

U.F.O.

STATEMENT OF:

Efrain Berovides  
121 Ogden Avenue, J.C., N.J.

STATEMENT TAKEN BY:

Detective Charles F. Rivas,  
Dade County Public Safety  
Department, Homicide Section  
Robert Hlavac,  
Inv. James P. Farrell, Hudson  
County Prosecutor's Office  
595 Newark Avenue, J.C.N.J.

DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF  
STATEMENT:

April 12, 1978, 5:51 p.m.  
Hudson County Prosecutor's  
Office, 595 Newark Avenue,  
J.C., N.J., Room 603

This is an investigation into the homicide of Luciano Nieves, which took place on the 21st day of February, 1975 at 6125 South-west 31st Street (parking lot of Children's Variety Hospital).

Q: Would you please state your full name?

A: Efrain Berovides.

Q: What is your age?

A: 38.

Q: What is your date of birth?

A: May 22, 1940.

Q: Where do you live?

A: 121 Ogden Avenue, Jersey City, N.J.

Q: What state?

A: New Jersey.

Q: Do you see the forms that I have laid before you?

A: Yes.

Q: These forms are stating your constitutional rights. I am going to read them to you and as you understand them and read along with me. I want you to sign your initials next to each of your

constitutional rights as I read them and as you understand them.  
I have laid them before you in both Spanish and English.

(He is now reading the forms in Spanish and in English.)

Q: Have you read your rights in Spanish?

A: Yes.

Q: Would you initial it?

A: Yes.

Q: Have you read your rights in English?

A: Yes.

Q: Would you initial it?

A: Yes.

Q: If you want an attorney to be present at this time or any time, you are entitled to have one present. Do you understand that?

A: Yes.

Q: If you cannot afford an attorney and so desire, one will be provided without charge to you, do you understand?

A: Yes.

Q: You have read the above statement and are fully aware of said rights?

A: Yes.

Q: Are you willing to answer any questions asked of you?

A: Okay.

Q: I do not desire the presence of an attorney at this time, do you understand?

A: Yes.

Q: This statement is given of your own free will without threats or coercion?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you agree that you understand your rights both in English and in Spanish?

A: Yes.

Q: Would you please sign the forms?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

A: Yes.

Q: Where do you work?

A: Empire Meat Packaging Company.

Q: What is the address?

A: 1161 East Broad Street, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Q: Do you know the telephone number?

A: 351-0500.

Q: How long have you worked there?

A: One year.

Q: Where did your work before that?

A: Newark Boneless Meat Co., 75 Stockton St., Newark, N.J.

Q: To what grade did you go to school?

A: In Cuba, I make first year in High School.

Q: What is your occupation?

A: Butcher.

Q: Are you married?

A: Yes.

Q: How long?

A: 13 years.

Q: What is your wife's name?

A: Martina Estella.

Q: And she lives with you?

A: Yes.

Q: How many children do you have?

A: One. And one died.

Q: How long have you been living at your present address?

A: Over six years.

Q: Where did you live before that?

A: I lived for seven months in 473 Walker Street in Fairview, N.J.

Q: Where were you born?

A: In Cuba.

Q: Where in Cuba?

A: Carbinas, Cuba.

Q: How long did you live in Cuba?

A: All my life before I came to the United States in 1960.

Q: Did you know an individual by the name of Valentine Hernandez, also known as Tino in Cuba?

A: Yes.

Q: How well did you know him, Valentine Hernandez, while you lived in Cuba?

A: His father is counselor in Cuba. I knew him all my life.

Q: I am placing a photograph in front of you. Is this the same Valentine Hernandez that you have always known?

A: Sure.

Q: Are you absolutely sure?

A: Yes.

Q: Would you please place your initials on the top left hand corner of the photograph?

A: Yes.

Q: Would you please place the date after your initials?

A: Yes.

Q: Would you please place the time which is 5:59 p.m. on the photograph?

A: Yes.

Q: And I will place my initials on the right corner of the photograph.

Q: Do you know the individual in the photograph that I am now placing in front of you?

A: No.

Q: You do not know the individual in the photograph?

A: No.

Q: Do you know an individual by the name of Jesus Lazo?

A: No.

Q: Have you ever heard the name Jesus Lazo?

A: In the newspaper and later, he told me.

Q: Later on, who told you what?

A: Valentine told me he go with him.

Q: You are speaking about Jesus Lazo being with Valentine Hernandez?

A: Yes, but I never seen him.

Q: What year did you come to the U.S.?

A: May 29, 1960.

Q: Where did you go when you first came to the U.S.?

A: Miami, Florida.

Q: How long did you live in Miami, Florida after coming to the U.S.?

A: I live in Miami till 1961. Then I go to Guatemala.

Q: From 1960 to 1961 you lived in Miami after which time you went to Guatemala to train for the Bay of Pigs Invasion, is that correct?

A: Yes.

Q: What year did you return?

A: Same year, 1961, in October.

Q: You were a Prisoner of War?

A: No.

Q: Are you, or have you ever been a member of the 2506 Brigade?

A: Yes.

Q: Are you still an active member?

A: No.

Q: Do you know if Valentine Hernandez is or was a member of the 2506 Brigade?

A: No. I don't know.

Q: When did you first meet Valentine Hernandez in Miami Florida?

A: When I came back from Cuba in October.

Q: Of what year?

A: 1961.

Q: Under what conditions did you first meet?

A: He cry because I went to see his mother. I go to see his mother. Everybody go to my house that night ...

Q: Did you re-establish your friendship with Valentine Hernandez and his family?

A: Yes.

Q: What year did you move to New Jersey?

A: 1965.

Q: Did you still maintain your friendship with Valentine Hernandez and his family during the time you lived in New Jersey, after moving from Miami?

A: Yes, I would see them once in a while, not a lot, because I

worked all the time, I not got time.

Q: During the period of 1975, were you living at the present location where you are living now, which is 121 Ogden Avenue, J.C.?

A: Yes.

Q: Jersey City?

A: Yes.

Q: When did you first hear of Luciano Nieves' death?

A: In the newspaper, on the radio, on T.V.

Q: When?

A: The day they killed him.

Q: That was the 21st day of February or one more day after Feb. 21, 1975?

A: Yes.

Q: Possibly the 21st or 22nd day of February?

A: Yes.

Q: When did Valentine Hernandez contact you after the Luciano Nieves' death?

A: A week, a week and a half.

Q: Under what conditions did he contact you?

A: He called me on the telephone; he wanted to come over my house.

Q: Did he call you at home?

A: Yes.

Q: How did he get your telephone number?

A: He talked to me about a year and a half before. He maybe got my telephone number from Florida.

Q: What did that particular conversation, which you state took place approximately one week after the Luciano Nieves' homicide, consist of?

A: On the phone?

Q: Yes.

A: He wanted to see me.

Q: Did he tell you why?

A: No.

Q: Did he tell you where he was calling from?

A: From New York.

Q: Did he say where?

A: No.

Q: Did he say that he wanted to see you alone or that there would be someone else with him?

A: No.

Q: Did you agree to see him at your house?

A: Yes.

Q: When did he come to your house?

A: The next day.

Q: Do you recall at approximately what time he arrived at your house?

A: Suppertime. About six or six thirty. Because I told him I would be home after five o'clock.

Q: Do you recall what he was wearing at that time?

A: He had a coat on. It was wintertime.

Q: Do you recall if he was wearing glasses?

A: No. I don't remember.

Q: What did you and Valentine Hernandez discuss at your house during the time of your meeting?

A: He said he came from Miami because the FBI was looking for him and he wanted to stay one night at my house because he had no place to stay that night.

Q: After he told you he had no place to stay that night, did he



A: He told me the FBI looked for him because the FBI said he killed Luciano Nieves.

Q: Did you notice anything peculiar about his hands and fingers?

A: Yes. I saw he got part of his finger missing.

Q: Do you recall which finger, on which hand?

A: (Showing) That finger, showing his right index finger.

Q: Did you ask Valentine Hernandez what happened to his finger?

A: Yes.

Q: What did he reply?

A: He say he got shot in the finger.

Q: During this period of time, who was present at your home?

A: My wife, my kid.

Q: Did your wife see his finger?

A: No.

Q: Was she present during any of the conversation between you and Valentine Hernandez?

A: No.

Q: Where was she?

A: She was in the living room and Valentine Hernandez and me were in the kitchen.

Q: What did Valentine Hernandez ask of you?

A: He asked me to stay one night in my house. He had no place to go that night.

Q: Did he tell you during the time of your conversation in the kitchen, did he re-emphasize that the police were looking for him and that was the reason for him wanting to stay at your house?

A: He said he had no place to go because the police was looking for him.

Q: Where did he come from?

A: New York.

Q: And prior to New York?

A: Miami.

Q: Did he tell you how he came to New York from Miami?

A: No.

Q: Did you notice whether Mr. Hernandez had a vehicle at the time he arrived at your house?

A: Yes. I think it was a Buick.

Q: During your conversation with Valentine, that evening, did he mention Jesus Lazo?

A: Yes.

Q: What did he say in reference to Jesus Lazo?

A: He says he was also running with him away from the police.

Q: Did he tell you that he came from Miami with Jesus Lazo?

A: Yes.

Q: During your conversation with Valentine, did he tell you how he had got his finger shot?

A: No. He told me a shooting somewhere but not exactly where.

Q: Did he say that he shot himself or that someone else shot him?

A: No, he no told me who shot him.

Q: He didn't tell you under what circumstances he was shot?

A: No.

Q: Did he tell you that he killed Luciano Nieves?

A: No, he never told me.

Q: What did he tell you in reference to Luciano Nieves' homicide?

A: He told me he came from Miami because the FBI was looking for him and Lazo and the FBI said he killed Luciano Nieves.

Q: From your conversation with Mr. Valentine Hernandez, what did you conclude?

A: I think, myself, he never told me exactly what he did, he is a friend of mine, but I think he killed the guy myself.

Q: From your conversation with Valentine Hernandez, did you conclude that he killed, that he and Lazo killed Luciano Nieves?

A: Yes. When I talk to somebody else, I know some people, I am scared myself, I told him, I don't want to give you a hand, because I have my boy, my conclusion at that time that he got a big problem, and I told him to go. But he never told me that he killed him. But I think myself that he killed him.

Q: Where did he sleep the night that he stayed at your house?

A: In the basement of my house.

Q: Is there anything else that you can recall during that meeting with Valentine Hernandez that would be beneficial to the investigation?

A: I told you that Valentine Hernandez' wife came into my house, she had problems, to feed the children, she had no money, and I gave her money for the children to eat and the next time she called me I said this is dumb, don't call me no more. I don't want to get involved.

Q: On what did you base your decision to break away from these people?

A: Because I know the FBI was looking for him.

Q: What happened?

A: I was scared for my family.

Q: You say, you know what happened, what happened?

A: The FBI was looking for him.

Q: Is there anything else you can think of. Has either Valentine Hernandez or Jesus Lazo attempted to contact you since that last meeting with Valentine Hernandez?

A: No. I no talk to him no more. Just the wife.

Q: Are you familiar with an individual by the name of Lucy Luciano or Lucy Lazo?

A: No.

Q: During the time of your association with Valentine Hernandez, have you at anytime known him to necessitate the wearing of glasses, eye glasses?

A: No.

Q: Is it common for Valentine Hernandez to wear a mustache as far as you know?

A: No.

Q: Have you ever known Valentine Hernandez to wear a mustache before?

A: No.

Q: When Valentine Hernandez came to your residence, after your telephone conversation with him, did he have a mustache?

A: Yes.

Q: Have you known Valentine Hernandez to ever wear a toupee?

A: No.

Q: At the time he came to your residence, was he wearing a toupee?

A: No.

Q: I am ending this interview at 6:35 p.m. Thank you. After this statement is typed up, and after any corrections you deem necessary, would you be willing to sign this statement?

A: Yes.

*Signed Before Me*  
*4/13/78. 3:53 PM*

*D A*

*Efrain Berovides*  
Efrain Berovides