

SECRET

22 June 1960

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Chief, WH/4

**SUBJECT:** Meeting with June COBB, Aide to Juan ORTA

**DATE:** June 3 to 5 1960

**FROM:** Harry HIRSHDORF

1. On 3 June 1960 (following arrangements made in Havana, Cuba two weeks earlier by the undersigned), Miss June COBB arrived in New York City for a series of meetings and possible recruitment as a contact of the WH Division.

2. Originally scheduled to arrive Friday evening 3 May, Miss COBB arrived early Friday morning, having left Havana the previous night, travelling by way of Miami. This complicated matters somewhat since Miss COBB was not fully informed of the true reason for our asking her to come to New York. As a result, she made contact with a few people whom we would have rather not have had her see prior to our contact with her. Names of all persons contacted in New York are contained in a separate memorandum based on a debriefing carried out in Washington on 6 June 1960. She also contacted [redacted] Editor of [redacted] in New York, and attempted to find out about me from him. He had been briefed by me earlier in the week, however, and merely referred to me as a "friend" with many contacts in newspaper field and in government circles. Miss COBB knows me as "Henry Hubner" and as far as I knew, she has no knowledge of my real name.

3. My first contact with Miss COBB was made in Havana, Cuba on 28 March 1960. We met in the coffee shop of the Havana Hilton hotel where I was introduced to her by [redacted] of [redacted]. My cover at the time was that my visit to Havana was being sponsored by "German and French newspaper interests", leaving somewhat vague my specific sponsors. Miss COBB did not inquire about me any further at that time and was helpful in getting appointments for me and Mr. Claus Jacobi, a legitimate German correspondent of "Der Spiegel", with certain Cuban officials. We met again several times during my stay in Havana and found her a woman with many contacts among leaders of the revolutionary movement. Before leaving Cuba I met her for dinner in an attempt to evaluate her possible usefulness to us but made no further effort toward a recruitment.

4. After returning to Headquarters and discussing her strategic position within the hierarchy of the revolutionaries, Chief WH and Chief WH/4 opined that a recruitment attempt should be made in view of the increasing interest in the activities of the Cuban government.

5. On 20 May 1960 on another trip to Havana, Miss COBB was again contacted and after two meetings was asked to come to New York. At no time in my discussions with her was CIA named or inferred. In Havana I talked

to her about her "future" and said that I had been somewhat impressed by her fluency in Spanish and ability to "get around". I asked her if she had an interest in coming to New York and discussing an employment possibility which would make use of her talents. In answer to her inquiries as to what she would have to do, I vaguely referred to reporting and writing and possibly some public relations activity. She agreed to come and I advanced her \$180.00 to purchase her plane tickets.

6. The question of "leave" to come to New York was brought up for I told her that I didn't want her to get into difficulties with her office. She said that she was pretty much her own boss and would find an adequate excuse. Later we decided that I would send her a telegram in the name of her father from New York telling her that father would be in New York for a few days and would like to see her. She believed that this would be a good excuse because all her close high level friends including her boss don't know that she is very attached to her father and also that he sends her money from time to time. I also asked whether her going to New York would create any suspicions on the part of the police or security people. She was sure it wouldn't because of the rather high rate of traffic by Cuban officials to and from New York. She thought Miami would be more suspicious. She honestly felt that New York would be the most logical place for her to go.

7. Miss COBB told me she has an office on the eighth floor of the ICA building in Havana which is the same building and same floor that Fidel CASTRO has his office. She has a secretary and a private office. Her principal task is that of public relations vis-a-vis English speaking countries. She also does translations of newspaper and magazine articles for Fidel. In addition to public relations she lately has been becoming more and more involved in the "Youth Movement" of the revolutionary government. One of her present tasks is to organize "Youth Camps" and to make plans for an influx of "Foreign Youth leaders" who shall be invited to the new revolutionary Cuba. She has frequent contact with Fidel's secretaries, Colla and Maria SANCHEZ, and claims to see Fidel about two or three times a week at irregular periods, usually to translate some article. She has daily contact with her boss, ORTA, Executive Chief of Fidel CASTRO's office. She received a salary of 280 pesos a month and the fringe benefits that all other revolutionary government employees receive.

8. Miss COBB, an American citizen employed by the Cuban Revolutionary Government, is a difficult type of person to characterize. Coming from the North American Midwest, she left home in her early twenties and has been restless and more or less "homeless" ever since. She is "bohemian" as a type, and her life with Latin Americans of all walks of life hardened her considerably and has removed much of the womanliness and warmth from her. Due to many factors in her past she has become overtly hard and cold and confused. She doesn't quite fear of anyone anywhere any more and told me on several occasions that she has never been fully accepted by the better class Latins, or Latin Americans from the same walk of life she comes from. She believes this is one reason why she "fits" in with the "revolutionaries" for they too are not fully accepted by Havana Cubans and more or less stick to themselves. Miss COBB has undergone such emotional stress in her life

SECRET

is no longer sure that the Revolutionary movement she was so idealistically motivated for a few months ago is the right thing, and until her contact with us, had made up her mind to leave Cuba in the near future. Her association with Fidel Castro and encourage has been another shattered "dream", one of a whole series in her life. As a result, I do not feel she is an "ideal" agent but in view of the lack of contacts in the Revolutionary movement and the fact that she is a member of the official group, I feel she can be of use and can be made to pass information and material to us.

9. One of the most difficult problems with Miss COBB will be control. She has shown good conspiratorial sense which at first surprised me somewhat but after learning some of her back ground and past activities (long illicit love affair and engaged in dope traffic) it is probably by now second nature to her. She will also need considerable steering toward intelligence targets. Although she sits in the midst of numerous activities of intelligence interest, her own personal interests until now have been along vastly different lines and much of her past activity with the Revolutionary government has been guided by emotion and idealism. She is enthusiastic and is liable to take her first intelligence assignments with some dilletantism, not purposefully but as a result of her "collaborating" with a United States service of some stature against a force she once firmly believed in but lately has been turning against because of failure to materialize along the idealistic lines she originally anticipated.

10. Miss COBB also has very few materialistic aims or desires. Money means almost nothing to her as is indicated in the report on her debriefing. Of the cash advanced her for a round trip ticket to New York she purchased a one-way ticket and used the other to pay off debts. She thought nothing whatsoever of this and apparently obtains and spends money without a true realization of its value. She lives over her income of approximately 100 pesos (equivalent to dollars) a month, making up the difference by handouts from friends or, if she is really caught short, by having her father send her money.

11. While in New York, several meetings were held with her and she was gradually indoctrinated to the fact that my interests in her were of an intelligence nature. CIA was never mentioned in our discussions yet at one point she said she suspected I must be from CIA because no other government agency operates outside of the United States and her past experience with the FBI was of a nature to indicate that they always ask her to visit them at their offices. (She was questioned once on a trip to New York in connection with the Marita LORENZ case.)

12. While in New York discussing her potential with her, it was obvious that her complex background, present activities, vast circle of friends and her unstable character would call for a more thorough debriefing. She agreed to come to Washington with me to "see and talk to a friend for a technical evaluation of her ability to act securely" and on 6 June 1960 she arrived at the hotel Blackstone in Washington registering as Annswell Wilson. Arrangements were made with S/H/CI to have her polygraphed to which she agreed. That evening she was taken to the Hotel Raleigh where an extensive debriefing and evaluation of her was made. The results of this debriefing including a chronology of her activities and past history are contained in a separate

SECRET

13. Following the polygraph, Miss COBB planned to return to New York and Havana but due to the length of time that the examination required, she stayed in Washington until the morning of 7 July. She departed for New York at 8:00 A.M. and left that evening for Havana, Cuba. She obtained information of a CI nature before leaving and managed to pass it on to us through Igor [redacted] of [redacted] before her departure. This information concerned activities of a Cuban agent in Miami.

14. Miss COBB was told prior to her departure that if she was sincere in wanting to aid and assist us in obtaining factual information about current activities in Cuba, she would have to be completely honest and subject herself to some control. She was given a few targets to concentrate on until our next meeting as an attempt to evaluate her ability along these lines. She was asked to obtain names and contacts of Soviet and satellite citizens dealing with the Revolutionary government. She was asked to see the Chief of Greena Latina when she knows well and monitor his activities. She was asked to find a name to see KUNE HAI, head of the Free China News Agency (Communist) and monitor his activities also. Also, she was told to try to determine what Kunes Sidnes accomplished on his visit to the Soviet Union. She was told that all matters pertaining to Cuban relations with the Red Chinese and the Soviets are of interest as well as any indications of local Communist party activities with the Government.

15. At first I was planning to go to Havana to establish a local contact, however, just before her departure Miss [redacted] suggested that she make another trip to New York around 1 July and to discuss the matter of a local contact, if advisable, at that time. I believe that the Havana Station should determine if they want to have local access to Miss COBB and her activities. If Miss COBB can be controlled and accepts steering, it would perhaps be desirable to mould her into a long range asset by having her become very cozy with the Communist leaders and become, overtly, even more "rabid" about the revolutionary movement. Later she could perhaps be used elsewhere in Latin America, probably among the rabid left wing youth groups that are becoming increasingly anti-American and more powerful in various areas.

16. We would appreciate any comments the Havana Station may have concerning where and how to establish contact with her locally. We feel that her usefulness has current need and she may be able to handle many of the spot assignments for the local station. She does need direction and that too could best be handled locally. Her next visit to New York has already been laid on by her physician friend who will request her to visit the city for "treatment" before the doctor departs for Europe on an extended trip. Miss COBB was informed that if her services are considered useful, we will pay her a sum of 200 Cuban pesos a month. She agreed but she was told that any unreliability or indication of dishonesty on her part would break the relationship. The sum of 200 pesos was suggested after discussing the matter of compensation with a senior member of the Havana Station.

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