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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : *W* Director, FBI

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DATE: October 11, 1955

FROM : Legal Attaché - Havana, Cuba (94-11)

~~SECRET~~ - AIR COURIER

SUBJECT: THE MAFIA - HAVANA DIVISION
GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE INTELLIGENCE FILE
CRIMINAL SECTION, INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION

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DECLASSIFIED BY *SP8 Mac/pda*
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(JPR) Organization and Membership

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#211,326

No information has come to the attention of the Havana Office up to the present time as to the existence or non-existence of a so-called MAFIA. There are a number of American hoodlums who frequently travel back and forth from Havana to the United States and there are also a number of them who have established their residence or headquarters in Havana.

Efforts are being made at the present time to keep a closer check on these individuals and to further ascertain their activities and connections in Havana. Should this check reflect any organized tie-up between the various American mobsters and hoodlums or should any indication of the existence of a MAFIA become apparent, the Bureau will be immediately notified.

It is noted in reports received at Havana from various domestic field offices that American hoodlums who are traveling to Havana are oftentimes referred to as members of the MAFIA or "syndicate," etc. As stated above, a closer check will be maintained on these individuals to establish their connection with one another.

There is set out later in this report information which indicates connections between American hoodlums and officials of the Cuban Government. While it is realized the Bureau is primarily and principally interested in possible tie-ins between MAFIA or underworld elements and politics or politicians of the U.S. Government, the information set forth below is being submitted as also being of possible interest to the Bureau.

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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associated with his brother, ~~HENRY TRAFFICANTE~~, and they allegedly control a bolita operation in Florida. JAMES ("JIMMIE") ~~LONGO~~, FBI 4454459, is alleged to be a Lieutenant of SANTOS TRAFFICANTE and operates as a messenger for TRAFFICANTE between Florida and Havana. LONGO was known to be at the Sevilla Biltmore Hotel in Havana in August and September, 1955. *Cuba*

MEYER LANSKY, who is considered as one of the top hoodlums of the United States, was reported to be in Havana, Cuba, during July, 1955. The purpose of the trip was to meet with his brother, ~~JACK LANSKY~~, and other unidentified individuals to set up a gambling casino in Havana.

Criminal Activities and Methods of Operation

All information in the possession of the Havana Office to date with reference to the activities of the American gangsters in Cuba relates to the operation of gambling casinos and similar enterprises. Inasmuch as gambling is legal in Havana, these matters are not strictly criminal activities.

According to information furnished by CI HAV-11, MEYER LANSKY was in conference with Mr. JAMES ENNIS, of the Hotel Nacional in Havana, in January, 1955. Informant was of the opinion that LANSKY was trying to arrange the gambling concession at the Hotel Nacional which, under authority of a law decree published 1/27/55, could be authorized to operate a gambling casino. At that time there were negotiations under way for the purchase of the Hotel Nacional from the Cuban Government by the Pan American Affiliates, a subsidiary of the Pan American World Airways. Information received by the Havana Office was to the effect that LANSKY was awaiting the results of these negotiations to see if he could then obtain the gambling concession at the Hotel Nacional. *(u)*

Source further stated that SANTOS TRAFFICANTE, JR., of Tampa, Florida, is presently running a numbers operation out of the Hotel Sevilla Biltmore in Havana. It is noted that although gambling is authorized in Havana, numbers writing is not but it has always been tolerated inasmuch as it affords a considerable source of graft for the local police. Source stated that the fact TRAFFICANTE is able to operate a numbers racket out of the Sevilla Biltmore Hotel is an indication that TRAFFICANTE has backing from the Cuban Government. It is noted that the Sevilla Biltmore Hotel is owned by one AMLETO BATTISTI, an Italian born Cuban citizen, *(u)*

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who was elected to the Cuban Congress in November, 1954, and who for many years has been known unofficially as the numbers king of Havana. Source further stated that TRAFFICANTE is backed in his numbers operation by Brigadier General EULOGIO CANTILLO y PORRAS, Adjutant General of the Cuban Army. (S)(u)

Source also stated that TRAFFICANTE is attempting to obtain the gambling concession at the Comodoro Hotel in Havana and apparently has the inside track because of backing received by him from General CANTILLO. It is to be noted that the Comodoro Hotel does not have gambling facilities at the present time but is eligible to obtain authorization for same under the new Cuban law decree. This hotel is a combination beach club and hotel and has about 2,000 members in addition to transient guests who may visit the hotel. (S)(u)

CI HAV-11 on March 19, 1955, advised that he had received information to the effect that TRAFFICANTE was attempting to take over the gambling operations at the San Souci Night Club. Source stated that the San Souci was presently owned by Tropicana interests who bought up a controlling percentage of the stock in order to squeeze out NORMAN ROTHMAN who had operated the San Souci as front man and ostensible owner although it has always been indicated that he was bank-rolled by someone else. (S)(u)

In connection with the activities of TRAFFICANTE, it is noted that HAV-11 on April 18, 1955, advised that TRAFFICANTE had arrived in Havana on April 17, 1955, although according to previous reports, his arrival date had been scheduled for April 20, 1955. (S)(u)

The Miami Herald for April 21, 1955, reported the finding of the murdered body of CHARLIE WALL on April 20, 1955. WALL was described as the 76 year old statesman of the Florida underworld. He had been shot seven or eight times with a shotgun and his throat had been cut from ear to ear. It is not known whether WALL's murder is connected in any way with the fact that TRAFFICANTE arrived in Havana on April 17 after having previously announced to his friends that he was coming to Havana on April 20, 1955.

From information contained in the files of the Havana Office, taken from reports submitted by the Miami Office in GIIF Surveys,

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CUBA
The article charged PERTIERRA with operating the gambling at the National Casino and Jockey Club with the assistance of CHARLES "LUCKY" LUCIANO and his lieutenants, MEYER LANSKY and CHARLIE SIMMS. Both PERTIERRA and MIRANDA are still actively associated with gambling interests in Havana at the present time.

In November, 1952, HAV-11 furnished information to the effect that "LUCKY" LUCIANO was making an effort to obtain official approval for re-entry into Cuba. It is noted that subsequent to LUCIANO's arrest in 1947, in Havana, he was deported to Italy. According to the source, the person handling the attempted approval for re-entry of LUCIANO into Havana in 1952 was ANTONIO MADAN VALDES. (X)(U)

Source at the same time furnished information that MEYER LANSKY was trying to secure the concession for gambling operations at Oriental Park and that he subsequently purchased a share of the Montmartre gambling casino from PERTIERRA who for many years had owned and operated the Montmartre. Source related at that time that LANSKY's brother, JAKE, was in Havana looking after their interests in the Montmartre. It is noted that during 1946 and 1947 when LUCIANO was in Cuba, MEYER LANSKY was one of his most frequent visitors and LANSKY, at that time, was planning to buy a share in the gambling concession in the National Casino and the Oriental Park Race Track. (X)(U)

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In January, 1955, HAV-11 furnished information with reference to the possible drug activities of MARIO GARCIA who is associated with the Montmartre Night Club and who was believed to have connections with "LUCKY" LUCIANO. No verification of this information was obtained but it was referred to the proper authorities of the Cuban Government and also the U.S. Treasury Representative in Havana. (X)(U) *cuba*

By letter dated 2/1/54, captioned "Bookmaking and Race Wire Service Activities; Special Survey," the New York Office reported that CI NY-207C advised that the New York underworld syndicate controls gambling and other illegal activities in Cuba. The mob, according to NY-207C, was reported to have excellent connections with the Batista Government in Cuba and were represented in their operations by an attorney who is married to President Batista's oldest daughter.

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It is noted that SALVATORE GRANELLO, concerning whom information has been set forth previously in this report, was fingerprinted by the Foreign Section of the Criminal Bureau of Investigation of the Havana Police on 3/30/54 in connection with an application for a firearms license. GRANELLO was assisted in this matter by a member of the law firm of PEREZ BENITO y LAMAR. "TONY" PEREZ BENITO is married to MIRTA BATISTA, a daughter of President Batista.

Reports have also reached the Havana Office to the effect that Colonel ROBERTO ~~FERNANDEZ MIRANDA~~, who is a brother-in-law of President Batista, has also entered into negotiations with American hoodlums and gangsters. Colonel FERNANDEZ is active in the control of Oriental Park Race Track which was taken over by the Cuban Government and is also rumored to be in on deals in connection with the newly planned operations at Oriental Park Race Track. *Cuba*

By letter to the Director dated 7/13/54, *mas* the Miami Office furnished information to the effect that ~~EDUARDO FERNANDEZ~~, who was Cuban Consul at Miami, Florida, and who also manages property owned by Cuban President Batista in the Miami area, is married to ~~ANN FISCETTI~~, widow of the late ~~CHARLIE FISCETTI~~. *Cuba* *File* FBI 643159 B. FISCETTI was a member of the Chicago CAPONE SYNDICATE and was a high ranking member of the U.S. underworld.

On April 28, 1955, CI HAV-11 advised that a concession to bring slot machines into Cuba and to set them up had been granted to MARTIN FOX, one of the owners of the Tropicana Night Club in Havana. Source stated that authorization for the above had been given by ~~SANTIAGO REY~~, Minister of the Interior. Source advised that ~~GEORGE DEVINE~~, American hoodlum, had been negotiating for the concession and was very put out over the fact it was given to MARTIN FOX. *(X)(u)*

On April 29, 1955, Mr. EDMUND CHESTER, confidant and confidential advisor to President Batista, advised that the introduction of slot machines and other gambling devices into Cuba was authorized under the new law decree concerning gambling which had been passed in January, 1955. CHESTER stated that a great deal of pressure had been put on the Cuban Institute of Tourism to obtain passage of the above law decree by MEYER LANSKY.

A separate file is being set up to correlate and report all information which may come to the attention of the Havana Office in connection with the so-called MAFIA. This matter will be given close attention and all information received will be promptly reported.

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