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MICHAEL MCLANEY
[Restricted]

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SECRET

Our Ref: SF.52/5

"X"

9th February, 1967.

gambling Activities - Bahamas Islands

You will recall that on 30th December, 1966, I forwarded to you a memorandum based on information received from the Bahamas Police (Special Branch - Supt. Gregory Bentley in charge) via my Headquarters as well as from my opposite number in Jamaica.

2. As paragraph 7 thereof indicates, we were most anxious that no action be taken by you to prejudice either the source or subsequent investigation in the Bahamas; we are grateful for your co-operation in this respect. We did, however, ask you to let us have details of any records you had relating to those mentioned in the report. Such records as were available you kindly forwarded to us on 5th January, and since that time I have made oral requests for further information relating to McLANEY, and for a further attempt to be made to check the name of David PROBINSKI, referred to earlier as PROVINSKI.

3. As indicated at the time, the material I passed to you emanated from a source whose reliability had then to be established; the same state of uncertainty regarding the source pertains today. As you will appreciate, the report as it stands indicates that the P.L.P. in their recent election campaign in the Bahamas expected to derive appreciable assistance from the U.S. contacts named in the report, some of whom (such as PROBINSKI) seem to be concerned (unexceptionally) with the Civil Rights movement and others, such as Michael McLANEY perhaps with organised crime syndicates. In the event, the election passed off without violence, but this may have been due more to the fact that the P.L.P. (unexpectedly) won the election than to any other factor; even though the allegations of arms trafficking made in the report cannot be confirmed, there is reason to believe (based on what the F.B.I. Field Office in Miami has passed to the Bahamas Police in recent months - para 8 of my note refers) that the P.L.P. (if so disposed) could have laid their hands on sufficient firearms to make their point.

4. The result of the elections was that the P.L.P. came to power, and L.O. PINDLING (para 2(d) of my note) is now Prime Minister. While investigations in the Bahamas have by no means confirmed the entire story as recorded in my letter of 30th December, it is nevertheless a fact that since the election McLANEY has been seen in and around a Bahamian Minister's office and this naturally gives rise to concern on the part of the Governor and also the Commonwealth Office in London as to the extent to which those named in my note of 30th December may have succeeded in ingratiating themselves with the P.L.P. leaders for purposes which, to say the least, are most unlikely to be conducive to good government.

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ENCLOSURE

*name: JH. Galt to DeLoach
2-16-67*

(S)

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15. The ...

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5. The question of the extent to which Mr. PINDLING and his ministers should be advised against maintaining associations with undesirable clients such as McLANEY not only raises problems of dissemination, but also (and perhaps even more important) the extent to which it would be wise to base an approach solely on the contents of the unconfirmed report sent to you on 30th December.

6. If I may say so, my own view has been from the outset that your expert assistance should have been enlisted in an attempt to get to the bottom of this report, particularly as it contains suggestions that U.S. citizens may have been engaged in unlawful activities within your jurisdiction. I am glad to say that this view has now been accepted; accordingly I have been instructed to approach you on behalf of the British Government departments concerned, as well as my own Service, and to request that you would be so good as to consider mounting an investigation of those named in the report, including the interviewing (where possible) of those concerned, with a view to assisting us to determine its reliability.

7. In an attachment to this letter, I attach additional information relevant to the original report which I have received from the Bahamas, and may I say not only how much your collaboration at this stage would be welcomed by us, but also that my services are always at your disposal, should clarification of any point be required.

8. In view of the delicacy of the matter under reference, we have been at pains throughout to avoid publicity of any kind, and for this reason none of the suspects have been questioned in the Bahamas itself. You should know that the source of the report in question was in fact James HAWTHORNE, and while we see no reason why he should not be questioned in due course, we do venture to suggest that care should be taken to avoid giving him any reason to think that you are aware of his role as a source of Special Branch Bahamas, and that perhaps he should not be approached until after some of the others concerned have been seen, and have provided (at least notionally) collateral on which to base the approach to HAWTHORNE himself. I believe that at the moment HAWTHORNE, McLANEY and PROBINSKI are all in the Bahamas.

9. Since drafting the above, I have also heard that on 6th February, a Mr. Peloquin of the Department of Justice visited the Bahamas, and indeed spoke to Mr. PINDLING about the undesirable aspects of the characters of McLANEY (whom he said was 'in trouble' with the Internal Revenue Service), PROBINSKI (a bankrupt, who had kept a house of prostitution), and one 'Tex' McCRARY, whom Mr. Peloquin said had been in

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touch with him last week in Washington, and had indicated that Mr. PINDLING wished to have information about McLANEY and PROBINSKI. As a result of his visit to the Bahamas, Mr. Peloquin has agreed to supply full dossiers on McLANEY, PROBINSKI, McCRARY and CHESLER to the Governor, through the Consul General.

10. Mr. Peloquin is no doubt keeping you informed of his interest in this matter, although I myself did not hear of his plan to go to Nassau until after he had returned. I understand that Mr. Peloquin is aware of my contacts with you on this matter; I accept that he may well be in a position to supply the Bahamas with information from U.S. agencies other than the F.B.I. (with which I have no contact) but notwithstanding what Mr. Peloquin may have on record, and the channel to the Bahamas he has established (through the U.S. Consul General) it still seems to me to be right to present you now with all the facts as I know them, and to invite you to pursue some active enquiries in order to get to the bottom of the 'HAWTHORNE' story.

11. Amongst the enclosures to this letter will be found a somewhat fuller version of the source material included in our note of 30th December 1966.

Enc.

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INFORMATION

[Para 11 of cover letters refers]

3. The following is a summary of the information which has been received up to 16 DEC 66. The source is engaged in the activities of the US and Bahamian citizens concerned, and the Special Branch assessment of the source is that he is thought to be reliable and that the information is probably true.

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a) A group of American citizens named Michael McLANEY, David PROVINSKY, Duke JORDAN, William HANDLEY, Samuel BENTON, James HAWTHORNE, Dr. SPIRO, ? BESSINGER (ph), and ? VINN have agreed to give financial and other assistance to the PLP, in return for gambling concessions after the PLP form the Government. McLANEY is the leader of the group.

b) HAWTHORNE will leave for EUROPE p.m. on 16 DEC 66 to arrange for the purchase of some 1,500 small arms and ammunition to be used by the PLP in an armed insurrection, planned to take place should the PLP lose the Election at the polls. McLANEY has arranged for purchase funds to be made available at the EXCHANGE & INVESTMENT BANK, 15 PIERRE FATIO, GENEVA, where a person named Louis POLIAR is to be contacted. The arms are to be purchased in BELGIUM, and shipped from ANTWERP to a port which has not yet been decided, but the ultimate destination may be TREASURE CAY in the Bahamas.

c) Should the PLP not obtain a majority of seats at the Election, McLANEY is determined that the armed insurrection will start, irrespective of the then policy of the PLP leaders.

d) An unidentified contact of McLANEY's, who is a resident of NEW YORK, has promised to loan a twin engine aeroplane and pilot to the PLP for campaign purposes. The same person promised 25,000 (£ or \$?) to the PLP campaign fund when he met ~~FRINDLING~~ in NEW YORK recently.

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- e) BROVINSKY will move to NASSAU to advise the on campaign tactics and run their public relations. He is known to have brought in excess of \$15,000 to NASSAU over the week-end 3 - 4 DEC 66 and this money is believed to have been ear-marked for the payment of PLP candidates' deposits on 9 DEC 66 (Nomination day).
- f) ? VINN will be responsible for PLP public relations in the USA, including PLP propaganda in the international press. He is also arranging for the provision of PLP campaign propaganda to the Bahamas.
- SECRET
- g) MCLANEY, together with L.O. PINDLING, Arthur FOULKES and Milo BUTLER Snr., of the PLP, are engaged in a plan which is aimed at the exploitation of certain documents stolen from the FREEPORT AUTHORITY and the law offices of Stafford SANDS. In essence, PINDLING will be given the documents after he has given evidence which will ensure the withdrawal of certain indictments, returnable to the NEW YORK Grand Jury, issued recently against the present possessor of the documents.
- h) MCLANEY will arrange for a 32' boat to be placed at the disposal of PLP candidates in the Out Islands.

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James Russell HAWTHORNE/Lou POLLAR

Subject of your memorandum 15402 dated January 1967; this indicates that he has an extensive record of violent crime.

2. Introduced to Special Branch Bahamas, through Roy SOLOMON, former Minister for Communications and Works in U.B.P. government defeated at January 1967 elections. Apparent motive for coming forward was desire to be on the right side in the event of trouble, and to gain standing with U.B.P. in hope of obtaining new gambling concession.

3. Early in January 1967, HAWTHORNE claimed to have been to Geneva to collect a letter of credit from the Exchange and Investment Bank, 15 Pierre Fatis, and to have handed this over to one Louis POLLAR, who was it seems to have been some kind of contact man with access to supplies of arms in Brussels, which would be shipped later to the Bahamas (possibly Treasure Cay) via Antwerp. POLLAR, according to HAWTHORNE refused the letter of credit, and added that in any case no arms were available in Belgium because stocks had been bought up by King Hussein of Jordan.

4. Enquiries in Switzerland revealed that the Exchange and Investment Bank was established in 1959, and moved to Geneva in 1966. There are six Swiss directors, and one American. The latter is Benjamin WHEELER of Miami - your memorandum 15403 of 4th January refers. No trace could be found in Swiss records of either HAWTHORNE or POLLAR having been in Switzerland up to 6th January, but on 9th January, it was reported that Lou POLLAR, an American citizen with large sums at his disposal was due to arrive there that day; in fact he did not arrive. In the meantime a check had been made of Belgium immigration records for details of any visit there (December/January 1967) by HAWTHORNE, with negative results.

5. At this stage, an opportunity was taken of questioning HAWTHORNE about his movements with a view to verifying the story he gave as at paragraph 3 above. On 7th January, he claimed to have flown to Europe from Nassau on 19th December accompanied by an English girl, whom he had met in Bahamas on 16th December, and went straight to Geneva; he claims to have returned from Europe to Nassau on 4th January 1967, via Bermuda and Miami. It is confirmed that HAWTHORNE was in fact a passenger to London on BOAC Flight BA 672 from Nassau on 19th December. There is no record of any onward journey from London on HAWTHORNE's part. HAWTHORNE alleged that he stayed in London at the Carlton Towers Hotel; the result of a check on this statement is awaited from London.

/6. It ...

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6. It is not without interest that HAWTHORNE is the subject of an exclusion order in London; he clearly slipped through the Immigration control at London Airport; Furthermore, according to Interpol, he was sentenced to two years imprisonment in absentia in 1961 for fraud. He married a Belgian girl in London in December 1960.

7. HAWTHORNE also alleges that when in London in December/January 1967 he saw "quite a lot" of a man named WESTON "a person of substance and high level contacts". He added that WESTON had had a very satisfactory interview with Wallace GROVES in Freeport, Bahamas involving a land transaction worth 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ million dollars. WESTON has not yet been identified.

8. HAWTHORNE also said on 7th January, that the arms dealer he had met in Geneva was not POLLAR after all, but an unnamed West German; it was this man who refused to do business with him. He told Special Branch Bahamas that he (HAWTHORNE) would be seeing McLANEY for frank instructions on 7th January (i.e. prior to the Bahamas elections).

9. Regarding Lou POLLAR referred to above, a delicate source reports that a U.S. citizen named Lou POLLER who lives in Miami, is an even larger shareholder of the Exchange and Investment Bank of Geneva than Benjamin WHEELER. It was this man who was due to reach Geneva on 9th January, but did not arrive; WHEELER informed the Bank of POLLER's delay by telephone. POLLER is said to have two addresses in Miami - one being Biscayne Avenue, and the other Ireland Terrace, Corablu (? sic). It is believed by those concerned with the bank in Switzerland, that POLLER is a man undoubtedly capable of any shady deal. Have you any record of POLLER please?

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Michael ~~Mc~~LANEY
Samuel ~~R~~ICE
Tex McCRARY
and others.

Bahama

Subject of your memorandum No.15400 dated 5th January 1967.

2. It is reported that since the recent advent of power of the P.L.P. McLANEY is a frequent visitor to the Ministry of Tourism office, and is negotiating for a lease in his own name of offices to be used by the P.L.P. in Bay Street, Nassau.

3. One of McLANEY's associates in Nassau who has been seen visiting Mr. PINDLING's Office is Samuel RICE, described as an attorney from Florida (Fortlauderdale); he is known to act for Samuel BENTON who has been declared a prohibited immigrant in the Bahamas (see also your memorandum No.15401 dated 4th January 1967). Have you any record of this man please? I apologise for the dearth of personal particulars.

4. RICE arranged for the following aircraft to be made available for use by the P.L.P. in its election campaign:-

- (a) Cessna 206 - N 3436 L - piloted by one Len ~~R~~OSSMAN, carrying credit card in name of Meray Carol ~~A~~BEAZLE c/o American Aviation Corporation, Tameana Airport, Florida.
- (b) Beech Queenair, registered as N.1100Q, owned by Telectron (associated with, or subsidiary of Metalab ~~a~~subject of your memorandum No.15404 dated 4th January 1967).
- (c) Helicopter belonging to Adventure Helicopter Corporation piloted by one Paul WOODS.

BA

5. Regarding paragraph 4, one Harold ~~J~~ENSEN, a U.S. aircraft pilot who has been living in the Bahamas for some years, where he has been employed by the Bahamas Tractor and Equipment Co. Ltd., told Special Branch that prior to the elections a pilot friend of his who works for the Crescent (?) Aircraft Company of Fort Lauderdale, had told him of an approach by a man named William SKILLINGS (owner of a Fort Lauderdale public relations firm and at one time P.R.O. at Riley Aeronautics). This approach had to do with hiring a helicopter for use by the P.L.P. subsequently there was a meeting attended by SKILLINGS and Sam RICE (see above), PINDLING, John Ward EVANS, Vice President of Riley Aeronautics who lives at 9941 S.W. 66 Street, Miami, one George NEESMITH (phonetic) of Crescent Airlines, and one Joseph A. WHITCOMBE, of whom we have no further particulars.

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EVANS and NEESMITH are rumoured in the Bahamas to have had involvements in the past with 'American Intelligence'.

6. A fourth aircraft involved was a D.C.3 owned by the Carolina Aircraft Corporation leased to one Carl BOY of Fort Lauderdale, and piloted by one Chase ANDERSON.

7. Any likely record of any of the individuals mentioned in paragraphs 5 and 6 which you may be able to produce would be appreciated.

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David ~~PROBINSKY~~

B Bahamas
Baybrook 1920

Referred to in my earlier letter as David PROVINSKY; your memorandum No.15405 dated 4th January 1967, said that PROVINSKY was no trace in your records, on the basis of the particulars sent to you.

2. I understand that PROBINSKY is said to be about 46 years of age. On 11th January 1967, a newspaper in Jamaica said that a 46 year old American named PROBINSKY had managed the P.L.P's campaign after "having been active in Civil Rights activities in the United States".

3. Currently in Nassau, he is reported to be a close contact of both Michael McLANEY and "Tex" McCRARY.

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OUTLINE BRIEF FOR INTERROGATIONS OF OXFORD PERSONALITIES

1. Michael McLANEY

- a) When did contact with PINDLING first start?
- b) How and through whom was contact with PINDLING made?
- c) Were other PLP personalities involved in the contact at any stage and if so, the details?
- d) Why is McLANEY supporting PINDLING and the PLP?
- e) Did PINDLING make promises to McLANEY of concessions of any sort in return for his support and if so, the details?
- f) What are the details of the support given by McLANEY to PINDLING and the PLP?
- g) Did McLANEY obtain assistance, financial or otherwise, from other U.S. citizens and if so, the details?
- h) Were any arrangements made to supply arms to the PLP in the event of a UBP victory on 10 JAN 67?
- j) Were there any plans made for any form of civil disorders in the Bahamas in the event of a UBP victory at the polls, either on 10 JAN 67 or in the post-election period?
- k) Did McLANEY attend a meeting at TREASURE CAY on 27 NOV 66 at which PLP election campaign plans/strategy were discussed and if so, who was present at this meeting and what was discussed?
- l) Did McLANEY visit PINDLING's office on 12 or 13 DEC 66 and if so, what was the purpose of this visit?
- m) McLANEY has visited NASSAU on a number of occasions since 10 JAN 67, what was the object of these visits?
- n) Can McLANEY give any information concerning a number of documents, possibly stolen, which are held in NEW YORK at the present time and which purport to prove malpractice by members of the previous UBP Government?
- o) What is the extent of, and background to, McLANEY's contact with Wallace GROVES and Lou CHESLER?
- p) Is McLANEY interested in starting, or participating in, any form of gambling operation in the Bahamas and if so, the details.
- q) What is, or was, the extent of McLANEY's contacts with members of the previous UBP Government or personalities?
- r) What are the details of McLANEY's contact with Sam RICE in whose company he has been seen in NASSAU?
- s) Does McLANEY own any land or property in the Bahamas?

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2) Dave PROBINSKY

- a) How, why and when did PROBINSKY become involved with the PLP. What has he been doing for the party?
- b) Who has paid, and is paying, his salary for the work that he has done, and is doing, for the PLP?
- c) What is his object in working for the PLP and how long is this work to continue?
- d) What is the background to, and the extent of, his contact with MCLANEY?
- e) What does PROBINSKY, know of MCLANEY?
- f) What are his relations with PINDLING and the leaders of the PLP, and what is his exact position with the party?
- g) Who are the other U.S. citizens with whom PROBINSKY has been working since he was first retained to work for the PLP?
- h) What was the extent of his contacts/activities in the Bahamas prior to the start of the election campaign?
- j) Does PROBINSKY know of any plans formulated to use firearms had the UBP won the election?
- k) What policy would the PLP have adopted in the event of a UBP victory at the polls?
- l) What is the present PLP policy, and planning, on gambling concessions in the Bahamas. Has PROBINSKY given advice, or been consulted on this by PLP leaders?
- m) Is PROBINSKY interested personally in obtaining gambling, or any other type of concessions, in the Bahamas?
- n) What was, or is, the extent of PROBINSKY's contact with the previous UBP Government or personalities?
- o) Has PROBINSKY any contacts living at FREEPORT and has he any interests there?
- p) What are the details of PROBINSKY's contact with Sam RICE, in whose company he has been seen in NASSAU?
- q) Does PROBINSKY own any land or property in the Bahamas?

3) Sam RICE

He be asked the same questions as PROBINSKY except (q). (with appropriate name amendments) plus the following.

- a) Does RICE own, or claim ownership to land or property on GRAND BAHAMA or elsewhere in the Bahamas?
- b) Has RICE instituted, or is he planning to institute, legal proceedings against any persons in the Bahamas and if so, the details?
- c) From where was the PLP political propaganda obtained which RICE was disseminating in large quantities?

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- d) Why has RICE visited the Ministry of Tourism recently?
- e) Did RICE have the authority to offer concession of any type to U.S. citizens on behalf of the PLP?

[Faint, mostly illegible typed text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. Some words like "Ministry of Tourism" and "concession" are faintly visible.]

GJA/ah

Head of Special Branch