

9 May 1977

SUBJECT: Cubana Flights

1. The Mexico Station surveillance of Cubana flights in 1963 consisted of a unilateral group (LIFIRE) and two separate groups (LITEMPO and LIENVOY) handled jointly with the Mexican Government.

a. LIFIRE was handled by Robert Feldmann. These sources observed arrivals and departures of Cubana flights. They reported any unusual incidents and provided copies of the flight manifests. This travel was routinely reported to Washington by cable (JMGIN Cuban Travel). A copy of the manifests was sent later by dispatch to Washington with the same reporting crypt.

b. LITEMO and LIENVOY were handled (on the policy level) by the COS with high ranking Mexican Government officials. I made the daily pick-up meetings with Career Agent Jeremy K. Benadum for LITEMPO and Staff Agent Arnold F. Arehart for LIENVOY. LITEMPO was a surveillance team of Mexican Security Service Officers. They operated a concealed passport camera and photographed incoming passengers' passports from the Cubana flights. No outgoing passports were photographed because the facilities for departures were located at the other end of the airport and not feasible for the number of available agents at our disposal. Further, the purpose of the passport camera operation was to identify the Soviets arriving via Havana. They also provided us with a list of the incoming passengers on the Cubana flights. (50-6-91/4 Job 67-200/50, Box 13). LIENVOY was a telephone tap operation against the Cuban Embassy and provided transcripts of conversations with the Cubana Office and the Mexican Airport Control Office.

2. I checked with Robert Feldmann who said he thought all of the Cubana flights were passenger flights. A review of the transcripts for the Commercial Office of the Cuban Embassy for late 1963 indicates that they were shipping large quantities of automobile parts, foods and medicines from Mexico City to Havana by Cubana Airlines. Statements to clients on what day they could send cargo and packages by Cubana led me to the conclusion that all the flights to Mexico City from Havana could carry passengers but some of the flights out were basically cargo (with the capability of also carrying a few passengers). From manifests, it appears that Cubana made a flight from Havana to Mexico City and return every other day. There was a flight on 22, 25, and 27 November 1963. The 22 and 25 November flights carried passengers. The 27th November flight carried 75 passengers to Mexico and returned with LOPEZ and it is believed a plane load of cargo. (LITEMPO passenger list attached).