

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY Cuba REPORT NO. CSCI-316/00718-64
SUBJECT Armando (patronymic unknown) DATE DISTR. 9 September 1964
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FIELD REPORT NO.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION. SOURCE GRADINGS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

SOURCE: A former Cuban IS officer who served with the Cuban Intelligence Service until April 1964.

Headquarters Comments

The following report is one of a series containing personality information provided by one source and includes supplemental information from the records of this Agency.

It is requested that the addressees take no action on any of the individuals mentioned in the personality reports without first checking with this Agency.

1. Armando (patronymic unknown), pseudonym "Frances," works at the Special School of the Direccion General de Inteligencia (General Directorate of Intelligence - DGI) where guerrilla warfare training is given foreigners; he is in charge of classes in explosives. Armando is a captain in the rebel army. He was an aide to Raul CASTRO and fought with his group in the mountains.

2. Source described Armando as a Cuban citizen who was born about 1929. He is about five feet seven or eight inches tall, 155 pounds, and has a medium build. He has a fair complexion, black, short, hair, slightly bald in front, small eyes, a hawk nose, and a lean face. Armando always wears an army uniform.

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GROUP 1
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Headquarters Comments

1. Armando (patronymic unknown) is probably identical with Armando TORRES who is believed to be identical with Armando TORRES Mesones. The main basis for this assumption is that all have been identified as aides to Raul CASTRO and it would seem unlikely that he would have three aides with such similar names. Also, as can be seen by the following traces, their backgrounds appear to be similar in most instances.
2. A usually reliable source, in a report dated 29 September 1947, stated that Armando TORRES was a member of the Federacion Estudiantil Universitaria (University Students' Federation - FEU) of the National University, Habana, Cuba. He was involved in sending letters to obtain aid in the campaign against the Trujillo "tyranny."
3. A fairly reliable source in a report dated 16 April 1948, said that Armando TORRES was one of the persons personally contacted by Vassili BOGATYREV and Ivan MISHINSKY in regard to the establishment of a Cominform Bureau in Habana. Though TORRES was to work for the Cominform, it did not, according to course, necessarily mean he was a Communist.
4. A fairly reliable source, in a report dated 7 May 1948, identified Armando TORRES as a Cuban pro-Communist delegate to the Latin American Youth Congress held in Mexico in late April 1948. He was an FFU representative to the Congress.
5. An untested source in a report dated 9 July 1958, said that Armando TORRES, also referred to as "Buffalo Bill," claimed he was Cuban born, but had studied in Spain and France.
6. In a report dated 11 July 1958, an unknown source listed the most important people surrounding Raul CASTRO. Included was Lt. Armando TORRE, an aide to CASTRO, and described as having been born in Camaguey, studied in Paris, traveled to Spain and called "The Frenchman." In this same report an untested source said that Armando TORRE, aka "Buffalo Bill," was born in Habana about 1926, was five feet six inches tall, 140 pounds, had black hair and an olive complexion.
7. Two usually reliable sources, in a report dated 3 and 10 July 1958, described Armando TORRES, an aide to Raul CASTRO, as a suspected Communist who had returned to Cuba from Spain and Hungary ten months before. TORRES was identified as one of the persons responsible for the rebel decision to abduct American citizens in June 1958.

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8. A source whose reliability is unknown said that Armando TORRES, born in Camaguey about 1933 and who studied in Paris, told him that he had interviewed the ex-Costa Rican President, Jose FIGUERES, in Germany in 1956. That following the Hungarian Revolution he (TORRE) went to Vienna to aid Hungarian refugees and clandestinely entered Hungary where he remained for seventeen hours before returning to Vienna. The report was dated 14 July 1958.
9. An untested source with excellent contacts in Haitian exile circles, in a report dated 3 July 1959, stated that Captain Armando TORRES was the Cuban Military Attache to Haiti.
10. An untested source, in a report dated 3 May 1960, said that Armando TORRE, Cuban Ambassador, arrived in Rome on 10 April 1960, and left for New York on 26 April 1960 via Pan American Airlines.
11. The records of this Agency revealed a copy of a passport for Captain Armando TORRE Mesones, issued in Habana on 6 April 1960, with the designation, Embajador Extroordinario. Also included was a Cuban Revolutionary identification card for Armando TORRES y Mesones showing he held the rank of captain in the Direccion Inteligencia - G-2 and that he was born in Camaguey, Cuba, on 26 September 1930. TORRES was in Rome on an arms buying mission.
12. In a report dated 20 April 1962, a fairly reliable source gave the following information on Armando TORRES, nickname "El Francis:"

He was born in 1931, is married and has one child. He and his wife are French Nationals. TORRES is a good friend of Vilma ESPIN and Raul CASTRO and always lives very close to the latter. He is five feet ten inches tall, weighs between 145 and 150 pounds, has greenish brown eyes, black hair, a thin face and is white. He was in the Sierra Maestra with Raul CASTRO. TORRES speaks French, English, Italian, German, Jamaican, Russian, and Portuguese. His speciality is ciphers and translations and he has been an assessor of all the departments of G-2. In G-2 he is in charge of training military attaches. TORRES, who is adventurous and brave, is 100% Communist.