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Memorandum

TO : Director, FBI [134-15266] (S)

FROM : SAC, Miami [134-1292] (P) (S)

SUBJECT: TRIPOD PSIA
IS - CUBA

DATE: 8/23/66

~~SECRET~~

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(JFK)

On August 16, 1966, MM [1154]-S was interviewed at length following his return from the Dominican Republic (DR) on August 14, 1966. Despite detailed questioning for specifics, he seemed to have difficulty in recalling day to day activities of his visit. The interviewing Agent concluded, however, that the informant was not withholding any information, but that he could not recall more information that he furnished as set out below:

The informant left Miami on July 28, 1955 on CDA flight, unaccompanied, as MITCHELL WERBEL was unable to obtain a visa to enter the DR. WERBEL is subject of Miami file 105-11409.

Upon his arrival in the DR, the informant went to the house of a friend who lives at Feliz Maria #81, where he remained for a week. The following day he went to see Commodore RAMON EMILIO JIMENEZ, Chief of Staff of the Dominican Navy, whom the informant has known for approximately 18 months and who is considered to be the informant's best contact in the DR. From JIMENEZ the informant received permission to go to the Hainai Base to check equipment which originally belonged to the anti-CASTRO organization JURE, when that organization had a base in the DR. This base is located 14 kilometers from downtown Santo Domingo.

The informant went to the base and began to inventory the JURE equipment which consisted of 50 caliber machine guns, a recoilless cannon, numerous small arms, ammunition and explosives. The informant

- 2 - Bureau (RM)
- 1 - Miami

JEM:JMS

26 (30)

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[134-15266-23] (S)

3 AUG 24 1966

for review at FBIHQ by
HSCA re 12-16-7 request.
(See Bufile #62-117290)

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Estimated the worth of the arms and explosives as between \$8,000 and \$10,000. This equipment was originally under the control of JOSE RABEL who is now a prisoner in Cuba. The equipment is now under the control of the informant.

Dom. Rep. For approximately the next 5 days, the informant waited in Santo Domingo for the arrival of LAWRENCE MITCHELL and MITCHELL WER BEL. LAWRENCE MITCHELL is a veterinary by profession, who resides in Georgia, and who is a friend of MITCHELL WER BEL.

While waiting for the arrival of MITCHELL and WER BEL, the informant visited the Immigration Department to obtain a document which would permit him to enter and leave the DR without any problem. He also made arrangements to obtain a temporary residence visa which he felt he would need if he was to continue to participate in business ventures in the DR.

During this time, the informant ascertained why MITCHELL WER BEL had been unable to obtain a visa. When WER BEL had been in the DR previously, he was involved in an automobile accident in which a small boy was injured. WER BEL also passed a bad check in the amount of \$5,000 in the DR. Such past activities on the part of WER BEL prevented him from obtaining a visa.

During the first week the informant was in the DR, he met several Cubans with whom he was acquainted. He identified them as follows:

Dom. Rep. "FATTY" GARCIA, who was formerly connected with CIA and the Frente Revolucionario Democratico (FRD). GARCIA was acquainted with WER BEL and requested informant to give WER BEL GARCIA's regards the next time he sees him.

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Dom. Rep
(S) [He spoke with] IGNACIO CASTRO, a Cuban businessman in Santo Domingo, [who] said that he had heard that ROLANDO MASFERRER was coming to Santo Domingo on August 13, 1966, [but other than this, the informant received no definite information relative to the whereabouts of MASFERRER.]

Dom. Rep
(S) [He recalled that he] had been introduced to SANTIAGO REY in the lobby of the Embajador Hotel by some Cubans, names not recalled. [Informant had never met] REY until this time.

(S) [Informant also recalled] that while [he was talking with] Commodore JIMENEZ, JIMENEZ [mentioned] that a group of members of the Movimiento Democrático Cristiano (MDC) of LAUREANO BATISTA FALLA have a boat which JIMENEZ referred to as a Sigma, which they are using for fishing in the Bay of Manzanillo. This is the only Cuban activity encountered [by the informant during his visit.]

(S) [While in the DR, the informant also] paid a visit to Colonel HOLMES, who is attached to the American Embassy, and had lunch with HOLMES. This was merely a social contact.

Dom. Rep
(S) LAWRENCE MITCHELL arrived on August 4, 1966 but without MITCHELL WER BEL, who still had not obtained a visa. On August 6, 1966, [informant and] MITCHELL went to Santiago in a rented car, [where they had to meet a business associate of MITCHELL named EDMUNDO VALLE. MITCHELL and VALLE had been in the banana business but are now planning to attempt to develop a peanut oil refinery in Santiago. MITCHELL and the informant] spent the day examining an oil refinery that MITCHELL expects to lease for this business venture. MITCHELL will pay a commission [or percentage to the informant] should any of his ventures in the DR develop financially.]

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Dom Rep X The following day, which was Sunday, August 7, 1966, MITCHELL (and the informant) visited FRANK BERMUDEZ, a Dominican millionaire and the President of J. Armando Bermudez, a rum distillery. (Informant is a long-time friend of BERMUDEZ, and BERMUDEZ discussed several business propositions with the informant, including the possibility that he would buy a farm for the informant to operate and also the possibility that he would buy the VENUS, which would be outfitted for commercial use except that BERMUDEZ would have the use of the vessel once or twice a month for pleasure purposes and fishing. The VENUS is owned by MANUEL RAY and was formerly operated by JURE. (S)

X MITCHELL (and the informant) returned to Santo Domingo on Monday, and on Tuesday (informant took) MITCHELL to meet Commodore JIMENEZ. At this time (the informant) advised JIMENEZ that JOSE RABEL had borrowed \$11,000 from LAWRENCE MITCHELL, which he had used to repair the VENUS, purchase arms and gasoline. RABEL had not repaid this money when he was captured in Cuba. Accordingly, the informant told JIMENEZ that (in order to repay) MITCHELL (he was turning over control of) the arms to MITCHELL in order that MITCHELL could attempt to sell the arms and recover his \$11,000. JIMENEZ then asked MITCHELL if he, MITCHELL, had any intention of trying to move the arms from the Naval Base, and MITCHELL said he wanted nothing to do with the arms but would like to sell them and recover his money. (Informant indicated that JIMENEZ had no intention of releasing the arms to MITCHELL if MITCHELL had wished to take personal possession of them. (S)

The following two or three days were spent by MITCHELL (and the informant) in attempting to arrange for their passage back to Miami, and there were no significant contacts made during that time. (They were finally able to get out of Santo Domingo on August 14, 1966. (S)

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