

S-E-C-R-E-T

24 AUG 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Chief, WHID for Cuba

SUBJECT : Attempted Assassination of CASTRO June 1965.

REFERENCE : ²²(OSMA)-19783, 11 August 1965

1. On returning to Madrid on 10 August, (QUANTUM-51) who has been in Havana for years, reported that Mario SALABARRIA Aguiar, former Commandante in the Cuban National Police 1944-47 and chief of Police Intelligence (SIIE) 1945-47, and 27 unidentified persons were arrested for conspiring to kill Fidel CASTRO late in June or early July 1965. According to (QUANTUM-51) who talked with members of his family, SALABARRIA had sworn to avenge the death of Eufemio FERNANDEZ Ortega, former National Police Captain. As the leader of this conspiracy, SALABARRIA worked closely with Dr. Bernardo MILANES Lopez who drew up the assassination plans and allegedly obtained money and weapons from the United States. MILANES, according to (QUANTUM-51's) information, was arrested before the plotters were ready to carry out their plans. SALABARRIA then advanced the date set for the assassination. The conspiracy was discovered and he was arrested. When his wife learned that SALABARRIA was to be condemned to death, she went to Fidel to plead for her husband's life. Fidel, who at one time had been their friend, denied knowledge of SALABARRIA's case but assured her that his life would be spared. According to (QUANTUM-51) SALABARRIA's wife knows nothing further of her husband's fate.

2. News of SALABARRIA's role in an abortive assassination attempt and of his arrest is significant confirmation of current reports regarding the exposure of a plot to kill CASTRO in Havana in June-July 1965. The Agency has known of Mario SALABARRIA's conspiratorial activities and personal dedication to his role as Fidel's murderer since the summer of 1963. At that time SALABARRIA was seeking weapons and funds for his mission. Through his confidant, AMTURVY-4, a barkeep on the Havana waterfront and a long time friend of (QUANTUM-51) he sought contact with AMTURVY-1, then a minor GOC official. SALABARRIA had known AMTURVY-1's brother, AMCONCERT-1, for twenty years and he assumed that AMTURVY-1 was in touch with the Agency through AMCONCERT-1 in Miami. Accordingly at their first meeting in the summer of 1963 in AMTURVY-4's bar, SALABARRIA told AMTURVY-1 that he was a member of a group which was plotting CASTRO's death. He asked AMTURVY-1 to help him obtain money and weapons for this conspiracy. He emphasized, in particular, that he needed money to purchase vehicles which were essential if the group were to succeed in their mission. In return for whatever

S-E-C-R-E-T

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AMTURVY-1 could furnish, SALABARRIA offered to carry out minor sabotage actions for AMTURVY-1's American "contacts". A few months later in October 1963, when we were satisfied with SALABARRIA's bonafides, we managed to get a few pistols, revolvers and some sabotage materials into SALABARRIA's hands through AMTURVY-4. SALABARRIA responded with a plea for more, but denied that he could retrieve an arms cache from a site on the north coast. AMTURVY-1 became cynical about SALABARRIA's plans and then in response to our instructions he abandoned direct contact with SALABARRIA early in 1964. SALABARRIA, however, continued to see AMTURVY-4 who kept in touch with both AMTURVY-1 and QUANTUM-51.)o/

3. Meanwhile, SALABARRIA's accomplice, Dr. Bernardo MILANES Lopez, prominent Havana doctor who was the personal physician of CASTRO's mother for 15 years until her death in July 1963, was recruited in November-December 1963 while on a visit to Madrid. During the course of his recruitment, MILANES stated that he was active in a group of conspirators who were plotting to kill CASTRO. He alluded to disgruntled Rebel Army officers and medical colleagues, but he did not name SALABARRIA among those few he identified as persons of trust. He did, however, spell out the group's needs for weapons, money and vehicles in order to carry out their assassination mission. And, he finally agreed to serve as a collection agent in return for limited financial compensation and in the apparent hope that we would in time furnish him with sufficient funds for the needed vehicles. Following his return to Havana in January 1964, MILANES proved to be a fairly regular S/W correspondent, a source of some Order of Battle. While he repeatedly urged us to help him obtain the vehicles for his group, he never disclosed to us how deeply involved he, himself, was in the plot to kill CASTRO. We subsequently learned that he had informed SALABARRIA of his recruitment by CIA in Madrid and that he had tried to persuade SALABARRIA to work directly with him rather than with AMTURVY-4.

4. MILANES was arrested in the company of his chauffeur and nephew, both fully witting of his clandestine activities for the Agency and presumably equally involved in the conspiracy to kill CASTRO. From the limited evidence acquired to date, it appears that MILANES' arrest may have been prompted by the blackmarketeering of his nephew, censorship of his mail or physical surveillance. In any case, it is known that he had in his possession compromising Agency commo equipment and S/W materials.

Originated by: Susan L. Darling:cm

Orig & 1-- Addressee
1-- WH/C/MO
1-- WH/C/MO/FI-CI

Walter T. Cinti
C/WH/C/MO

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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM

RELEASE AS SANITIZED

1998

1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Chief, WHID for Cuba

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