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17 January 1977

CONTACT REPORT

WHO : A | former staffer
 8709 Bay Pointe Drive
 Tampa, Florida 33615
 813-884-8610

SUBJECT: Debriefing on Training and Demolitions Given to Anti-Castro Cuban Exiles

PLACE : Holiday Inn (Tampa Airport)
 Tampa, Florida

TIME : 14 January 1977
 0900 - 1445 hours

1. Purpose: To debrief A on questions posed by the Department of Justice regarding anti-Castro Cuban exiles. These questions, in general, covered training and explosives/detonation devices given to these exiles.

2. Meeting: A came to my motel room (503) on Friday morning at 0900 and departed at 1645. During this time, both of us sat in easy chairs in front of a picture window on the 5th floor - Mr. A did 95% of the talking. Neither of us got up during this period, a stretch of almost 8 hours. A was most entertaining, but only marginally informative as to specific details on the questions posed to him. He spins a good story and remembers people and places very well. My bona fides for the meeting was a call from Ms. Sheila O'Neil to A a day before I arrived in Tampa. A is a little goosy, because of a DEA connection (below), and checked me out thru a phone call to the motel by his wife. Incidentally, I used true name with A |

3. Results: A covered the following topics with me:

a. Training: On Panama and the facilities used, the best I could remember, Ft. Sherman was open in about August or September 1960 to train Cubans for about a 2 to 3 month period. There were about 40 to 50 men, mostly ARTIME followers. When it was decided a bigger group would be needed, which later became Brigade 2506, these people were sent to Rotalhuleu (Guatemala) ~~xxxxxx~~ in about November 1960. Actually, the group was split, with some going to Guatemala and others to the New Orleans area. As to other training in Panama, A has no knowledge. (NOTE: A suggested that Mr. A, retired staffer currently in the New Orleans area, might be a good source. A was C/Ops for the invasion Task Force, as well as Deputy for PM and C/Ops for JMWAVE at one time.)

S-E-C-R-E-T

A, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z, CIA employees.

b. Supplies: As to explosives, time delay fuses, remote control devises, detonation materials, etc. given to these exiles, A said, "Look over the supply manual for that time." Apparently, the exiles were given everything that was available and in large quantities. A said he just could not begin to give me a list of what had been passed.

c. Infil Teams: After the Bay of Pigs invasion, A worked with infiltration teams. The Agency worked with these teams from roughly 1963 to 1966. They were in two categories. The first were unilateral teams, training and sponsored by the Agency. The other category was "political" teams - that is political groups in southern Florida who were sponsoring infiltrations into Cuba. The Agency helped this latter category by giving them supplies. In the case of both, they usually made a cache in Cuba. The unilateral team, as an example, would make a cache on-island, and another group would pick it up and use it (compartmentation). In some cases, teams (both unilateral and political) would not actually make the cache and keep the material in Florida, to be used later at their own convenience. In addition, A was positive that some of Castro's troops obtained some of these caches, due to foul-ups and snitches. These caches contained pistols, rifles and heavier, money and demolitions. Some of the teams cheated by going to the Bahamas and burying their stuff on small islands and reporting back to Florida that they had cached in Cuba. A stated several times that there was no effective control over the "political" groups and therefore no control over the material given them. From this, we may surmise that Agency equipment (demolition included) was in the hands of anti-Castro Cubans in south Florida, as well as Castro's Rebel Army on-island.

d. Brigade Training: Further to demolition training to Anti-Castro Cubans, A reminded me that shortly after the Brigade was ransomed from Cuba, Brigade leaders were taken to Palm Beach and talked with President Kennedy. At that time, the US Govt offered Brigade members the chance to join the U.S. army. This also included infil team members, who were completely separate from the Brigade, and members of the Brigade airforce. The Army end of this training was given at Ft. Benning, Georgia and began in early 1963. There, Brigade members entered the U.S. Army at roughly equivalent ranks - officers were made 2nd Lts. They received Ranger training, plus jump training. Thus, A said, if any exiles were training in demolitions and related topics, their best training was probably given at Ft. Benning. Most of these men were in the U.S. Army for either 6 months or one year.

e. Cubana Bombing: A was specifically asked about the 6 October 1976 bombing of the Cubana airliner in the Caribbean. A said the street-word among the Cuban community in south Florida is that the bomb should have gone off in the plane on the ground. The bombers did not mean to kill all of those people. On BOSCH, the community does not particularly like him, but admires him because he had been going at Castro tooth and nail for years. They do not like the idea of terrorism and fault BOSCH and MORALES for this.

f. Swine Fever: A had read the recent articles in the papers about the introduction of Swine Fever into Cuba by the Agency in 1972. He had no knowledge of this. A did ask if we had checked with DIA??? He said when he had been with the Army as a Special Forces type, it was unbelievable what the Army had done in the way of Bio Warfare training in the States. He mentioned an ~~exercise~~ a training exercise in NYC, when a fake substance was introduced into the water of a hotel where Pres. Eisenhower was staying. In any event, ~~xxxx~~ A said if Swine Fever had been introduced into Cuba, he wouldn't doubt that the Army/DIA had some hand in it, especially if the so-called sources claimed it came out of Ft. Gulick.

g. Assassinations by the Agency: A said he had absolutely no knowledge of assassinations, attempts or plans, by anyone in the Agency during his tour. Not only were they prohibited by the Agency, they were counter-productive. It was explained to him during his Agency tour that there was a good chance of an assassination back-firing; that we (U.S.) are more vulnerable to assassinations than the Cubans or Soviets. Therefore, as far as he was concerned, they were strictly verboten. Editorializing, A said it was too bad that the upper-echelons did not believe in this restriction. On top of that, they approached mafiosa to help them. (NOTE: A is rather anti-Kennedy, especially Bobby, with whom he was in a shouting match during a hearing on the Bay of Pigs invasion.)

h. Assassination of Peruyero: Juan Jose Peruyero, a Bay of Pigs veteran and leader of the Brigade 2506, was gunned down last week as he left his home in Miami. A said the word on the street among the Cuban community is that this was done by the DJI as a warning to the anti-Cubans in Miami. Peruyero had no enemies - he was not into drugs, crime, politics, etc. By killing him, the Cubans were warning the community that they could strike anywhere and anyone. Thus, watch out and lay off Cuba and Cuban citizens. If anyone else had been killed, perhaps the killing could have been blamed on the mafia, drug dealers, politicians, etc. A copy of an editorial from the Tampa Tribune of 14 Jan 77 is attached, below.

i. Assassination of Lettallier: While on assassinations, this case entered A's conversation. He has no personal knowledge of what happened. Again, however, he gave me the "street word." In Miami, the Cuban community is saying that the same people who did in ROSSELLI performed the Lettallier assassination. Santo Traficante arranged for the Lettallier killing - hired and paid the killers. For this reason, the Chicago family of the Mafia is furious with Traficante, because he is/or will bring heat on the Mafia. The reason for Traficante doing it??? Fidel Castro hired him and paid him well to do it. The word is that Traficante has been cooperating with the DGI and Fidel since he departed Cuba. Fidel wanted Rosselli killed, because of Rosselli's part in the assassination attempt against Fidel. A emphasized that that this is not his theory, but word from the street in Miami.

j. CBS Show on Cuba: A said CBS is planning a show on the "Legacy of the Bay of Pigs," which should be broadcast in about May 1977. CBS has already shot some interviews in Miami, including one with Peruyero (above) before he was killed, plus covering the aftermath of his assassination. Currently, the CBS crew is in Cuba - they hope to film the beaches at the Bay of Pigs - which had been suggested to them by A. A has also been interviewed and has given his opinions for the TV showing. While in Cuba, the CBS crew hopes to also interview Fidel - also at the suggestion of A. The fellow behind the show is named CRILE and he has talked to A extensively. According to A, the show would have been very anti-Agency in its comments, but he A has turned this around almost 180 degrees!!! As planned, the show will be two hours and shown in May 1977.

k. Brigade 2506: On the Brigado, A said he had been an apolitical organization. Individuals of any political shade had been members and politica had not really entered Brigade Association business. Last year, however, they joined with Orlando BOSCH, among others, to help form CORU. Now, the Brigade is embarrassed and wished they had never joined CORU. They with-drew shortly after the Cubana bombing in October 76. However, the damage has been done to the Brigade Association, which A considers a shame. On the CBS film (above), A said he was filmed attending an anniversary meeting. This same meeting was where CBS filmed Peruyero.

l. A & DEA: When A retired from the Agency, he moved to Key West. He came to the attention of DEA, especially to Lou Conine, an ex-Agency officer now with DEA. A calls Conine an SOB and worse. He went into a long explanation of his activities with DEA in Key West. In summary, he was a P/A and ran a string of informants. Because of internal DEA politics, he was blown and left dangling on a string in Key West. He had to leave town within 24 hours and left his people (informants) there without calling or warning them. As a result, he lost friends, prestige with his informants (many of them Cuban exiles) and his business in Key West. In general terms, he was treated very shabbily by DEA and regrets ever having mixed with them. He is still in contact with one of

our ex-officer; (C) . . . According to A, B will be returning to the Agency shortly. B is familiar with the operation in Key West. Another ex-Agency employee was also involved in this operation, one C. The undersigned knew in Vietnam - he was a contract employee at about GS-12. With DEA he quickly rose to GS-14 and was directing the Key West operation. When it folded, according to A, A was busted to GS-13 and sent back to Washington, where he is now working in DEA's Inspection Division (similar to our IG Staff). A was also aware of another ex-Agency employee, (fmr) D, who was to go to Mexico under DEA "deep cover". According to A, D was to be involved in assassination operations against Mexican dealers and pushers. Instead, D ended up in El Paso for about a year and is now in Miami. The undersigned personally knew D, but did not know of his specific assignment within DEA. (NOTE: While the above is a little rambling, this is the way the debriefing of A went all afternoon!)

m. A's Manuscript: I had read A's manuscript, "The Bay of Pigs" before departing Washington. Lynch explained that he had dictated this paper and had a couple of secretaries type it out. It is only in very rough form and he wanted to get his thoughts down on paper. As he indicates in the paper, he wanted to get the facts straight. He feels that since he was there and part of the invasion, he has a unique view point of the Bay of Pigs and wants to see that history reflects his position. As indicated earlier,

A is rather bitter against the New Frontier, the Kennedys and Camelot. This is reflected in his manuscript. A claimed that much of his paper had been "stolen" in that he explained the invasion, for instance, to the CBS crew and they were using some of his material in the soon to be shown program described above. In addition,

A mentioned that he had spoken to the Agency historian - can't recall his name - on who is also writing a book (classified) on the invasion. As to publication, it seems to be in the distant future. He does not plan to go to a publisher, where he would receive royalty payments of around 5%. Rather, he plans to publish on his own, probably in Miami, and realize close to 100% profit. It might cost him ~~xxx~~ in the area of \$5,000, but he could realize a profit of about \$30,000 depending on sales.

n. Misc.: A also spoke about personalities within the Agency. He mentioned Ted Shackley, "Dum'Dum'Dimmer, many people in LAD who had a part in the invasion or JMWAVE. A is a member of the retired Agency employees association that Dave Phillips formed. As such, he has appeared several times on Tampa radio and TV shows. To me, he appears to be an articulate defender of the Agency.

4. Conclusion: For me, this was a most interesting interview. As far as results, the interview indicated to me that we can get broad-brush overviews from retired Agency employees, and few details. To answer specific questions from Congress and/or the Department of Justice, we must continue to dig and come up with documents from

Agency files. Unfortunately these documents appear to be most difficult to locate and retrieve, many of them buried in retired file holdings.

5. Recommendations: We should continue to seek information from retired Agency employees, especially when it appears that they were intimately involved in the particular event or activity in which we are interested. This should be a selective process and used only when we believe the retiree could contribute to our immediate inquiry. The documented facts, however, are still needed to answer questions posed to us officially by other Government entities.

G. A. Vickers, Jr.
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LA/Cps

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