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Hicks file

13 November 1960

CONTACT REPORT

SUBJECT: Meeting with Marmel Ray and West Odine in the latter's apartment (110 West 120 Street, New York City) on 22 November, 1960.

PART TWO OF THREE

1. Note: This meeting had been called by me in order to discuss the existing situation at sea, various contacts and our future relationships with the MRF. (See Memorandum For the Record dated 21 November 1960, OIR 12552, OUI 4556, and C/M/L's memorandum to C/M/L, 9 November, 1960; also see OIR 1774, 10 Nov 60 with notes that Hunt obtained Varona's concurrence on 21 November to discuss the status of the PAD's controller.)

2. The meeting was started by me telling Ray that I had received a somewhat garbled message concerning a certain operation on the Isle of Flores. How serious an undertaking was this and what, practically, was involved? (Generally this question was posed pursuant to a request by C/M/L, and in line with C/M/L's memorandum to me.) Ray informed me as follows:

(a) There are two garrisons stationed at the Isle of Flores with whom his organization has contact. One garrison is commanded by a [redacted] who could assist on approximately 100 men to [redacted] if [redacted] decides to break away from OAS. [redacted] also has approved [redacted] to trustworthy officials under his command (whether these officers were military or civilian Ray did not know) which were ready to assist in anti-OAS activities--the second garrison was located at the Punta del Norte and was primarily a coast artillery installation. Ray did not recall the name of the commanding officer.

(b) Quite separately from the above, Ray's people are in contact with a (Mrs) Padilla who is the [redacted] of the prison where Huber Katos is incarcerated. According to reliable information, Ray says, Padilla may be of help in arranging the escape of Katos. A female courier who arrives in Miami on 21 December said that Katos seems to trust Padilla and has given her his wife and has visit him at the prison--he okay to utilize Padilla in efforts designed to liberate Katos from prison.

(c) In considering the situation outlined in (a) and (b) above, Marmel Ray's military planners felt that the escape of Katos could be feasible since the MRF planners believe that the MRF will be freed and if the two garrisons are to be in contact with the MRF will defect, then other troops and a good part of the MRF will be on the Isle of Flores, know by the name OAS, as stated in the report. On the other hand, the MRF felt that the Isle of Flores was not

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undoubtedly know Jim Smith was also the military adviser to the MRP; any shipments would undoubtedly carry the FBI label and in all likelihood ID-prepared, anti-Castro literature would accompany such shipments; planes and pilots utilized in such an undertaking were FBI assets and identified as such.

6. Ray's reply to this was somewhat as follows: while the MRP thinks it controls these pilots I, Bender, should at least realize that the pilots who were working (formerly for Cubana Air Lines) really belonged to the MRP. In any case he, Ray, and the MRP would accept the proposed arrangement because it would not imply that the MRP is politically beholden to the FBI; it would simply indicate to the people inside Cuba that the MRP was utilizing all resources to obtain the equipment necessary to overthrow the regime. Naturally he was not enthusiastic about this formula but he could live and cope with it.

7. I told Ray that I would have to get in touch with our military people in order to find out whether or not we now had sufficient data on hand on which to base a decision. (Comments: C/M/J was briefed telephonically by me on the foregoing and on additional aspects of this meeting which are reported in part two of this Contact Report. C/M/J and I felt that we did not have as yet sufficient data to make any commitments; C/M/J instructed me to advise Ray that:

(a) Either the MRP should submit a detailed plan which we would consider on the basis of which we would then decide whether to be of assistance or not or;

(b) The MRP could go it alone, and ask us for some assistance after the operation has been launched and we would make our decision on the basis of existing circumstances.

Above was transmitted to Ray who indicated that the MRP did not desire to go it alone and that he would instruct Berguin to immediately contact Smith in Miami to work out a coordinated operational plan.)

8. At this point at the meeting I felt that the time was ripe to make the \$7500 payment (by order check) and to advise Ray that another \$7500 would be readily available to him via Jim Smith, the FBI controller. I repeated what I had said previously about duplication and followed the approved lines contained in my 19 November 1960 memorandum to C/M/J. Ray and Chibas' reactions were not unexpected; they rejected this particular funding proposal. (Comments: for additional details and other items covered during this meeting see pages two and three, "Contact Report, 22 November, Meeting with Ray and Chibas.")

CORRALO BROWNE  
C/M/J/PA

GD:msh

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