

MHPNO: 98-0457370

SECRET

SENSIND:

PAGE: 1

SECRET

ERP: 2

STAFF

ACTION: IMS/ESG (020) INFO: CIC/CEG, CIC/CEGLA, CIC/LA, DO/IRO, IMDORECORD, LA/FIG, LA/FIGSC, LIMITED, MDSX, ODPD, ORMS/LA, FILE, C/LA (3/W)

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PAGE 001

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CITE 55099

TO: PRIORITY DIRECTOR.

FOR: LIMITED DISSEM IMS/ESG INFO DO/IRO, CHIEF/LA, LA/FIG, LA/FIGSC, CIC/LA

SLUGS: WNINTEL

SUBJECT: CONTINUED PROTECTION OF OUR USE OF

REF: DIRECTOR 674771 98 0430861

TEXT:

1. ACTION REQUIRED: NONE, FYI ONLY AND IN RESPONSE TO REF.

2. THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION WHICH OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZES THE FACT OF WILL BE A DELICATE ISSUE ACROSS THE DO, AND *--ALTHOUGH DAMAGE ASSESSMENTS IN THE JFK ASSASSINATION RECORDS REVIEW BOARD (ARRB) ARE LIMITED TO ONLY FOUR COUNTRIES-- THE WORLD-WIDE USE OF MEANS THE IMPLICATIONS WILL BE WIDELY FELT. IN THIS SENSE IT IS ALMOST SELF-DEFEATING TO ARGUE FROM FOUR SPECIFIC CASES AND EXTRAPOLATE FOR THE WHOLE DDO. NEVERTHELESS, WE WILL ATTEMPT TO RESPOND TO REF FROM THE PERSPECTIVE.

3. OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF CIA USE OF IN WILL PREJUDICE UNILATERAL OFFICERS' AND ACTIVITY, WHICH --AS IN MOST IS THE AND ACTIVITY WHICH MATTERS THE MOST IN THAT THESE OFFICERS TEND TO HANDLE THE MOST SENSITIVE OUR UNILATERAL OFFICERS ALSO HANDLE OFFICERS. THUS BY DEFINITION THE UNILATERAL ACTIVITY CARRIED OUT BY THESE OFFICERS IS NON-COMPATIBLE, AND WOULD CAUSE DAMAGE TO RELATIONS WITH OUR VARIOUS CURRENTLY, IS ENJOYING A PERIOD WHEREIN --AS A RESULT OF PRESIDENT CLINTON'S VISIT HERE IN LATE 1997, AND THE VISIT TO HEADQUARTERS IN NOV 97-- HAS DECIDED TO RE-ORIENT ITS ACTIVITIES AWAY FROM SMALL RELATIONSHIPS IT HAS WITH VARIOUS TOWARDS CIA. THIS STRATEGIC SHIFT, WHICH COULD HAVE LONG-TERM BENEFITS FOR CIA, WILL BE DASHED WHEN WE RUN NON-COMPATIBLE OPERATIONS THE TRUST THAT TAKES AN

SECRET

ENDLESS NUMBER OF MEETINGS TO BUILD WILL BE GONE WITH THE FIRST PUBLICATION LOCALLY CONFIRMING OUR USE OF [REDACTED]

4. MOREOVER, BILATERAL U.S. [REDACTED] RELATIONS HAVE NEVER BEEN CLOSER; THESE WOULD BE TARNISHED, NOT IRREPARABLY BY ANY MEANS BUT UNNECESSARILY, BY OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF CIA USE [REDACTED] HISTORICALLY RELATIONS WITH [REDACTED] HAVE BEEN STRAINED, AND IT IS ONLY DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS THAT A NEW PRESIDENT AND HIS BOLD FREE-MARKET REFORMS HAVE PUSHED [REDACTED] SQUARELY INTO THE DEMOCRATIC ORBIT. CURIOUSLY, THE CLOSE POLITICAL RELATIONS AND OUR STEADILY-IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH [REDACTED] MEANS THAT BOTH PARTIES - EMBASSY DIPLOMATS AND SENIOR [REDACTED] OFFICERS-- WONDER WHY WE NEED TO [REDACTED] IF WE CAN GET VIRTUALLY ANYTHING WE ASK FOR FROM [REDACTED] OR FROM [REDACTED] OFFICIALS. INDEED, IN THIS RELATIVELY OPEN, COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT, AN INDICATION THAT [REDACTED] WAS WORKING ON INCOMPATIBLE [REDACTED] TARGETS WOULD BE ESPECIALLY DAMAGING.

5. AT THE RISK OF BORING THE READER WITH DETAIL, EMBASSY [REDACTED] IS SO OPEN A WORKPLACE THAT THERE IS NO REAL CLEARED ACCESS AREA (CAA), BUT RATHER A "HYBRID" CAA, TO USE THE RSO'S PHRASE. THIS MEANS THAT FSN'S HAVE LONG HAD OFFICES ON THE THIRD FLOOR, WHERE THE *EXECUTIVE OFFICES AND REPORTING OFFICES (INCLUDING [REDACTED] ARE LOCATED. NEEDLESS TO SAY, [REDACTED] IS NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THE CONFIGURATION OF OFFICES, [REDACTED] IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, WHERE EMBASSY OFFICERS DO NOT HAVE A FULL APPRECIATION OF THE ROLE/NEED [REDACTED] IN SUCH AN OPEN, FRIENDLY SOCIETY, OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF CIA'S USE [REDACTED] WOULD ONLY REAFFIRM THEIR POINT OF VIEW. OUR FEW [REDACTED] WOULD ESSENTIALLY THEN BE DECLARED. [REDACTED] WOULD HAVE TO ATTEMPT TO CHANGE OUR [REDACTED] PROFILE BY OBTAINING MORE [REDACTED] OFFICERS WHILE REDUCING THE NUMBER [REDACTED] AS HEADQUARTERS IS AWARE, UNDER CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES THERE ARE FEW [REDACTED] AND THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF NEW ONES TAKES YEARS AND IS EXPENSIVE. IN THIS SCENARIO, [REDACTED] WOULD NEVER RECEIVE ENOUGH PRIORITY TO WARRANT SENDING THREE [REDACTED] TO REPLACE THE THREE [REDACTED] SLOTS WE CURRENTLY HAVE. THE END RESULT WOULD BE THAT WE WOULD COLLECT VERY LITTLE [REDACTED] ON MAJOR PORTIONS OF OUR OPERATING DIRECTIVE (OD). SPECIFICALLY, INTERNAL POLITICAL REPORTING, WHICH IS A FIRST PRIORITY OBJECTIVE, WOULD BE ZEROED OUT, AND REPORTING ON THE [REDACTED] TARGETS, BOTH SECOND PRIORITY OBJECTIVES, WOULD BE NON-EXISTENT. THIS WOULD BE A SERIOUS LOSS TO THE USG, SINCE OUR [REDACTED] REPORTING HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN THE ONLY MEANS OF LEARNING TO WHAT EXTENT THE [REDACTED] ARE RESPECTING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS AND NOT REBUILDING THEIR MISSILE PROGRAM. ON THE [REDACTED] TARGET, WE WOULD LOSE SIGNIFICANT REPORTING ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND THE IMPACT OF THE ASIAN FINANCIAL CRISIS IN THE AMERICAS. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, HOWEVER, WE WOULD LOSE THE TRUST OF [REDACTED] GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND OF SOME SENIOR [REDACTED] OFFICIALS, WITH THE PREDICTABLE RESULT THAT IT WOULD TAKE YEARS TO REBUILD THE RELATIONSHIP.

6. IN TERMS OF A SECURITY THREAT, [REDACTED] REMAINS THE ONLY CAPITAL IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE THAT HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF TWO HIZBALLAH BOMBINGS, KILLING HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE. A TERRORIST INFRASTRUCTURE EXISTS IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA [REDACTED]

MHFNO: 98-0457370

SECRET

SENSIND:

PAGE: 3

OR THREE TIMES PER YEAR [REDACTED] OBTAINS REPORTING OF ANOTHER THREAT ON LOCAL JEWISH OR U.S. INTERESTS, INCLUDING THIS EMBASSY. IN THIS ENVIRONMENT, PUBLICATION OF CIA USE OF [REDACTED] MIGHT ENDANGER PEOPLES' LIVES, SPECIFICALLY [REDACTED] OFFICERS'. HAMAS, GAMA'AT AL ISLAMIYAH, AND HIZBALLAH ARE ALL ACTIVE [REDACTED] IN ADDITION, [REDACTED] ARAB POPULATION OF OVER 700,000. IN THE DIPLOMATIC WORLD, THE CUBAN EMBASSY IS LARGE AND ACTIVE; WE ARE CERTAIN THEY WOULD SEEK TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY [REDACTED] GAPS. [REDACTED] HAS NOT HAD ANY SIGNIFICANT [REDACTED] GAPS IN THE PAST, AND THUS ANY ONE OF THIS MAGNITUDE WOULD HAVE A LARGE IMPACT.

7. [REDACTED] HOPES THE ABOVE IS USEFUL IN MARSHALING ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE PUBLICATION OF THE ARRB RECORDS.

8. FILE: NONE. DECL ON: X1. CL REASON: 1.5(C) CL BY: 0705909
DRV HUM 4-82.

END OF MESSAGE

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