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S-E-C-R-E-T

REPORT NO.

DATE DISTR. 7 March 1968

COUNTRY Costa Rica

DOI 9 February - 4 March 1968

SUBJECT Letter, written by Fernando Melo,
indicating that negotiations
between Ludwig Starke and Rolando Masferrer
were not progressing well.

Rogelio Pinto

ACQ Costa Rica, San Jose
(4 March 1968)

FIELD NO. 108

SOURCE [Redacted]

1. (Field Comment: The following report should be read in conjunction with TPCS-314/01096-68 [Redacted] 4065) and [Redacted] 6099), which reported that Fernando Melo Fontanilla, a Cuban exile in Costa Rica, was serving as an intermediary in negotiations between Ludwig Starke Jimenez, a Costa Rican right-wing extremist, and Rolando Masferrer, a Cuban exile in the United States who was involved in plotting against the government of President Beno Duvalier of Haiti. The negotiations dealt with a plan whereby Starke would provide a staging area for an invasion of Haiti by Haitian and Cuban exiles under Masferrer's leadership. In return Masferrer, if successful, would subsequently support a move by Starke against the Costa Rican Government. Melo was reported to be planning a trip to New York on 21 February 1968 to talk with Masferrer and the latter's representative in the negotiations, Father Diego Madrigal Alvarez.)

2. When Melo returned to San Jose on 2 March after visiting New York City and Miami, Florida, he was detained and searched by security officials at the airport. Among Melo's possessions the security officials found a letter, signed by Melo, addressed to Father Diego Madrigal, New York. The letter was dated 9 February 1968. It was typewritten on letterhead stationery of Rogelio R. Pinto Impresos.

[Redacted] Comment: Melo sells printing equipment and thus may have a business connection with the Pinto firm; however, Rogelio Pinto has been reported in the past to have been involved in plotting against the Costa Rican Government.)

Mis: Pinto Comment: Pinto

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Ludwig Starke
Letter indicating negotiations between Starke and Masferrer
not progressing well

NO FOREIGN DISSEM

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3. Melo's letter acknowledged receipt of a cable from Madrigal; it then went on to state that "Rogelio obtained the visa" and now "the Haitian can come when he wishes." (Field Comment: Rogelio may be Rogelio Pinto. [redacted] 4099 [redacted] quoted Melo as saying that Starke had obtained a visa for Jacques Moringlane, a Haitian who would be the first of the Masferrer group to arrive in Costa Rica.) Melo then wrote that because nothing had been heard from Madrigal since the latter's visit to Costa Rica "the friends here" had begun to believe that "everything has been a pipe dream of mine; that we neither are going to do anything nor have anything." Melo complained that Madrigal's silence appeared to have "lessened the enthusiasm of this man of action and of rapid resolutions, who does not like to be made to waste his time." Melo warned Madrigal that if the Masferrer group had not reached a decision to move ahead with the plan, it would be better for the Haitian not to come to Costa Rica. Melo also warned that if there were no Cubans participating in Masferrer's project, he, Melo, would not support it, since he was interested only in the Cubans' problems and not those of the Haitians. Melo informed Madrigal that he expected to arrive in New York on 18 February; he suggested that they discuss the subject in detail at that time.

4. On 4 March Melo again left San Jose for Miami. He told the Costa Rican security officials that he would be away from Costa Rica for a month.

5. Field Dissem: State Army CINCSO

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 Rolando Masferrer
 involved in plotting against
 the government of Costa Rica
 Revolution in practice
 better indicating negotiations
 [unclear] of [unclear]
 [unclear] [unclear] [unclear]
 [unclear] not [unclear]

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