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16 October 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Security

THROUGH : Chief, Security Research Staff

FROM : M. K. Holbik, IRD

SUBJECT : Project AMWORLD

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to apprise you of certain information about Project AMWORLD which I feel you should know, if you do not already, and to avoid possible embarrassment to the Agency and to the Office of Security. Its purpose is not to discredit Mr. Henry HECKSHER, the former Project head, or any other persons who have been affiliated with the Project.

2. Until July 1964, while a Security Officer assigned to DDP/SAS, the majority of my time was devoted to Subject. Recent Project developments, coupled with remarks that have been made to me about this Project, have motivated me in submitting this account to you for your information.

3. Project AMWORLD was and is a so-called "autonomous" operation. In theory, as I understand it, the Agency would furnish funds and materials, but the actual handling, direction, or control of the Project would be by the Project head, Manuel ARTIME; cryptonym AMBIDDY/1. The second ranking Cuban in the Project was Rafael QUINTERO, whose cryptonym was AM JAVA/40. Until this summer, HECKSHER was the Agency staff employee in charge of Subject. HECKSHER was succeeded by Mr. Nestor SANCHEZ. HECKSHER's group was a very small one and consisted of his secretary, Mrs. "Bobbie" HERNANDEZ; her husband, Raul HERNANDEZ; Carl JENKINS; Dick BEAL, a career Logistics employee assigned to AMWORLD; and BEAL's secretary, Miss Gwen THORNTON. HECKSHER was one of the several special assistants to Mr. Fitzgerald, then the Chief of SAS. This small group was extremely loyal to

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HECKSHER, particularly Raul and Bobbie HERNANDEZ. They reportedly will join HECKSHER at his new assignment in Venezuela. The staff employee in Miami who handled AMWORLD matters was Mr. Karl ROHRER. It is believed that most of ROHRER's contacts in Miami, on behalf of the Project, were with Dr. Cesar BARO, whose cryptonym was AMYUM/19. BARO, until a falling out with ARTIME, had been the number three man in the Project. As of my departure from SAS, then WH/SA, ROHRER was assigned to the British Guiana Desk of WH and I believe was located in Barton Hall. ROHRER returned from Miami to Headquarters in about the early summer of 1964. After returning, he showed some bitterness toward the Project and commented that ARTIME was a weak man, a poor leader, of questionable morals, and that Cuban Project personnel, including QUINTERO and BARO were about ready to leave ARTIME's group, the MRR. ROHRER opined to me that the Project was "doomed". ROHRER was then a Junior Officer Trainee, GS-8. I personally believe that, if necessary, information could be elicited from ROHRER on a confidential basis.

4. Since leaving WH/SA, I have had occasional contact with persons who were then and/or are now assigned to WH and who were knowledgeable of AMWORLD matters. These contacts have ranged from Seymour BOLTEN, Al RODRIGUEZ (both of whom were super grade special assistants to Mr. Fitzgerald), secretaries in the "front office" of what was SAS, and others. Since these persons knew of my intense involvement in the Project, they have commented to me about it. I did not intentionally solicit their remarks. A remark that was made to me recently renewed my effort to locate copies of certain materials that I had extracted from files while in SAS and submit this memorandum. The remark was, as I can recall it, "Wouldn't Senator Goldwater have a ball if he knew about the Spanish ship and about ARTIME's wife?" This remark caused me to do considerable thinking and recall.

5. As you might recall, a Spanish ship was attacked about two weeks ago. My knowledge of the attack upon the ship is based on comments made to me by persons whom I knew while in SAS. The attack upon the Spanish ship was reportedly made by the SS Santa Maria, one of two AMWORLD vessels (converted Navy AKL's). I was with this vessel in Hoboken, New Jersey, for about two weeks during the late spring of this year. At that time the vessel was being equipped and

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manned. As was reported to me, the Santa Maria was cruising off of Cuba and at a distance noted the name on the Spanish ship; I believe it was "Sierra" lnu. The Santa Maria, thinking that this ship was one of those on its "watch list", opened fire on the Spanish ship and according to the newspaper publicity three Spaniards were killed and the Spanish Government was up in arms. As fate would have it, the Santa Maria reportedly attacked the wrong ship. The ship they were interested in was of the same name; however, it in fact was not the Spanish ship. I was further informed that because of this "flap", Secretary Rusk and Mr. McCone immediately conferred.

6. What is of equal or even greater concern to me relates to ARTIME's wife. In late February 1964, Henry HECKSHER requested that I check the OS Indices in the name of Adelaida Matilda PADRON Cruz. As a result of this check I made inquiry of OO/C and from that office received a report relating to PADRON. A copy of my resultant memorandum to Mr. HECKSHER is attached as Tab A. This, to my knowledge, was the first indication that PADRON, who was then reportedly ARTIME's mistress, was possibly a Lesbian. During continued contacts with HECKSHER, I would discreetly inquire about whether or not ARTIME continued to have an interest in PADRON. HECKSHER is quite shrewd and is extremely adept at double talk. In essence, he replied in the affirmative and further said that ARTIME planned to marry her. I am quite certain that the flow of information to HECKSHER about PADRON was in this manner--from BARO to ROHRER to either HERNANDEZ or HECKSHER. As time went on, judging from the material that I saw and from the remarks that I heard, it was obvious that BARO and QUINTERO had absolutely no use for PADRON. Tab B, authored by HECKSHER, notes that the political repercussions could be "calamitous" if ARTIME married PADRON.

7. During the next couple of months, PADRON was investigated by INS at the Agency's request. This was arranged through the Alien Affairs Staff. I'm told there is a Security file on her. In addition, there is a Subject file on her in WH Security. That investigation indicated that PADRON was in all probability bi-sexual and that she had been the former mistress of Fulgencio BATISTA. For your information, Tab C in part relates to PADRON's morals and to ARTIME's naivete. Tab D primarily concerns QUINTERO's feeling about PADRON.

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8. After my return from Hoboken, HECKSHER expressed his appreciation to me for the departure of the ship without incident, and was quite friendly. I then felt it prudent to again inquire about ARTIME's plan to marry PADRON and as I recall, HECKSHER told me that they either were married or were going to definitely be married. I believe that during that same week HECKSHER gave me a copy of a Dispatch with the instructions that I was to return it to him immediately after I had read it. The Dispatch was extremely damaging to PADRON. Among other things, it reported on an investigation conducted by Cubans used by a CI shop at JMWAVE. The Dispatch was RYBAT and stated that PADRON had been the mistress of not only BATISTA, but also of former Venezuelan Dictator JIMINEZ. Further, it stated that PADRON and her sister were both homosexual and had "posed" (for pornography) for BATISTA and JIMINEZ. In addition, the Dispatch noted that informants had said that PADRON definitely visualized herself as being the next First Lady of Cuba. It was well known among Cubans in Miami that PADRON was undesirable and that she was ARTIME's romantic interest. Tab E relates to a conversation of HECKSHER with ARTIME. I am quite certain that prior to the date of this Dispatch (UFGA-16512), 29 June 1964, HECKSHER requested the assistance of SAS Security and of the Alien Affairs Staff to intervene with INS to allow PADRON's departure to Nicaragua where she and ARTIME would reside. It should have been pointed out earlier that by this time PADRON and ARTIME had become man and wife.

9. After I read the Dispatch, I allowed a colleague to read it and then returned it to HECKSHER. If I had delayed its return, HECKSHER would have become suspicious since I had voiced my concern about PADRON. I commented to HECKSHER that indeed the Dispatch was extremely derogatory to PADRON and also to ARTIME. I asked HECKSHER what he planned to do. HECKSHER shrugged his shoulders and then said that the Agency was stuck with ARTIME and that the Dispatch had been shown to Messrs. Fitzgerald and Helms. Tab F is a copy I made of a Transmittal Slip. It indicates that apparently Mr. Fitzgerald did initiate some investigation because of the content of the Dispatch.

10. Tab G in part confirms the content of the Dispatch which was derogatory to PADRON and ARTIME.

11. It would not be surprising if some of the derogatory information about ARTIME and/or his wife has leaked out of WH/SA or the

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Agency. There are a number of persons currently in WH/SA who have very strong unfavorable opinions about ARTIME. As an example, one employee, quite outspoken, [redacted] told me on one occasion that it was a shame that the Agency was in any way involved with ARTIME'S [redacted] is one of those who had earlier been with the Cuban Project. She seemed to be knowledgeable about the derogatory information relating to ARTIME and PADRON.

12. To my knowledge, Project AMWORLD is the only Agency activity authorized by the White House to conduct sabotage operations against and in Cuba. It was this group that raided and devastated the sugar mill in approximately the spring of this year. To my knowledge, by Presidential request, no sabotage operations have been launched from JMWAVE since about the first of the year. I gathered that personnel at JMWAVE possessed certain ill feelings toward AMWORLD and toward ARTIME since it was the only operation that was allowed to conduct sabotage operations.

13. To repeat, it is not my intent to discredit HECKSHER, to second guess operational personnel, or to predict future "flaps". I view HECKSHER as a skilled operator who at times is a "wild man". This is submitted for your information. If you previously were aware of the content of this memorandum, I regret that I have caused you to expend time for a meaningless endeavor. In conclusion, I apprised my supervisor, Chet Crawford, of my intent to compile this information and have asked him to peruse this memorandum.

*M. K. Holbik*  
M. K. Holbik

Attachments:

- Tab A
- Tab B
- Tab C
- Tab D
- Tab E
- Tab F
- Tab G

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