Department, arrest a group of anti-Castro guerrillas in the Bahamas. Customs Service agents raid the militants' camp at No Name Key. And (see Chapter 6) the camp on Lake Pontchartrain is raided.

Alpha 66 held a press conference in March 1963 to announced an attack they had mountd on a Soviet ship docked in Cuba, at a time when Kennedy was in Costa Rica, seeking support for his Cuba policy.¹⁰⁵

- ◆ April 1963
Guerrilla raids on an oil refinery near Havana.
- ◆ May 1963
Guerrilla raid on a military camp near Havana.

103 ¹⁰²Hinckle and Turner, 144.

104 ¹⁰³Blakey/Billings 182

105 ¹⁰⁴Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, p. 292, based on an interview of Artime by Russell.

106 ¹⁰⁵Fonzi 132.

But some in the intelligence community believed that the missiles had not been removed from Cuba, as Khrushchev had promised Kennedy they would be. Kennedy had agreed to remove a number of older missiles from Turkey, and had agreed to a hands-off policy -- no invasions -- for Cuba. The intelligence and military communities were not pleased with the hand dealt to the United States.

In early 1963, despite Kennedy's hands-off policy toward Cuba, efforts began again to harass Castro, with the possible goal of setting up a new invasion team. This led to increased tension between the Cuban exile leaders and the Kennedy brothers. On March 17, SNFE/Alpha 66 attacked a military post and two Soviet freighters, and 13 days later, in response, the State and Justice Departments issued a statement to the effect that the United States would make every effort to stop future such actions. In early April, according to Morrow, six hundred agents were in Miami, trying to shut down the exiles' anti-Castro efforts.

June 1963: Bayo-Pawley affair

Robert Morrow:

In 1963, Morrow, working under Tracy Barnes's direction, was involved in a CIA project to produce counterfeit Cuban money, as part of an effort to destabilize Cuba's economy. (As we noted above, Barnes had been involved in the Bay of Pigs operation as the number two man, and he had subsequently moved to set up the Domestic Operations Division.)

No Name Key group: Interpen

A number of indications suggest that the Interpen group on No Name Key were the most important group of Cuban exile militia involved in the Kennedy assassination.

Col. William Bishop was the military leader and instructor, according to documents provided by Gary Shaw to Dick Russell, who interviewed Bishop in 1990 (It was Robert Morrow who originally put Russell in touch with Bishop).¹⁰⁶ Bishop had served under Charles Willoughby, in Military Intelligence, during the Korean War.

Later Cuban exile organizations

Paulino Sierra Martínez was the organizer behind a second generation organization of militant Cuban exiles. Sierra Martínez was a lawyer who had worked in the Batista administration, and had become a successful lawyer in Chicago, following stints as a judo instructor and as a translator.¹⁰⁷ He was assistant to William Browder, himself the general counsel of the Union

107 ¹⁰⁶Russell, 505ff. Russell notes. Russell notes that Bishop's real name may have been John Adrian O'Hare. Bishop was reportedly born in 1923 in George; he died in 1992, after a long bout with cancer. Russell discusses Bishop's reasons for permitting the interview.

108 ¹⁰⁷The following material is based on Blakey-Billings 195

Tank Car Company. In May of 1963, just after the U.S. government had stopped its support of the CRC, Sierra Martínez arrived in Miami, and met with leaders of the fractious Cuban exile organizations. By July he had put together what he called the Junta de Gobierno de Cuba en el Exilio, an umbrella group which he said would have the financial support of American businessmen from Chicago, and even some high-ranking American army and naval officers. But the identity of the sources of funding -- and most importantly, whether these backers were out of the organized crime syndicate was..... William Trull, an American whose credentials are uncertain, participated with Sierra Martínez in some of the meetings with the Miami Cuban exile groups, and Trull indicated that Sierra Martínez had acknowledged the participation of Los Vegas and Cleveland gambling figures in raising some \$14 million for the organization. But Sierra Martínez continued to be supported financially by Union Tank Car during the summer and fall of 1963, and he traveled in Latin America in July with the vice-secretary general of the Junta, Felipe Rivero, visiting Nicaragua and Colombia, and in August he purchased arms from Rich Rauchli, an arms dealer. [More on Rauchli, cofounder of Minuteman, arrested at Pontchartrain, etc.] Sierra Martínez was also in contact with several important Miami area Cuban exile leaders, including: Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo (Second Front of the Escambray); Tony Cuesta (Commandos L); and Antonio Veciana (Alpha 66).

HSCA (vol. 10, p. 68-69) on Manuel Artime's efforts in 1963:

Although Brigade 2506 officially ceased to exist after December 1962,(32) Manuel Artime, who had become known as the CIA's "golden boy,"(33) was soon scouting around Latin America for sites on which to establish guerrilla training camps. By October 1963, he had established four bases, two in Costa Rica and two in Nicaragua.(34) Artime's 300-man force consisted mainly of veterans of the brigade.(35) Artime would later admit that his resources included two large ships, eight small vessels, two speed boats, three planes, and more than 200 tons of weapons and armaments and about \$250,000 in electronic equipment. (36) During the year of his operation, Artime was able to conduct four major operations, three of which failed; the mistaken shelling of a Spanish cargo ship (which caused an international uproar); an infiltration mission in which all the participants were captured; an unsuccessful assassination attempt on Castro;(37) and finally, a sixman infiltration mission that did succeed.(38)

(244) Although Artime received U.S. Government support, there remained the question of whether President Kennedy was knowledgeable of or approved Artime's anti-Castro operations after the Cuban missile crisis. Following the assassination of both John F. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy, Artime said publicly that both the President and his brother were responsible for his establishing the Latin American bases.(39) He said that after his return from prison in Cuba, he met President Kennedy in West Palm Beach, Fla., and that Kennedy referred him to his brother.(40) Artime said he met Robert Kennedy in Washington and that then Attorney General promised him military aid if he, Artime, could get the bases.(41)

(245) Artime claimed that his anti-Castro operations from the bases ceased "when Bobby Kennedy separated from the Johnson administration."(42) Nevertheless, in December 1964, the Costa Rican police ordered the camps shut down when it uncovered a

\$50,000 contraband whisky operation involving a plan from Artime's group. The camps in Nicaragua were also closed, although Artime kept close personal ties to that country by becoming a beef broker for Nicaraguan President Gen. Anastasio Somoza, the country's largest beef producer.(43)

Alpha 66

Antonio Veciana, an early CIA recruit in Cuba as we have seen, fled to Miami in 1961 (date), where he was again in contact with "Morris Bishop", his American case officer in Cuba ("Bishop" has been widely speculated to be David Phillip Atlee; that this is in fact correct is convincingly argued by Gaeton Fonzi, the investigator for the House Select Committee¹⁰⁸). "Bishop" helped him established contacts with other anti-Castro exiles, forming a group that evolved into *Alpha 66*, a paramilitary group whose leadership included Eloy Gutierrez Monoyo and Antonio (Tony) Cuesta as well, operating with the direct support of JM/WAVE, the Miami CIA station directed by Ted Shackley. Alpha 66 as such was set up in the summer of 1962,¹⁰⁹ with discussions between Veciana and "Bishop" beginning as early as December 1961.¹¹⁰ Veciana and his group were encouraged by "Bishop" to work on plots to assassinate Castro.¹¹¹

Alpha 66 later merged with Rolando Masferrer's group (see above).

In March, 1963, a splinter group named "Commands L" led by Tona Cuesta¹¹² took the responsibility for a number of raids against Cuba, attacking a Soviet military post, and shelling two Soviet freighters. The U.S. government took steps to crack down on these activities, though according to Veciana, they were organized by "Maurice Bishop", in order to sabotage what was perceived to be a no-invasion policy towards Cuba of President Kennedy.¹¹³

There was a joint operation by Alpha 66/SNFE/MRP in mid to late 1963 with a center at 3128 Harlandale, in Dallas [a lot more on this] . According to a Dallas police report, the Cubans left the house sometime between the 15 and the 23rd of November -- and that Oswald had been

109 ¹⁰⁸Fonzi, *The Last Investigation*, passim.

110 ¹⁰⁹*The Man Who Knew Too Much*, 251, and see also *New York Times*, Sept 14, and October 15, 1962, and *New York Journal-American*, Sept 28, 1962, all three cited by Russell p. 757.

111 ¹¹⁰Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, p. 296.

112 ¹¹¹The Man Who Knew Too Much, p. 296.

113 ¹¹²The Man Who Knew Too Much, p. 301

114 ¹¹³The Man Who Knew Too Much, p. 297.

to the house.¹¹⁴ Lonnie Hudkins, a reporter, interviewed people in Dallas after the assassination, and he was told that Oswald had attended a party at the Harlandale house on Wednesday, November 20.¹¹⁵ [Accounts that this was John Thomas Masen.]

CIA Anti-Kennedy sentiment after the Bay of Pigs failure

Mark Lane cites two descriptions written by CIA officers after the Bay of Pigs fiasco:

David Phillips: "I went home. I peeled off my socks like dirty layers of skin -- I realized I hadn't changed them for a week. Helen tried to feed me, but I couldn't eat. I bathed, then fell into bed to sleep for several hours. On awakening I tried to eat again, but couldn't. Outside, the day was sheer spring beauty. I carried a portable radio to the yard at the rear of the house and listened to the gloomy newscasts about Cuba as I sat on the ground, my back against a tree.

"Helen came out from the house and handed me a martini, a large one. I was half-drunk when I finished. I went to the house for the gin bottle, the vermouth, the ice, and sat again with my back to the tree. I could look up and see a clear blue sky above the foliage. Suddly my stomach churned. I was sick. My body heaved.

"Then I began to cry.

"Helen came out of the house and pleaded with me to come in.

"Get the hell away,' I sobbed.

"It was growing dark. Helen came out of the house again with a blanket, which she draped around my shoulders.

"I wept for two hours. I was sick again, then drunk again. I kept thinking of other tears, in another place, of a colonel from St. Cyr whom I had made weep.

"Oh shit! Shit!"

Another is from Howard Hunt:

The Invasion was over.

Wading into the water that afternoon, San Roman sent a final bitter message: I have nothing to fight with. Am taking to the woods. I cannot wait for you.

Silently we wept. Never before had I seen a room filled with men in tears. I was sure Artime and all the others were dead, and I blamed myself for having been party to their betrayal. I heard Cabell's name go around the room, a curse attached to it with nearly every repetition.

115 ¹¹⁴Russell, p. 541.

116 ¹¹⁵Russell, p. 541.

Appendix: Cuban Exile Organizations

While there were countless anti-Castro organizations during this period, the most important was the umbrella organization cobbled together by E. Howard Hunt, Jr., for the CIA in May of 1960, called the FRD, the Frente Revolucionario Democrático, later reorganized and renamed the CRC -- the Cuban Revolutionary Council. This was the organization that undertook the Bay of Pigs invasion, through its military wing, known as the 2506 Brigade. The military leader of the brigade was José ("Pepe") Perez San Roman, a graduate of Cuba's military academy who had also undergone U.S. Army officer training at Fort Benning, Ga.¹¹⁶

The original FRD integrated five principle groups and their leaders:

- Aureliano Sanchez Arango of the Triple A group;
- Justo Carrillo of Montecristi;
- Antonio de Varona of Rescate, who had been prime minister under Prío Socarrás, the strong man who preceded Batista in power in Cuba; he served as General Coordinator. [Varona had the backing of Santos Trafficante, Jr., and other leaders of organized crime at this time, with the understanding that a return to Cuba of the FRD would mean a return to the lucrative gambling business from which Trafficante and his colleagues had been rudely removed by Castro.¹¹⁷ Varona was also a business associate of Lansky and Trafficante in the ANSAN Corporation, which acquired southern Florida real estate through extortion]
- Manuel Artime of the Revolutionary Recovery Movement (MRR); and
- Dr. José Ignacio Rasco of the Christian Democratic Movement (MDC)¹¹⁸

Additional members of the leadership included:

- Dr. Antonio Maceo, a noted Cuban surgeon;
- Carlos Hevia (former Cuban president)
- Rafael Sardinas.

Carlos Bringuier, who plays a role in the story to follow about Oswald, was the Secretary for Publicity and Propaganda (though the HSCA report said that Bringuier was not a member of the CRC¹¹⁹).

117 ¹¹⁶HSCA 10:66.

118 ¹¹⁷1975 Senate Intelligence Committee report, cited in *The Fish is Red*, p. 75.

119 ¹¹⁸HSCA X :57.

120 ¹¹⁹According to PD Scott 1993, p. 81, citing 10 AH 62, which says:
(229) After Carlos Bringuier and Oswald had been arrested in a street scuffle, Bartes appeared in court with Bringuier.(24) Although not a CRC member, Bringuier was respected by Bartes and it was as a show of support that Bartes appeared at Bringuier's hearing.(25)

Of these, it was Manuel Artime who came to be known as the CIA's "golden boy". The FRD was the Cuban government in exile, a creation of the CIA, a creation that was the work of E. Howard Hunt, Jr., a career officer of the CIA in May 1960.¹²⁰

Another faction was added to the leadership in March of 1961, just before the Bay of Pigs invasion. This was Manuel (Manolo) Ray Rivero's group, the MRP (Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo). It was at this point that leadership of the FRD passed from Antonio de Varona to José Miró Cardona. Shortly before the Bay of Pigs invasion, the CRC was set up as a larger organization within which the FRD was situated, though after the invasion, Ray and the MRP withdrew from the CRC, and the FRD became essentially identical to the CRC.¹²¹

At the same time, the CRC was joined by Revolutionary Action, and a faction of the 30th of November Movement, Rolando Masferrer's group.

◆ *Manolo Ray Rivero*

Manolo Ray was an early supporter of Fidel Castro, responsible for general strikes in the city of Havana while Castro led the fight against Batista. Ray was Castro's first Minister of Public Works, but he became disillusioned with the government, and defected to the United States in the middle of 1960, where he organized the *MRP*, the Movimiento Revolucionario del Pueblo, viewed widely as a left-oriented Cuban exile group. Ray was left in general out of the loop by the CIA -- most noticeably during the preparations for the Bay of Pigs operation -- and as noted above Ray resigned from the MRP after the Bay of Pigs disaster, and established a new organization called JURE.¹²² Amador Odio-Padron and Sara del Tomo were closely allied with Manolo Ray's efforts. Odio-Padron and his wife were both jailed by Castro, though his wife was later released.¹²³ The group's leader was Reynaldo Gonzales, who was arrested by Cuban authorities for involvement in an assassination attempt on Castro. Gonzales was found in the Odios' country house, and they were arrested for their involvement as well.¹²⁴ Manolo Ray withdrew the MRP from the CRC after the Bay of Pigs fiasco.¹²⁵

◆ *Manuel Artime*

Manuel Artime, a medical doctor from the Oriente province, was a representative of the National Agrarian Reform Institute immediately after the revolution, and he found himself in dis-

2 ¹²⁰The Fish is Red, p. 77, and p. 47.

3 ¹²¹HSCA X:58

4 ¹²²Evica, p. 120

5 ¹²³Evica, p. 120

6 ¹²⁴Antonio Veciana had organized this assassination attempt, according to Blakey-Billings, p. 198; see below on Veciana and Alpha 66.

7 ¹²⁵HSCA 10:59.

agreement with Castro's policies, a disagreement that led him to establishing in Cuba an underground group called the Movimiento de Recuperacion Revolucionaria (MRR). In 1960, Artime went to Miami, and became a civilian leader of the 2506 Brigade. He was imprisoned after the Bay of Pigs invasion.

The MRR benefited from the support of a number of Catholic organizations: the Young Catholic Students (JEC), the Young Catholic University Students (JUC), and the Young Catholic Workers (JOC).¹²⁶

◆ *Miró Cardona*

Miró Cardona led the CRC until the spring of 1963, when he resigned protest of the U.S. government's unwillingness to support the incursions into Cuba; his position was assumed by Antonio Maceo, with Varona a major force in the organization. American funds were reportedly cut off on May 1, 1963.(HSCA 10:59). Varona then became the official head of the CRC in June 1963, after an embarrassment caused by the CRC's fraudently claiming an invasion of Cuba.

In the fall of 1963, however, Artime was still running guerrilla camps in Nicaragua. He later was engaged in beef-exporting with Somoza.¹²⁷

◆ *Sergio Arcacha Smith*

Arcacha Smith was a lawyer who had served as a diplomat in the Cuban government prior to Castro's rise to power. He fled to New Orleans after Castro deposed Batista, and along with David Ferrie (see Chapter 6 below), founded the Cuban Democratic Liberation Front. He was close to Guy Banister as well (see Chapter 6). He served as the New Orleans delegate to the CRC for a period of about six months, and was then replaced by Luis Rabel.¹²⁸

◆ *Antonio Veciana*

Veciana was an accountant and business in Cuba at the time of the revolution. He worked for Julio Lobo, the Sugar King of Cuba (Lobo served as a CIA front in negotiating the release of the Bay of Pigs prisoners¹²⁹),¹³⁰ at the Banco Financiero in Havana.¹³¹ In the middle of 1960, he was approached by a man who identified himself as one Maurice Bishop, who interested him in becoming trained to participate in underground anti-Castro activities. Veciano became a leader

8 ¹²⁶Fuliati, *ZR Rifle*, p. 49.

9 ¹²⁷Fonzi 1993 280.

10 ¹²⁸HSCA X 61

11 ¹²⁹Fonzi 1993 297

12 ¹³⁰Fonzi, p. 121.

13 ¹³¹Fonzi, p. 128.

in the operations of the MRP, Manolo Ray's group.¹³² His activities in Cuba came to a halt in October of 1961, after his wife and children had left Cuba. He was involved in an assassination plot against Castro, during the course of which he realized that he had fallen under the suspicion of Cuban security. He fled the country the day before the planned assassination, but the attempt did not come off. After becoming installed in Miami, he was approached by Maurice Bishop again, and with Bishop's help, set up Alpha 66. Eloy Gutierrez Menoyo was the military leader.

Much later, in 1968, Maurice Bishop helped Veciana to obtain a position with the Agency for International Development in La Paz, Bolivia. His work there consisted of carrying out activities directed by Bishop against Castro and other Communist interest.¹³³ In 1971, he organized an assassination attempt on Castro's life during a visit of Castro's to Chile. The following year, Bishop severed their relationship, giving Veciana \$253,000 in cash for his efforts.¹³⁴

The story of the effort to identify Maurice Bishop is a long one, recounted in detail in Fonzi 1993, ending with the conclusion (a compelling conclusion, in this writer's opinion) that Bishop was David Atlee Phillips.

◆ Rolando Masferrer and Eladio del Valle

Masferrer was a senator from Oriente Province in Cuba, and he reportedly maintained a private militia, allegedly supporting organized crime's interests in Cuba. He escaped from Castro's Cuba along with Eladio del Valle.

"No Name Key mercenary Gerry Patrick Hemming told Florida reporter Bob Martin that, in 1959, Oswald, after leaving the Marine Corps, had been turned down as a member by Rolando Masferrer's group in Los Angeles. At that time, it was known as the Second National Front of the Escambre. By late 1962, it would have combined with Antonio Veciano's Alpha 66, calling itself SNFE/Alpha 66"¹³⁵

Masferrer's organization (date) was known as the SNFE (Second National Front of the Escambre) or the "30th of November" group, which operated into 1963, and merged with Alpha 66 to become SNFE/Alpha 66. Masferrer operated as the recipient of funding from the Syndicate in New Orleans in 1963.¹³⁶ In the mid 70s, he was killed by a bomb in his car.

- Eladio del Valle

14 ¹³²Fonzi, 130.

15 ¹³³Fonzi, 136.

16 ¹³⁴Fonzi, 139.

17 ¹³⁵Morrow, *The Senator Must Die*, p. 82

18 ¹³⁶According to William Bishop, a CIA agent who worked with Masferrer during this period. Russell, *The Man Who Knew Too Much*, p. 511.

Del Valle was a city councilman in Havana before Castro gained power in Cuba; he fled the country as Castro approached the city in 1959, leaving along with Rolando Masferrer, who he remained close to. He had made a fortune in smuggling American cigarettes and other items, working together with Santos Trafficante, Jr.

Del Valle worked with David Ferrie in 1960 flying into Cuba.¹³⁷ "In January 1961, shortly before the Bay of Pigs invasion, del Valle told the New York Daily News that he had a fighting force of '8,500 men in Cuba and a skeleton force of about 200 working in Miami and Central America.'"¹³⁸

Del Valle was also the leader of the Free Cuba Committee in Florida, which "reportedly had links to Santos Trafficante."¹³⁹

As we will see in the next chapter, Robert Morrow says that he received a request from del Valle in September 1963 for some walkie-talkies that Morrow believes were used in the assassination.

Del Valle was found dead on the night of February 22, 1967, beaten and shot, on the floor of his automobile. At the time, Jim Garrison was attempting to [subpoena?/question?] him (see chapter x below); he was killed on the same night that David Ferrie died.

◆ Rolando Cubela: AM/LASH

Cubela was a commander of Castro's forces during the revolutionary period, but he later became disillusioned with Castro, and offered his services to the CIA.

Desmond FitzGerald met with Cubela on Oct 29, 1963 in Paris; he said he was Robert Kennedy's personal representative (which must have been galling, since he had a particularly low estimate of Robert Kennedy). FitzGerald acceded to Cubela's request for arms to be used in an assassination attempt, and the two of them had a final meeting on November 22, 1963.

The AMLASH operation continued through June of 1964, and later. The following winter, Cubela met with Manuel Artime, and got from him a sight and a silencer for his rifle. In June of 1965, the CIA closed its contacts with Cubela, at just the moment when another assassination attempt on Castro was about to take place. March 1, 1966, Cubela was arrested, and eventually imprisoned; today he is said to live in Spain.¹⁴⁰

19 ¹³⁷Russell, p, 293, citing *Fish is Red*, p. 206 and Morrow, *THE SENATOR MUST DIE*, p. 31, 73. See also Morrow's *First Hand Knowledge*, where he says he brought del Valle out of Cuba during the Bay of Pigs operation.

20 ¹³⁸Russell, p. 293, citing *New York Daily News*, January 8, 1961.

21 ¹³⁹Summers, *Conspiracy*, 347; link to Trafficante: "FBI 105-95677, quoting *Diario Las Americas*, February 25, 1967; " on Ferrie: *El Tiempo* (New York), March 1967.

22 ¹⁴⁰Russell, p. 535f.

◆ DRE (Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil)

spokesman: José Antonio Lanusa; sponsor of raid in August 1962 into Havana harbor (see below). Leader: Carlos Bringuier (see interaction with Oswald in Chapter 6). DRE was under the general umbrella of JM/WAVE in Miami.

◆ Tony Varona

Former premier of Cuba under Prío Socarrás, and a leader of the Autentico Party, and first leader of MRD; he resigned to let Miró Cardona become the leader of the new CRC, though he later became leader of the CRC just before its demise in 1963. Varona was brought into the CIA-mafia assassination plotting by Santos Trafficante and "Macho" Gener, a Cuban.¹⁴¹ Varona was given poison pills for Castro by Rosselli, but he did not use them before leaving from Cuba.¹⁴² Varona "represented the interests and fortune of Prío Socarrás, whose investments were intermingled with Lansky's."¹⁴³ In March 1962, Bill Harvey passed more poison pills to Rosselli, who handed them on to Varona; these pills were to target Castro, Raul Castro, and Che Guevara.¹⁴⁴

◆ Mario Kohly

In October 1960 [according to Morrow], Nixon, Cabell, and Kohly met on the golf course at the Burning Tree Club in Washington, and Nixon laid out a plan to Kohly by which Castro would be assassinated, and the left-leaning Cuban exile leaders of the CRC (in Kohly's view: Miró Cardona; Manuel Ray; Tony Varona) would be eliminated as soon as a new government had taken control, with Kohly becoming the new head of state. In return, Kohly would guarantee the support of his men in the Escambrey Mountains. The leaders in question -- those who would be killed, including Miró Cardona -- were to be kept aside at Opa Locka Air Force base by the CIA during the invasion, and then brought to Cuba by the CIA, where they would be killed by Masferrer's men; the job was to be organized by Oscar del Valle García (see Morrow, SMD, p. 40, who cites a videotaped interview with del Valle García in 1983) The men were in fact taken to Opa Locka on the night of the invasion, and held incommunicado, but one of them, Tony Verona, escaped on April 19, and telephoned the White House; Kennedy sent A.A. Schlesinger and A.A. Berle to rescue them, and to bring them to Washington on an Air Force airplane. (Peter Wyden's account includes the detaining of the CRC leaders, and their meeting with Kennedy when they were released and brought to Washington, but it offers no account as to why the CRC leaders were kept incommunicado during the invasion, and notes that Kennedy appeared to be shocked when informed of this.

23 ¹⁴¹P D Scott, 1993, p. 90

24 ¹⁴²Moldea, *Hoffa Wars*, p. 133.

25 ¹⁴³*The Fish is Red*, 74f.

26 ¹⁴⁴*The Hoffa Wars*, Moldea, p. 135.