

NAMES FROM THE WAR AGAINST CASTRO

This book deals with reports, remarks and rumors pertaining to a great number of individuals. In most cases these are in the context of public and secret actions relating to Cuba, actions by the U.S. government, by private citizens, and by the Cuban exiles who sought to remove Fidel Castro and his cadre. To assist the reader, the following list of individuals and groups is provided for reference. Some of the names were well known in media coverage of that period, but many were not. In addition to this brief listing, photographs are provided to assist the reader in viewing individuals as actual people rather than just names.

Further, an effort is made in Chapter 16 to provide additional detail on key individuals and to discuss their activities after the Kennedy assassination.

ALVARADO, GILBERTO UGARTE

Gilberto Ugarte Alvarado was a Nicaraguan intelligence informant who went to CIA officials in Mexico City with a detailed story of having observed Lee Oswald inside the Cuban embassy, receiving money for a Cuban sponsored assassination. Alvarado's story was initially strongly endorsed by local CIA officers; David Phillips was initially a leading proponent of Alvarado's information.

ALPHA 66

Alpha 66 was one of the best organized and most militarily effective of the activist Cuban exile organizations. In 1962 and 1963, Alpha 66 was very successful in launching attacks in Cuba, targeting port installations and foreign shipping. Russian ships and assets were among its primary targets. Alpha 66 was also especially effective at private fund raising through exile business connections in New York City and Puerto Rico; the key individual in this effort was one of its principal organizers, Antonio Veciana. The most well known, aggressive and successful Alpha 66 raid leaders were Tony Cuesta and Eduardo (Eddie) Perez (Bayo). Alpha 66 was largely put together by Antonio Veciana and Eloy Menoyo; Veciana had approached the CIA with a proposal to assassinate Castro and his key leaders, in 1961 he helped organized an abortive bazooka attack on Castro before escaping into exile. Eloy Menoyo had been an active Second Front of the Escambray leader during the revolution

against Batista. Menoyo was adamant in retaining the “Second Front of the Escambray” name and the consolidated group was often referred to as Second Front Alpha 66.

Many young, activist Cubans also had dual membership in Alpha 66 and in the DRE (Student Revolutionary Directorate). The DRE students had been strongly involved in the Castro revolt against Batista but had been excluded as Castro turned to Communism and Russia; DRE members remained strong anti-Communists and maintained one of the most effective intelligence channels into Cuba under Castro.

AM/LASH

This CIA cryptonym was associated both with a project and an individual. The individual was Dr. Rolando Cubela. Cubela had led DRE forces into Havana to oust Batista but later became associated with Castro and held a variety of minor posts in the Castro regime. These posts did however allow Cubela to travel internationally. After contacts with and recruitment by the CIA, Cubela eventually came to be viewed by the CIA as one option for organizing an internal revolt against Castro. Cubela himself continuously promoted the idea of an assassination attempt against Castro and requested equipment from the CIA for this project.

AM/TRUNK

The CIA AM/TRUNK project was another effort to identify Cuban military and political leaders who would be willing and able to organize an internal revolt against Fidel Castro. Much of this effort was devoted to a search for military leaders unhappy with the growing Russian military influence and control, which had escalated significantly during 1963. The AM/TRUNK and AM/LASH projects continued for a number of years, even in the face of internal CIA evidence that many of the AM/TRUNK Cuban assets (given AM/WHIP numerical designations) were compromised by Cuban intelligence. There was even CIA security concern that Cubela (AM/LASH) might have been an informant to Castro, who was testing the CIA’s willingness to engage in political assassination.

ARTIME, MANUEL

Manual Artime was one of the early counter-revolutionary leaders (MRR party – Movement for the Recovery of the Revolution) inside Cuba. After fleeing to the U.S he became one of the exile leaders playing a major role in successive U.S. organized exile movements. Artime and other leaders including Tony Varona, Aureliano Arango and Jose Cardona met with Senator John Kennedy as early as the Democratic National Convention in 1960.

In 1963 Artime was sanctioned, along with Harry Ruiz Williams, to be a major leader of a new Kennedy Administration’s autonomous group offensive against Fidel Castro. The CIA crypt for the Artime focused project was AM/WORLD. Artime was given far more autonomy than had been previously associated with U.S. backed efforts; in return his charter was to operate totally outside the continental U.S. and to engage in a wide variety of public activities which would make his U.S. sponsorship totally deniable. Newly released CIA documents show that the Artime effort was highly compartmentalized and isolated even from other “secret war” operations within the CIA.

AM/WORLD

This CIA autonomous group project was part of a larger Kennedy administration multi-agency effort to produce a coup within Cuba which would internally remove Fidel and Raul Castro, allowing their replacement with a new provisional government in which exile leaders would play a key role. The CIA was not in charge of this effort but was limited to supporting Artime's military build-up off shore and other related political actions including helping him establish contacts and infrastructure in a number of Latin American countries. CIA officers playing key roles in this project included Henry Hecksher and Carl Jenkins.

BAYO, EDDIE

Eddie Bayo (Eduardo Perez) initially fought under Raul Castro against Batista. Bayo was a fierce fighter and later turned against the Castro regime. After his rejection of Castro and exile to the U.S., Bayo became a crew member of the *Tejana III*. The *Tejana* was a WWII subchaser which had been purchased by persons associated with the King Ranch in Texas and pledged to the CIA's secret efforts against Castro. It was then purchased by Alberto Fernandez Hechaverria, registered under the dummy company name of InterKey Transportation and refitted and "gunned" by the CIA for supply missions into Cuba before the Bay of Pigs in 1961. In 1963 the *Tejana* was placed under control of Manuel Artime and crewed by his MRR commandos as part of the build-up of his forces outside the United States. After leaving the *Tejana*, Bayo became one of the most aggressive and successful leaders of Alpha 66 boat attack groups, participating in raids against Russian ships and assets in Cuba. In 1963 Bayo helped promote and organize a mission into Cuba known as operation identified by the CIA as operation TILT (and generally known among those involved as the Bayo-Pawley mission). This mission was funded by former U.S. ambassador and millionaire William Pawley who participated personally, as did personnel from *LIFE* Magazine and personnel from the CIA's JM/WAVE Cuban "secret war" headquarters in Miami.

CUESTA, ANTONIO AKA "TONY" CUESTA DEL VALLE

Tony Cuesta had been a businessman in Havana but after going into exile, became one of the most aggressive exile raiders operating first with Alpha 66 and then with Commandos L (Liberty). Cuesta led his first mission into Cuba in September of 1962 shortly before the Cuban Missile Crisis; however, he became a very visible and public figure primarily due to *LIFE* Magazine's coverage of a raid he led into Cuba in the spring of 1963. Cuesta led a Commandos L team (a spin off group from Alpha 66); the raid resulted in the sinking of the Russian merchant ship *Baku* and received major media visibility as part of *LIFE*'s photo journalism support for the exiles and their efforts. A *LIFE* photographer accompanied Cuesta and his crew on the mission.

DE TORRES, BERNARDO

De Torres was a Bay of Pigs veteran who was held a Castro prisoner with other Brigade 2506 members until December 1962. Upon his release in Florida, he joined his brother Carlos in Miami. Carlos operated a Miami detective agency. Bernardo went on to become the chief of intelligence for the reformed Brigade 2506 and was acquainted with Interpen members including William Seymour and Roy Hargraves. Later De Torres would become involved in the Garrison investigation of the JFK assassination.

DRE (STUDENT REVOLUTIONARY DIRECTORATE)

Members of the Student Directorate were very active in protesting and opposing the Batista regime and DRE fighters played a major role in the revolution against him. DRE members fought fiercely in Havana and initially took control, later to concede political control to Fidel Castro and his followers when they entered the city. DRE members were later among the first to oppose Castro's eventual turn to communism and the Soviets. The DRE network inside Cuba might be considered one of the best organized and secure during the period of 1962-1963. In the U.S. DRE exiles and members were primarily engaged in fund raising, recruiting and political/media opposition to the Castro regime. DRE and its Miami chapter were one of the few exile organizations actively cultivated and supported by the CIA, both for their intelligence connections and their political value. However DRE members who were more operationally inclined did participate in raids of their own into Cuba and also joined with other operationally focused groups such as Alpha 66/SNFE. During 1962 and 1963, the leader of DRE was Manuel Salvat and its military director was Blanco Fernandez. Army intelligence documents note that some members of Alpha 66 were also members of the DRE and we find DRE and Alpha 66 individuals associated in Miami, Puerto Rico and in Dallas during this period. We also find DRE members in New Orleans in contact with Lee Oswald in 1963 and very actively involved in developing propaganda opposing Oswald and the Fair Play for Cuba Committee. DRE members in New Orleans and Miami were also among the very first to seek media attention tying Castro to Oswald and to the Kennedy assassination. Unfortunately, the reports dealing with Oswald which must have gone from the DRE to its CIA case officer have never been made available and as of 2006 are the subject of an ongoing lawsuit against the CIA.

FERNANDEZ, ALBERTO

Alberto Fernandez (CIA crypt AM/DENIM-1) was a graduate of Princeton, attended prep school with John F. Kennedy and was the director of the Sugar Stabilization Board of the Cuban Sugar Institute in 1958 and 1959. His eventual opposition to Castro and his counter-evolutionary activities led to his exile. Initially he had been a strong 26th of July supporter and reportedly raised over \$2 million dollars for the movement. An FBI memo dated October 1958 lists companies that had been solicited for payments to Fidel Castro and his rebel army. These included United Fruit, Lone Star Cement, Freeport Sulphur, Czarnikow Rionda, Chase Manhattan Bank, King Ranch (Robert Kleberg), Standard Oil, Hilton Hotels. One of Fernandez's first operational moves after his exfiltration to the United States was to use his business connections, including his being known to the Klebergs of King Ranch, to help negotiate and fund the purchase of an ex Navy sub chaser for penetration and supply missions into Cuba. The ship was located in New Orleans, owned by Texan Robert McCoy, and was purchased jointly with Texas (Kleberg) and Cuban funds (approximately \$38,000 each) in November of 1960. This ship would be named the Tejana. Its crew would come to include two men whose names that would also become legendary in independent exile military operations, Tony Cuesta (AM/DENIM 14) and Eddie Bayo.

HARVEY, WILLIAM

William Harvey was a senior CIA officer who was placed in charge of Task Force W (CIA operations) within the multiple agency, Kennedy Administration anti-Castro project

named Mongoose. Mongoose was charged with the overthrow of the Castro regime. Project Mongoose and Task Force W operated out of the same facilities and used the resources of the giant JM/WAVE CIA station on the south campus of the University of Miami. Harvey was ordered by Richard Helms to reactivate the joint CIA-Roselli assassination project in 1962. Helms apparently did this without the knowledge of either the Kennedy administration or the Director of the CIA, John McCone. This effort had originally been organized prior to the Bay of Pigs, using syndicate “fixer” Johnny Roselli and remaining gambling syndicate connections in Cuba which had been part of the Trafficante network. Harvey and Roselli engaged in several efforts to poison or otherwise remove Fidel Castro during 1962 and although the project was officially terminated at the end of that year, the two men continued a close personal association throughout 1963. This association continued even after Harvey was removed from Task Force W and reassigned to Italy. William Harvey had earlier been assigned by Richard Helms to organize and recruit personnel for an overseas CIA Executive Action capability designated ZR/RIFLE. This project was to give the CIA the capability to remove foreign leaders through the use of criminal assets; recent document releases also show this project remained active during 1963 after Harvey’s removal from Task Force W/ Mongoose and his reassignment.

HARGRAVES, ROY

Roy Emory Hargraves was an exceptionally active American supporter of exile anti-Castro activities. Initially he became associated with a group headed by ex-Army Major George Tanner but his longer term association was the Interpen group organized by Gerry Patrick Hemming. As part of this group Hargraves was involved with training members of the AAA group headed by Sanchez Arango. AAA was an offshoot of the Authentico party. Arango had been one of the chief leaders along with Varona and Artime during the preparations for the exile invasion of Cuba; however, he had broken from that effort and the CIA entirely at the last minute over concerns that the invasion had been compromised and would be a disaster. Arango’s initial funding reportedly came from Rolando Masferrer, a former political power in the Batista regime. FBI documents report that Hargraves received funding from Masferrer to launch a successful raid into Cuba in 1963. Hargraves led in a team of exiles, captured two Cuban fishing boats, engaged in a running fight with Castro forces and successfully extracted his team and the boats to the Bahamas. This ended up causing a minor political crisis with the British when the boats were forcibly recovered by the Cubans (in a raid after Hargraves had returned to Miami). Hargraves was a close friend and associate of independent exile activist Felipe Vidal Santiago. Hargraves continued his anti-Castro and anti-communist activities during the 1960s, becoming involved in a plan to create war with Cuba by simulating an attack on Guantanamo naval base. He eventually moved to Los Angeles where he was involved with bombing attacks on both the SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) and the Black Panthers.

JDGE (JUNTA DEL GOBIERNO DE CUBA EN EL EXILIO)

The “Junta” appears to have been largely a paper and media entity, organized to raise funds, buy arms and establish a Cuban government in exile prior to a successful overthrow of Castro. The movement’s leader was Paulino Sierra Martinez. Reportedly its designated candidate for the replacement President of Cuba was Carlos Prio Soccares. Soccares was a

former Cuban President and had been Fidel Castro's primary sponsor in the movement to overthrow Batista. Sierra actively engaged in major arms purchases as well as in supplying money to several of the more militant operational exile groups. However he had virtually no rank and file and actually hired various Interpen associates to transport some of his purchases to Florida and to store them there.

In 1963 Sierra's primary activities were in Chicago and Miami and most of his weapons purchasing efforts were in Chicago and the Midwest. Intelligence reports on the Junta suggest that it had gained major financial pledges from gambling syndicate elements, particularly out of Las Vegas. These pledges were made in return for potential concessions after the overthrow of the Castro regime.

JURE

JURE, organized and by Manuel "Manolo" Ray; it, was socialist-democratic in its politics and generally viewed by other groups and the former Batista associated politicians as being too left wing in its views. Many exiles, especially those from the commercial and landed social classes viewed it virtually as "Castroism without Castro". Ray and JURE were also not trusted by many CIA officers including Howard Hunt, Ted Shackley and David Morales. In one memo out of JM/WAVE, Ray's group is suspected of spying on JM/WAVE/CIA operations. Many of the JURE members were outside the United States and Ray himself spent a good deal of time in Puerto Rico. JURE had been part of the original consolidated exile movement prior to the Bay of Pigs but was not one of the organizations with which the Agency maintained the same sort of ongoing contact as DRE or UNIDAD.

MARTINO, JOHN

John Martino was a casino employee in Havana, specializing in electrical installations involved with the gaming. He left Cuba during the Castro take over but continued to make trips back, possibly serving as a courier. During one such trip he and his young son were arrested. The son was returned to the United States; John Martino was imprisoned by the Castro government for several years. After his release in late 1962, he wrote a book (*I Was Castro's Prisoner*) which was published in 1963. The book related the failure of the U.S. State Department to support him while in prison as well as a host of terrible information about the Castro revolution and government. The book mentioned many individuals Martino met in prison and also named David Morales, a U.S. Embassy employee, who had impressed Martino. Martino credited with trying to warn the U.S. government about Castro's communist leanings. In 1963, Martino promoted and personally participated in the Bayo-Pawley mission into Cuba. This mission was staffed with Alpha 66 personnel with military coordination by Rip Robertson who worked for David Morales at JM/WAVE. Robertson had debriefed Martino after his return from Cuba.

McKEOWN, ROBERT

Robert McKeown was a Texan who had participated in transportation of weapons into Cuba. The weapons were purchased by Carlos Prio Soccares for use by Fidel Castro's forces. McKeown organized the transport of these weapons and was active in Texas, Florida and Cuba. Eventually he was arrested for arms smuggling and in 1963 was living outside Houston Texas and on probation. Earlier he had gained media visibility when Fidel Castro

visited Houston and asked to meet with his old friend, offering him a position in Cuba. During that same period McKeown was repeatedly contacted by Jack Ruby who wished introductions to elements within Cuba to facilitate his own sales activities and to help gain releases for certain friends from Cuban imprisonment. Those friends had formerly been involved in the casino business there, a business which saw a great deal of reorganization and government control under Castro. In 1963, McKeown was reportedly contacted by Lee Oswald, who was in the company of one of Prio Soccares associates; an individual named Hernandez whom McKeown had worked with earlier in the Castro gun smuggling.

MORALES, DAVID

David Morales was officially an Army NCO and a State Department employee. He had worked out of the U.S. Embassy in Havana (while David Phillips was working as an under cover contract employee for the CIA in Havana), and had earlier participated in the highly successful CIA PB/SUCCESS operation (along with David Phillips) which deposed a leftist leaning Guatemalan leader. After Havana, Morales assumed the responsibility for training and organizing an exile intelligence/security operation in support of the 1962 effort against Castro. Following the Bay of Pigs disaster, he was placed in charge of “secret war” operations run out of the JM/WAVE complex in Miami, reporting to Theodore Shackley. All operational penetration teams were under his supervision and one of his major penetration leaders was Rip Robertson, who had also worked in the Guatemalan coup. David Morales also provided operational support for the Task Force W assassination operations conducted by William Harvey and Johnny Roselli.

MONGOOSE

The Mongoose project was the follow-on Kennedy administration response to the disaster at the Bay of Pigs. That project had actually originated under President Eisenhower. Mongoose was to be the Kennedy response; it originated in a memorandum from President Kennedy in November of 1961. The memorandum went to multiple agencies and called for all designated parties to follow the lead of Major General Edward Lansdale. Lansdale, designated Mongoose project leader, was to “use our available assets to help Cuba overthrow the Communist regime.” These assets were to be largely operated out of the CIA station in Miami known as JM/WAVE and run by station chief Theodore Shackley. Lansdale would run the planning and oversee the grand strategy of Mongoose while William Harvey was assigned to be in charge of the CIA elements known as Task Force W. Lansdale’s decisions and planning were to be overseen by a special group of senior administration personnel in Washington, including Robert Kennedy.

ODIO, SYLVIA

Sylvia Odio was the daughter of a wealthy Cuban businessman; both her father and mother ended up imprisoned by Fidel Castro for providing aid and comfort to revolutionary activities against Castro. Sylvia and her father were both politically affiliated with Manolo Ray’s relatively liberal JURE party. Sylvia and her children eventually moved to Dallas Texas in early 1963 to join other members of her family. While not active with the local JURE organization herself, Sylvia remained in contact with Ray and attempted to locate weapons

sources for JURE. Her younger sister, Sarita, a college student in Dallas, was associated with individuals who were active DRE members.

PENA, OREST

Orest Pena owned the Habana Bar in New Orleans. Although the Habana was frequented by the Cuban and exile community Pena himself was not affiliated with any particular exile party. He had associated with local members of the Cuban Revolutionary Council and later with members of the DRE. His brother was self-described as pro-Batista while Pena himself served as an informant to the FBI, providing information on individuals he suspected might have communist leanings or who might actually be Castro supporters or informants. In the summer of 1963 Pena and his bartender Evaristo Rodriguez observed an individual in their bar whom they later felt was Lee Oswald. This individual was accompanied by a Latin who made a number of remarks about the bar being owned by a “capitalist” or an “imperialist”. Pena reported this incident after the assassination and quickly lost his position as a valued FBI informant.

PHILLIPS, DAVID

David Phillips began his career as a CIA officer as a contract employee and spent virtually his entire career assigned to combat communist influences and oppose Fidel Castro throughout the hemisphere. Phillips worked covertly for the CIA in Havana in 1959. Later he was attached to the Cuba Task Force in support of the Bay of Pigs operation, charged with propaganda and media relations for the Cuban Revolutionary Council. Afterwards he was moved to Mexico City and placed in charge of covert operations and counter-intelligence for the CIA station there. He advanced rapidly in this position, receiving a promotion in the fall of 1963, eventually becoming Chief of Cuban Operations and finally Chief of Western Hemisphere. At that time he held the rank of GS18, the highest position in the CIA not requiring executive appointment. At that rank and before retirement age, David Phillips chose early retirement; shortly thereafter he became involved in founding an association of retired intelligence professionals devoted to opposing media coverage, articles, books and other vehicles which were negative towards the CIA. Eventually Phillips wrote his own autobiography, *The Night Watch*, as well as other books including one titled *The Carlos Contract*, dealing with a contract political assassin. One of the major characters in the latter book was clearly patterned on Phillips’ long time co-worker and associate, David Morales.

RIP ROBERTSON

Rob Robertson was a CIA military operations officer; he joined the PB/SUCCESS team in Guatemala, serving as part of the military component with David Morales. Robertson would later become a Brigade 2506 military advisor and was present as an advisor and UDT (underwater demolitions team) leader at the Bay of Pigs. He later became one of the military operations personnel at JM/WAVE, where he continued to demonstrate his personal bravery in Cuban penetration missions. Reportedly Robertson, along with senior boat guide Eugenio Martinez, were part of the unsanctioned group sent into Cuba by William Harvey during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Both men would later be assigned to the CIA supported TILT mission. Robertson had also conducted debriefing and other contacts with John Martino

after Martino's return from prison in Cuba. Robertson went on to lead Cuban exile military personnel in Angola (where he used the name "Carlos") and later served in Vietnam.

ROSELLI, JOHN

John Roselli spent a lifetime within organized crime, eventually becoming one of the best connected and most respected "fixers", with connections to Chicago, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Miami. Roselli first obtained success and prominence within the LA movie industry and then went on to become a key "facilitator" for gambling related deals in Las Vegas and later in Havana, Cuba. He was a key organizer of the "skim" from Vegas casinos to syndicate heads in Chicago and the Midwest. When the CIA decided to go to the gambling syndicate to find someone who could use the established syndicate network inside Cuba for the assassination of Fidel Castro, Johnny Roselli was recommended. Roselli was involved in Castro assassination attempts both before the Bay of Pigs and afterwards when the project was reactivated under William Harvey. One of his consistent resources in the Castro efforts was Antonio "Tony" Varona. Varona was a well-respected exile leader but also a man with syndicate connections to the Trafficante organization within Cuba. Santo Trafficante Jr. headed most crime syndicate activities in Florida and Cuba; he was imprisoned by Fidel Castro after Castro began to take major control over the Havana casinos.

UNIDAD

A list of the armed exile military organizations groups potentially most dangerous to Fidel Castro in the early 1960s would likely begin with Unidad Revolucionario/UR, formed within Cuba in 1960 and composed of participants from 27 independent groups including Movimiento Liberation, MRD, MRR, Rescate and 30 November. Rafael Diaz Hanscomb of the MRR initiated this effort at unification even after being advised against doing so by Antonio Varona, the leader of the Frente. Varona would later become the leader of the CIA-sponsored Cuban Revolutionary Council/CRC. Early in 1961 Diaz made a trip from Cuba to the United States to obtain external support via contacts at Sinclair Oil. During meetings with U.S. Government officials and the CIA, the UR was given pledges of supplies and a plan to establish and staff an office in Miami was developed. At this point the chief leaders of Unidad were Diaz Hascomb (Cuban General Coordinator), Andrews Zayas (Civil Coordinator), and Major Sori Martin (Military Coordinator.)

The first materials to be provided from the U.S. arrived in Cuba in late February, 1961 and by mid-March the CIA thought Unidad had developed into a significant anti-Castro movement, having penetrated Cuban police and military forces. Unidad was preparing plans for coordinated uprisings, a rebellion within the Cuban Navy and other operations.

But UNIDAD advised the CIA that it was not yet ready to support any actual military action against Castro. It also advised its own Cuban network of that position.

The CIA did not warn UNIDAD about the impending Bay of Pigs invasion. As a result, it was not only unable to provide any support but its members were surprised and its network extensively damaged by the Castro round-ups.

VARONA, DR. MANUAL ANTONIO DE VERONA Y LOREDO

Tony Varona was heavily involved in exile politics and to a large extent became a stand in for former Cuban President Carlos Prío Socarrés. Varona became the head of numerous exile parties including the FRD, OA, Rescate and eventually became the acting head of the Cuban Revolutionary Council, supported by the Kennedy administration and the CIA during and after the Bay of Pigs. The CRC worked with various Interpen members to set up a training camp outside New Orleans in 1962 (when the administration began cracking down on raids out of Florida) but aborted the effort due to ongoing administration opposition to unauthorized exile military activities. Varona also maintained connections to the powerful gambling syndicate members who had been so influential in pre-Castro Cuba, including the Trafficante organization. It was this connection which resulted in his being used in the Roselli organized poison attempts against Castro; Verona accepted arms, money and supplies in return for his participation. Varona also maintained his connections to key political leaders such as Manuel Artime, even after Artime was selected by the Kennedy Administration to move the exile efforts against Castro offshore in 1963.

VECIANA, ANTONIO

Antonio Veciana had an established and successful accounting business in Cuba, with connections to numerous Cuban professionals and businessmen. However Veciana was firmly opposed to Castro's turn to communism and eventually left Cuba to become one of the chief organizers of Alpha 66. Veciana traveled widely and served as the public spokesman for Alpha 66. He has made it clear that most of the group's strategy and plans were directed by a very secretive American. Veciana went on to work with this American in a variety of efforts, including assassination attempts, directed against Castro. Veciana described one of these attempts (in Chile) as being very similar to the Kennedy assassination.

VIDAL, FELIPE VIDAL SANTIAGO

Felipe Vidal was a Cuban naval officer who went into exile from Castro's communist regime via South America. He was approached by the CIA but no ongoing relationship developed due to mutual distrust. Vidal distrusted CIA's motives and CIA apparently distrusted his associates. Vidal moved into the U.S. via Miami and remained very independent, joining no established exile party but associating with more operationally inclined individuals. He attempted to form his own group for missions into Cuba but could not come up with sufficient funding. During 1962 and 1963 he associated with the Interpen group but primarily became a good friend of Roy Hargraves. Vidal was also one of the first people approached by Paulino Sierra when he came to Miami recruiting for the JCGE. Vidal also became a close friend and confidant of John Martino, keeping Martino informed on exile affairs. In the fall of 1963 Vidal made a series of trips to Dallas, Texas.