

10 September 1963

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Jose CASAS Rodriguez

1. About 1500 hours, 10 September 1963, ⁰⁵ CASAS Rodriguez was called at his place of work (Engineering firm: Gannett, Fleming, Corddry and Carpenter, Inc., 600 N. 2nd St., Harrisburg, Pa. Tel: ²⁹ 238-0451) by ⁰⁸ Mr. PAULMORT, and advised that PAULMORT would like to visit him and would arrive at ⁰³ CASAS' house between 2000 and 2100 hours that evening. CASAS ⁰⁵ agreed. (PAULMORT has previously visited CASAS in May 1963.)

2. In accordance with the telephone conversation, ⁰³ PAULMORT accompanied by ⁰⁵ Mr. NIKILSON arrived at ⁰³ CASAS' house shortly after 2000 hours, 10 September. ⁰³

3. During the initial greetings, in response to the general query "how's the work getting along?", ⁰⁵ CASAS replied that he was very busy now because of a special assignment in which he was dealing with a Costa Rican engineer visiting Harrisburg in connection with an engineering project in which ⁰⁵ CASAS' firm was involved with the Costa Rican government. This assignment was to continue until the engineer left at the end of the month. CASAS had, in fact, just returned from having a few social beers with the Costa Rican.

4. Following the conclusion ⁰³ of general amenities and ⁰⁵ the dispersal of various of the six offspring, ⁰⁵ PAULMORT explained to CASAS the purpose of our visit. CASAS conceded that he knew AZCUE well and that he would like to help both AZCUE and ourselves, but that he was not the man for this sort of activity. It was clearly and repeatedly explained to ⁰⁵ CASAS that his task was simple and without danger. He would be watched by our people at all times. When surveillance determined that AZCUE was physically ⁰⁵ approachable, CASAS would simply greet him as an old friend, and most likely a normal friendly conversation would ensue. During the course of ⁰⁵ general talk, CASAS could perhaps recall AZCUE's former statements in which he praised Americans, although, perhaps because of his official position, castigated the Pentagon. CASAS could then perhaps ask ⁰⁵ AZCUE if he was really aware of the mess awaiting him in Cuba. If AZCUE was interested in helping both the Cuban people and himself, CASAS could help ⁰⁵ AZCUE by arranging an introduction with an American who could be of great assistance. If AZCUE said no, that would be the end of it. CASAS could ⁰⁵ play it by ear. Very simple and no risk to CASAS. The only danger would ⁰⁵ be to AZCUE should the Cuban learn of CASAS' approach; therefore as a ⁰⁵ protection to AZCUE, absolute secrecy must be maintained by CASAS. Although ⁰⁵ CASAS admitted the simplicity of his part of the job, he stated that Cubans were not capable of keeping their traps shut, and that unfortunately he was no exception, even though he realized that the safety of his friend depended on his keeping silent.

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5. It was clearly explained to ⁰⁵CASAS that we would pay his travel expenses and compensate him well for his time and effort. Although he professed little interest in the payment, it was evident that the idea of some extra money, as well as a trip to Mexico City (where he has relatives) appealed greatly to him. He left us for a few minutes to consult with his wife. She apparently left the decision entirely to him.

6. As to ⁰⁵CASAS' employers, he felt that he could probably get a few days off. He was instructed to give some excuse such as family illness, rather than tell his chief that he was to do a job for the U.S. Government. (In reply to ⁰³PAULMORT's query, ⁰⁶CASAS replied that his chief was a retired colonel named ⁰⁶HALLOCK, and described ⁰⁶HALLOCK thus: "a businessman - you know - he likes to make money.") Depending on the outcome of his request for a couple days' leave of absence, ⁰⁵CASAS finally agreed to go to Mexico, although he again said that he did not feel that he was fit for this sort of job.

7. At our request, ⁰⁵CASAS agreed to try to get off the following day, Wednesday, 11 September, and fly to Washington in order to go through the necessary steps with I&NS. If he could not leave his job on Wednesday, he would try for Thursday. He was given the sterile HQS number ⁰⁶7378294 and instructed to ask for Mr. ⁰³WIKELSON, (This had of course previously been arranged at HQS.) ⁰⁵CASAS was to call before 1130 hours on Wednesday, advising us of the time of his arrival in Washington and his flight, so that he could be met. If for some reason he was unable to get through to us, we would call him after 1130 hours at his place of work.

8. ⁰³PAULMORT and ⁰³WIKELSON departed Casa ⁰⁵CASAS about 2200 hours.