

DL 44-1639

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On January 28, 1964, CHESLEY JONES, Agent, Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Unit, 1114 Commerce Street, advised that he could not recall an individual by the name of (FNU) DAVIS in the ROBERT RAY MC KEOWN case but would check his file and the indices of his office to determine if such person could be identified. Mr. JONES advised on January 28, 1964, that he was unable to identify (FNU) DAVIS through a check of the MC KEOWN file or the indices of his office.

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HO 44-939

DWF/mem

The following investigation was conducted by Special Agent DANIEL W. FULTS, JR.:

AT HOUSTON, TEXAS

On January 24, 1964, at the file room of "The Houston Chronicle" newspaper the following information was noted pertaining to ROBERT RAY MC KEOWN:

On April 28, 1959, the photograph of MC KEOWN and FIDEL CASTRO appeared in "The Houston Chronicle" newspaper. CASTRO, on that occasion, briefly visited Houston, Texas. The article accompanying the photograph quoted CASTRO as saying that when MC KEOWN could come to Cuba he would be given a post in the Cuban Government or perhaps would be given some franchises.

The March 12, 1958, edition of "The Houston Chronicle" noted that a partial list of the weapons seized in the home of MC KEOWN, located in the Shady Lake section near Pasadena, Texas, was entered in evidence at a bond hearing for MC KEOWN by CHESLEY JONES, Dallas, Texas, an agent of the Alcohol, Tobacco Tax Unit of the Internal Revenue Service.

On January 27, 1964, Captain GUS GEORGE, Harris County Sheriff's Office, advised no record would be available at this time concerning an individual reportedly calling from Dallas, Texas, in early 1959 for the purpose of getting in touch with ROBERT RAY MC KEOWN.

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January 28, 1964

Date _____

ROBERT RAY MC KEOWN, born January 28, 1913, residence Bay Cliff, Texas, unlisted telephone number Bay Cliff 9661492, upon interview at the Houston Division of the FBI furnished the following information:

He is presently employed as a salesman for the Houston Slush Pump Company, 2112 Quitman Street, Houston, and he formerly resided with his sister, MRS. FRANK DENNY, 9138 Wayfarer Street, Houston. His wife makes her residence in Miami, Florida. On February 25, 1958, he was arrested and charged with conspiracy to smuggle guns and related equipment to Cuba for the benefit and use of FIDEL CASTRO and his forces. On October 24, 1958, in the United States District Court, Southern District of Texas, Houston, Texas, he was sentenced for these activities to 60 days to serve and fined \$500 on one count, and was given a two year sentence suspended for five years on good behavior on a second count. The period of his probation expired December 11, 1963. At the time of his arrest, conviction and sentencing, considerable publicity concerning him and his activities appeared in the press. His photograph appeared in the newspapers on a number of occasions. He knows FIDEL CASTRO personally, and when CASTRO visited Houston, Texas, briefly in April, 1959, MC KEOWN went to the Houston Airport, visited with CASTRO, and had his photograph taken with CASTRO. This photograph was widely publicized. CASTRO tried to persuade him to stay on the airplane and proceed to Cuba with him (CASTRO). However, because he was then on probation, he told CASTRO it would not be possible. CASTRO was somewhat irritated at this, and suggested that MC KEOWN disregard the probation and go anyway. CASTRO stated he would give MC KEOWN a Government position in Cuba or perhaps he might give him some franchises or concessions there. MC KEOWN responded that he fully intended to comply with his probation to the letter, and stated he would come to Cuba when he could do so in a completely legal manner.

During 1958, while MC KEOWN was out on bond and prior to his sentencing, he and a MR. JARRETT entered a partnership and opened up the J and M Drive-In on Red Bluff Road near Taylor Lake and Clear Lake, in the vicinity of

On 1/24/64 at Houston, Texas File # HO 44-939
by SA DANIEL W. FULTS, JR. : mem Date dictated 1/28/64

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Remah and Seabrook, Texas. MC KEOWN obtained his share of the funds for this venture by borrowing from CARLOS PRIO SOCARRAS, former President of Cuba with whom he had a close friendship. About two years ago, MR. JARRETT died, and the business was sold.

FIDEL CASTRO took over the leadership of Cuba on about January 1, 1959, following the revolution which he had led. About one week after that, while he was on duty at the J and M Drive-In, Harris County, Texas, Deputy Sheriff ANTHONY "BOOTS" AYO appeared and said that some person had been frantically calling the Harris County Sheriff's Office in an effort to locate MC KEOWN. The name of the caller was not known to AYO, but he was calling from Dallas, Texas, and on the last call had said it was a life and death matter. MC KEOWN advised AYO to provide the caller with the telephone number of the J and M Drive-In. In about one hour's time, (8:00 p.m. or 8:30 p.m.) a person called MC KEOWN on the telephone and said his name was "Rubenstein". The caller said he was calling from Dallas, Texas, and indicated he was aware that MC KEOWN had influence in Cuba and particularly with CASTRO. The caller stated he wanted to get three individuals out of Cuba who were being held by CASTRO. He stated that if MC KEOWN could achieve their release he would be paid \$5,000 for each person. The caller added that a person in Las Vegas, Nevada, would put up the money. MC KEOWN replied that he most certainly was interested in making some money, and assured the caller he could obtain the release of any person being detained by CASTRO; however, MC KEOWN specifically advised the caller he would do nothing toward this end until he was paid \$5,000.00 in cash at the outset. The caller stated he would clear this with the man in Las Vegas, and would later recontact MC KEOWN. Nothing further was ever heard from this individual by MC KEOWN.

About three weeks following this telephone call, a man personally appeared at the J and M Drive-In and spoke with MC KEOWN. This person did not identify himself to MC KEOWN, nor did MC KEOWN ask his name. The man said he had a proposition whereby MC KEOWN could make \$25,000. When he indicated genuine interest in the man's proposition, they went to the rear of the Drive-In where patrons sit to

COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 1689—Continued

drink beer and where they could talk more privately. The man stated he had an option on a great number of jeeps which were in Shreveport, Louisiana, and he desired to sell them to CASTRO at a very profitable figure. He wanted MC KEOWN to provide him with a letter of introduction to CASTRO, which letter would clearly indicate that the bearer was responsible and reliable. MC KEOWN said he would gladly provide such a letter of introduction for a fee of \$25,000, but before he undertook to do anything he would have to have in hand at least \$5,000.00 in cash. The man indicated he wanted the letter right away, whereupon MC KEOWN asked if he had the necessary \$5,000 in his pocket. The man said that he did not, but that he would go and get the money and return. According to MC KEOWN, the man never returned nor did he ever again see him.

MC KEOWN stated that from the numerous photographs he has seen in the press and in magazines of JACK RUBY, the man with whom he talked concerning the letter of introduction to CASTRO resembles RUBY. The man gave the impression of being or trying to be a "big shot", and his manner and attitude was rather haughty. While his recollection of this man is somewhat hazy at this time, he vividly recalls the man had a small patch on his nose. MC KEOWN recalled he had asked the fellow what the patch was for, and he was advised that he had attempted to take out a blackhead and a small infection developed. To the best of his recollection, this man was probably 45 to 50 years of age, 5' 8" to 5' 10" in height, 200 pounds, stocky build, well dressed. He recalled the man had a tie clasp which matched his cuff links. He had no idea how the fellow traveled to the J and M Drive-In, and he never ascertained the man's name. MC KEOWN advised that he feels strongly that this individual was in fact JACK RUBY, the man whose photograph he has seen many times recently in the press.

MC KEOWN commented that because of the publicity accorded him in connection with his gun smuggling activities, he was literally besieged with requests for favors, requests for interceding with CASTRO, et cetera, following CASTRO's successful effort in Cuba. He stated his inability to leave the United States during his probationary period prevented him from fulfilling some of these requests which would have provided fabulous fees.

He remarked he is not certain that the above-described telephone caller from Dallas or the man who personally appeared at the J and M Drive-In was identical with the JACK RUBY who killed LEE HARVEY OSWALD. To his knowledge, he has never seen or met LEE HARVEY OSWALD.

MC KEOWN stated that he knew of no one by the name of "Davis" who was convicted for gun running activity with Cuba.

1Date January 28, 1964In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

March 26, 1964

A. J. "BOOTS" AYO, residence 328 Bayshore Drive, La Porte, Texas, telephone - La Porte number GA-1-0144, upon interview at his place of employment, Jay Marks Chevrolet Company, La Porte, Texas, advised as follows:

He is well acquainted with ROBERT "DICK" MC KEOWN but has not talked to him in the past month or two. MC KEOWN formerly owned the J and M Drive-In located on Red Bluff Road near Clear Creek some two years previous. AYO was formerly employed as a Patrolman by the Harris County Sheriff's Office. AYO recalled on one occasion his office contacted him (AYO) by radio and wanted to know how to contact MC KEOWN. AYO told his office he would personally check and advise. The Harris County Sheriff's Office told AYO by radio at the time that some person from Dallas, Texas, was exceedingly intent on trying to contact MC KEOWN by telephone. AYO was not furnished the name of the individual calling nor the nature of the caller's business. AYO proceeded to the J and M Drive-In, told MC KEOWN about the telephone call, and MC KEOWN furnished AYO the telephone number of the J and M Drive-In, which AYO relayed by radio to the Harris County Sheriff's Office. This incident took place not too long after MC KEOWN had opened the J and M Drive-In because a telephone had not been installed for a very long time.

AYO stated he could recall nothing further about this matter and at the time it impressed him as just a routine matter. He commented he had always found MC KEOWN reliable, although at the present time MC KEOWN may have to watch his drinking, inasmuch as he (MC KEOWN) is now off probation.

On 1/27/64 at La Porte, Texas File # HO 44-939
by SA DANIEL W. PULTS, JR. : mem Date dictated 1/28/64

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JACK L. RUBY
LEE HARVEY OSWALD - VICTIM

The following information concerning Lewis Joseph McWillie was developed by the FBI in connection with another matter.

The January 3, 1961, edition of the "Chicago American," a Chicago daily newspaper, on page 5, column 2, contains an article captioned "Teacher Ducks Talk of PUNCH." The article states that LaVerne Kautt, a teacher at Senn High School, refused to answer questions by reporters after having promised three times to talk to the press. Kautt stated, "My advisers agree this is a private matter. I have nothing to say about it." The article reflects that Kautt was in Havana over the week end with eighty other Chicagoans who were guests of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. Lewis McWillie, of Miami, told the "Chicago American" that he was waiting to board a plane for Miami in Cuba when Kautt started talking to Cuban newspapermen. Kautt told the reporters that everything that Castro and the Cuban Government was doing is a good thing, even taking property from the Americans. He said that the United States wasn't anything but an imperialistic government. McWillie stated Kautt also strongly denounced American newspapers quoting him as saying they constantly misinterpret and misrepresent stories that come from Cuba because imperialist advertisers dictate editorial policy to American newspapers. McWillie said he was so annoyed over what Kautt said that when their plane landed at Miami, he asked Kautt to repeat his remarks on American soil. Kautt refused and McWillie said, "He made a move like he was going to hit me so I hit him in the nose."

The January 4, 1961, edition of the "Chicago Tribune," a Chicago daily newspaper, on page 5, contained an article captioned "Teacher to be Questioned on Fidel Fracas." It mentions that Assistant Superintendent Richard C. McVey, who is in charge of school personnel, planned to talk with LaVerne Kautt concerning possible disciplinary action by school officials and the Board of Education in connection with statements made by Kautt in Cuba concerning the American Government. McVey said that if it is found that Kautt is a member of the Communist Party or any organization that advocates overthrow of the Government, he would be discharged.

COMMISSION EXHIBIT No. 1690

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