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MHFNO: 98-0457370

SECRET

SENSIND:

PAGE: 1

SECRET

ERP: 2

STAFF

ACTION: IMS/ESG (020) INFO: CIC/CEG, CIC/CEGLA, CIC/LA, DO/IRO, IMDORECORD, LA/FIG, LA/FIGSC, LIMITED, MDSX, ODPD, ORMS/LA, FILE, C/LA (3/W)

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PAGE 001

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CITE 55099

TO: PRIORITY DIRECTOR.

FOR: LIMITED DISSEM IMS/ESG INFO DO/IRO, CHIEF/LA, LA/FIG, LA/FIGSC, CIC/LA

SLUGS: WNINTEL

SUBJECT: CONTINUED PROTECTION OF OUR USE OF

REF: DIRECTOR 674771 98 0430861

TEXT:

1. ACTION REQUIRED: NONE, FYI ONLY AND IN RESPONSE TO REF.

2. THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION WHICH OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZES THE FACT OF [REDACTED] WILL BE A DELICATE ISSUE ACROSS THE DDO, AND *--ALTHOUGH DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS IN THE JFK ASSASSINATION RECORDS REVIEW BOARD (ARRB) ARE LIMITED TO ONLY FOUR COUNTRIES-- THE WORLD-WIDE USE OF [REDACTED] MEANS THE IMPLICATIONS WILL BE WIDELY FELT. IN THIS SENSE IT IS ALMOST SELF-DEFEATING TO ARGUE FROM FOUR SPECIFIC CASES [REDACTED] AND EXTRAPOLATE FOR THE WHOLE DDO. NEVERTHELESS, WE WILL ATTEMPT TO RESPOND TO REF FROM THE [REDACTED] PERSPECTIVE.

3. OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF CIA USE OF [REDACTED] IN [REDACTED] WILL PREJUDICE UNILATERAL OFFICERS' [REDACTED] AND ACTIVITY, WHICH --AS IN MOST [REDACTED] IS THE [REDACTED] AND ACTIVITY WHICH MATTERS THE MOST IN THAT THESE OFFICERS TEND TO HANDLE THE MOST SENSITIVE [REDACTED] OUR UNILATERAL OFFICERS ALSO HANDLE [REDACTED] OFFICERS. THUS BY DEFINITION THE UNILATERAL ACTIVITY CARRIED OUT BY THESE OFFICERS IS NON-COMPATIBLE, AND WOULD CAUSE DAMAGE TO [REDACTED] RELATIONS WITH OUR VARIOUS [REDACTED] CURRENTLY, [REDACTED] IS ENJOYING A PERIOD WHEREIN --AS A RESULT OF PRESIDENT CLINTON'S VISIT HERE IN LATE 1997, AND THE [REDACTED] VISIT TO HEADQUARTERS IN NOV 97-- [REDACTED] HAS DECIDED TO RE-ORIENT ITS ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM SMALL [REDACTED] RELATIONSHIPS IT HAS WITH VARIOUS [REDACTED] THIS STRATEGIC SHIFT, WHICH COULD HAVE LONG-TERM BENEFITS FOR CIA, WILL BE DASHED WHEN [REDACTED] WE RUN NON-COMPATIBLE OPERATIONS [REDACTED] THE TRUST THAT TAKES AN

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ENDLESS NUMBER OF MEETINGS TO BUILD WILL BE GONE WITH THE FIRST PUBLICATION LOCALLY CONFIRMING OUR USE OF [REDACTED]

4. MOREOVER, BILATERAL U.S. [REDACTED] RELATIONS HAVE NEVER BEEN CLOSER; THESE WOULD BE TARNISHED, NOT IRREPARABLY BY ANY MEANS BUT UNNECESSARILY, BY OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF CIA USE [REDACTED] HISTORICALLY RELATIONS WITH [REDACTED] HAVE BEEN STRAINED, AND IT IS ONLY DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS THAT A NEW PRESIDENT AND HIS BOLD FREE-MARKET REFORMS HAVE PUSHED [REDACTED] SQUARELY INTO THE DEMOCRATIC ORBIT. CURIOUSLY, THE CLOSE POLITICAL RELATIONS AND OUR STEADILY-IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH [REDACTED] MEANS THAT BOTH PARTIES -EMBASSY DIPLOMATS AND SENIOR [REDACTED] OFFICERS-- WONDER WHY WE NEED TO [REDACTED] IF WE CAN GET VIRTUALLY ANYTHING WE ASK FOR FROM [REDACTED] OR FROM [REDACTED] OFFICIALS. INDEED, IN THIS RELATIVELY OPEN, COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT, AN INDICATION THAT [REDACTED] WAS WORKING ON INCOMPATIBLE [REDACTED] TARGETS WOULD BE ESPECIALLY DAMAGING.

5. AT THE RISK OF BORING THE READER WITH DETAIL, EMBASSY [REDACTED] IS SO OPEN A WORKPLACE THAT THERE IS NO REAL CLEARED ACCESS AREA (CAA), BUT RATHER A "HYBRID" CAA, TO USE THE RSO'S PHRASE. THIS MEANS THAT FSN'S HAVE LONG HAD OFFICES ON THE THIRD FLOOR, WHERE THE *EXECUTIVE OFFICES AND REPORTING OFFICES (INCLUDING [REDACTED] ARE LOCATED. NEEDLESS TO SAY, [REDACTED] IS NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THE [REDACTED] CONFIGURATION OF OFFICES, [REDACTED] IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, WHERE EMBASSY OFFICERS DO NOT HAVE A FULL APPRECIATION OF THE ROLE/NEED [REDACTED] IN SUCH AN OPEN FRIENDLY SOCIETY, OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF CIA'S USE [REDACTED] WOULD ONLY REAFFIRM THEIR POINT OF VIEW. OUR FEW [REDACTED] WOULD ESSENTIALLY THEN BE DECLARED. [REDACTED] WOULD HAVE TO ATTEMPT TO CHANGE OUR [REDACTED] PROFILE BY OBTAINING MORE [REDACTED] OFFICERS WHILE REDUCING THE NUMBER [REDACTED] AS HEADQUARTERS IS AWARE, UNDER CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES THERE ARE FEW [REDACTED] AND THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF NEW ONES TAKES YEARS AND IS EXPENSIVE. IN THIS SCENARIO, [REDACTED] WOULD NEVER RECEIVE ENOUGH PRIORITY TO WARRANT SENDING THREE [REDACTED] TO REPLACE THE THREE [REDACTED] SLOTS WE CURRENTLY HAVE. THE END RESULT WOULD BE THAT WE WOULD COLLECT VERY LITTLE [REDACTED] ON MAJOR PORTIONS OF OUR OPERATING DIRECTIVE (OD). SPECIFICALLY, INTERNAL POLITICAL REPORTING, WHICH IS A FIRST PRIORITY OBJECTIVE, WOULD BE ZEROED OUT, AND REPORTING ON THE [REDACTED] TARGETS, BOTH SECOND PRIORITY OBJECTIVES, WOULD BE NON-EXISTENT. THIS WOULD BE A SERIOUS LOSS TO THE USG, SINCE OUR [REDACTED] REPORTING HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN THE ONLY MEANS OF LEARNING TO WHAT EXTENT THE [REDACTED] ARE RESPECTING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND NOT REBUILDING THEIR MISSILE PROGRAM. ON THE [REDACTED] TARGET, WE WOULD LOSE SIGNIFICANT REPORTING ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND THE IMPACT OF THE ASIAN FINANCIAL CRISIS IN THE AMERICAS. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, HOWEVER, WE WOULD LOSE THE TRUST OF [REDACTED] GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND OF SOME SENIOR [REDACTED] OFFICIALS, WITH THE PREDICTABLE RESULT THAT IT WOULD TAKE YEARS TO REBUILD THE RELATIONSHIP.

6. IN TERMS OF A SECURITY THREAT, [REDACTED] REMAINS THE ONLY CAPITAL IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE THAT HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF TWO HIZBALLAH BOMBINGS, KILLING HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE. A TERRORIST INFRASTRUCTURE EXISTS IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA [REDACTED]

MHFNO: 98-0457370

SECRET

SENSIND:

PAGE: 3

OR THREE TIMES PER YEAR [REDACTED] OBTAINS REPORTING OF ANOTHER THREAT ON LOCAL JEWISH OR U.S. INTERESTS, INCLUDING THIS EMBASSY. IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, PUBLICATION OF CIA USE OF [REDACTED] MIGHT ENDANGER PEOPLES' LIVES, SPECIFICALLY [REDACTED] OFFICERS'. HAMAS, GAMA'AT AL ISLAMIYAH, AND HIZBALLAH ARE ALL ACTIVE [REDACTED] IN ADDITION, [REDACTED] ARAB POPULATION OF OVER 700,000. IN THE DIPLOMATIC WORLD, THE CUBAN EMBASSY IS LARGE AND ACTIVE. WE ARE CERTAIN THEY WOULD SEEK TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY [REDACTED] GAPS. [REDACTED] HAS NOT HAD ANY SIGNIFICANT [REDACTED] GAPS IN THE PAST, AND THUS ANY ONE OF THIS MAGNITUDE WOULD HAVE A LARGE IMPACT.

7. [REDACTED] HOPES THE ABOVE IS USEFUL IN MARSHALING ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE PUBLICATION OF THE ARRB RECORDS.

8. FILE: NONE. DECL ON: X1. CL REASON: 1.5(C) CL BY: 0705909
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END OF MESSAGE

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