

INVESTIGATOR UNDER FIRE

Bribery Charges Aired In Cuban Slaying Case

SANTIAGO, Cuba, Jan. 27—(AP)—Bribery charges were before a Cuban court today in the trial of 26-year-old Mrs. Karen Nelson, American woman accused with two Cuban plantation employes of complicity in the pistol-death of her cane-planter husband.

Swan Nelson, father of the dead Alvar Nelson, 31, told the three judges yesterday that the state's chief witness had sought bribe through a third person to have the charges dismissed.

The witness, Enrique Bringerzu, who brought the initial charges against Mrs. Nelson and the two employes and who said he likes "to investigate things," interjected another surprising angle.

Bringerzu testified "I cannot think Karen Nelson the author of any crime. I have no idea who might be responsible, but I do not think it was an accident."

He did not explain why, under the circumstances, he had brought the charges. He told newsmen later that he is the "villain in this proceeding, but I believed it was my duty to bring the charges." He did not elaborate.

Mrs. Nelson, formerly of Utica, Mich., and the two employes on the Nelson plantation, are charged with having plotted the murder of Alvar Nelson to collect his insurance. Charged with Mrs. Nelson are Luis Monterde, plantation foreman, and Hector Marrero, plantation storekeeper, whose sister is Monterde's wife.

Nelson was shot fatally Dec. 11, 1949, on his father's plantation. The defense claims that the shooting occurred accidentally when Nelson's own revolver fell from his holster and discharged when he went to the plantation pumphouse to start a pump.

Nelson, asked directly whether Bringerzu had ap-

proached him for a bribe after the charges were filed said:

"Yes, that is true, but he did not do so directly, but sent a third person to see me, saying that with his connections he could have had the accusation dismissed and the whole thing cleaned up in a week."

"I am absolutely convinced the death of my son was accidental," Nelson continued. "Therefore, I do not have nor ever had the slightest suspicion that Karen, or two employes of my plantation had anything to do with it. Karen and their baby live with me, and the two others are still my employes and have my fullest confidence."

Bringerzu, who was described by other witnesses as a "despicable character and a busybody who appears off balance mentally," said he based his opinion that Karen was not "the author of any crime" on his own observations and "what some people said." He did not identify these persons.

Nelson dismissed the state's suggestion that an illicit relationship existed between Karen and Monterde with the statement: "Knowing Karen and Monterde as I do, it is absolutely impossible to think such a thing."

Victor Perdomo, a rural guard soldier and one of the original investigators, said he found no evidence of any crime.

The original investigation produced a finding of accidental death. Mrs. Nelson, Monterde and Marrero were arrested about three months later. Friends expressed the belief that their arrest developed from the malicious gossip of a discharged plantation employe.

The trial moved into its fifth day with the indication that proceedings would be suspended for 20 days if not completed today. Presiding Judge Jose Subirats explained that Monday is a holiday and that the defense attorney has business in Havana Tuesday.