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LUIS POSADA

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Memorandum

SECRET

TO :

DIRECTOR, FBI (105-193849)

DATE: 2/20/70

FROM: ⁴⁵⁰ ~~REVIEWED BY~~ ^{11/24/97 JAL} ~~WJFK TASK FORCE~~ MIAMI (97-518) (P)

SUBJECT:

JAMES MELVILLE HART
RA - VENEZUELA
(OO: MIAMI)

- ☒ RELEASE IN FULL
☒ RELEASE IN PART
☒ TOTAL DENIAL

Re Miami letter to Bureau, 12/30/69 and Bureau letter to Miami, 1/20/70.

A re-canvass of local sources and agencies in January, 1970 developed the following information:

On January 30, 1970, STANLEY SCHACHTER, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, (ASAC), Enforcement Section, U. S. Customs, Miami, advised a re-check of his indices revealed Customs has a pending Munitions Control Act investigation regarding subject under the name of JAMES S. HART. SCHACHTER said although there is a slight variation in the name, this is obviously the same person as captioned subject since he is a member of the HART family involved in the Rupununi uprising in Guyana.

SCHACHTER advised that Customs has received considerable information from another U. S. Government Agency in Caracas regarding HART and his attempts to export firearms from the Miami area. No information has been received concerning HART, however, since October, 1969.

SCHACHTER said Customs presently has a source in Venezuela close to HART who is to alert Customs immediately upon his next departure for the U. S.

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ASAC SCHACHTER, in view of their pending investigation under the Munitions Control Act, requested that Customs be

- 2 - Bureau (RM)
1 - Jacksonville (Info) (RM)
1 - Washington Field (Info) (RM)
4 - Miami (2-97-518)
1 - 105-1729) (FPM - VENEZUELA)
(1-64-129) (ORLANDO GARCIA)

JCB:cmr
(8)



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REC-10

105-193849-9

FEB 24 1970

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MM 97-518

consulted prior to any interview of the subject in order not to prematurely alert him to their investigation.

For the information of the Bureau, it would appear the original information with regard to HART coming to the U. S. to negotiate a \$300,000 arms deal originated with HART's contacts in Florida: JOSEPH EUGENE ~~HOLNESS~~ in West Palm Beach, ^{Fla.} and STANLEY ~~HARRIS~~, in Jacksonville, ^{FIA} These individuals attempted to sell information to the Guyanese and Venezuelan governments concerning this alleged plot by HART after reportedly having been bilked by HART, and CIA is of the opinion this information originated with them. Leads are presently outstanding for interview of HOLNESS and HARRIS.

Previous interviews of HOLNESS, as set out in Miami LHMs of August 27, 1969 and November 7, 1969 under the HOLNESS caption developed information regarding HART's attempts to purchase arms in Florida in 1969. These LHMs are being disseminated locally to Customs for information in its continuing investigation of HART.

For additional information with regard to this case, on January 15, 1970, FAUSTO DANIEL ~~VILLAR~~ and MANUEL ~~PERAZA~~ were arrested in Miami by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Unit for violation of the National Firearms Act, possession of unregistered automatic weapons. At time of their arrest, they were selling firearms to an undercover Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Unit Agent which were determined to have been stolen from the U. S. Army Reserve Center, Columbia, South Carolina in December, 1969. During interview of PERAZA and VILLAR, both admitted purchase of weapons from two white male Americans in Miami on December 30, 1969 knowing same to have been stolen. VILLAR also admitted at this time having been in contact with LUIS ~~POSADA~~, a Cuban working for the Venezuelan Government, with regard to firearms shipments. ^{AKA FAUSTO} ^{7/12} ^{CUBA}

On January 27, 1970, RICARDO MORALES, Key Source-Cuban, advised that FAUSTO VILLAR, following the above arrest,

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7/12
X VASQUEZ
was in contact with MORALES. VILLAR stated he had been contacted in 1969 by LUIS POSADA, ORLANDO GARCIA and JOHNNY HART (associate of POSADA) with regard to arms shipments to Venezuela for use of the Guyanese insurgents. He said that several shipments of arms had already been sent to Venezuela with these men and he personally assisted in handling one such shipment from Ft. Lauderdale to Venezuela. VILLAR stated that CIA was aware of this and that POSADA was working for CIA. (S)

On January 30, 1970, MORALES advised that VILLAR said he has known since January 23, 1970 that HART is in the Miami area for the purpose of buying weapons and that HART, ORLANDO GARCIA, and LUIS POSADA are working together on this deal.

It is noted that LUIS POSADA (S) and ORLANDO GARCIA, who are allegedly working with HART in this arms purchase, are known to have been of operational interest to CIA in the past. In view of this, on February 12, 1970, ED ANDERSON, CIA, Covert, Miami, was contacted with regard to their current connection with CIA at which time ANDERSON was briefed orally concerning above facts. (S) (S)

ANDERSON confirmed that LUIS POSADA continues to be of operational interest to CIA; and although ORLANDO GARCIA has been of operational interest for many years in the past, he was unable to verify definitely that GARCIA (S) is still under CIA control. He also provided no other information as to extent of CIA's involvement, if any, in this alleged arms smuggling operation. (S) (S)

On February 13, 1970, ASAC SCHACHTER, U. S. Customs, Miami, who has primary jurisdiction with regard to arms smuggling, was orally apprised of the above facts. SCHACHTER said he desired to have VILLAR interviewed by his own agents with regard to the allegations concerning arms smuggling and he requested the Bureau continue to furnish any information developed with regard to this matter.

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SCHACHTER stated he had placed a nationwide stop with the Immigration and Naturalization Service concerning HART. SCHACHTER volunteered that he was personally acquainted with (S) POSADA and was well aware of his CIA connections. SCHACHTER will consult with CIA to determine the extent of their involvement in this operation.

Since the principal statute involved is under U. S. Customs jurisdiction and Customs is currently conducting investigation concerning HART, Miami feels no interview of HART should be conducted as requested by State. It would appear more appropriate that Customs should conduct such interview at the proper time during the course of their investigation; and UACB, no interview will be conducted.

Miami will continue to maintain close liaison with Customs and will submit LHM, with copy to Customs locally, following interviews of HOLNESS and HARRIS.

Bureau is requested to determine from CIA if (S) ORLANDO GARCIA VASQUEZ, (Bureau File 64-36297) continues to be of [operational interest] (S) to that agency. (S) (X) (X)

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