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Amesbury 11

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, WHD for Cuba

SUBJECT : Espinosa Allegations

1. Sensitivity: Regardless of accuracy, they
- A. present a problem because of their having been presented to other government agencies;
 - B. in view of matters touching on U.S. security, are delicate and could have unfavorable repercussions if repeated to newsmen by the complainant or his associates (whose independent, previous threats were of greater potential embarrassment);
 - C. affect the reputations and the security of our personnel at [redacted] and [redacted]
2. Action: In view of the foregoing, the allegations
- A. should be put in proper perspective i.e., not ignored because of the potential embarrassment but considered in the light of what we already know (Almost all of them are repetitions of previous charges and reports, known well to both the [redacted] and [redacted] stations and to Headquarters officers concerned with the AMLASH group, whose members' reliability, reputations and good faith are questionable. Two of the charges - about [redacted] and "Tota" and about AMWHIP-1 and CARRILLO - are new.);
 - B. should be treated so as to protect us against any charge of laxity and so as to establish the facts but, at the same time, treated so as to avoid attributing to them more importance than they deserve;
 - C. should be kept in mind as examples of other charges which may be bandied about and reported by the AMLASH group to other governmental agencies or to other governments or to news media (In the last connection recall the implied threat of publishing ODYOKE responsibility, as reported previously by [redacted] 3716, IN 38634.);

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D. should be examined together with all the other available reports so that we may

- (1) clarify our own objectives and wishes with respect to all the AMLASH group (and this includes AMWHIP);
- (2) sort out which people, if any, are worth our time in the future;
- (3) take appropriate measures, including interrogation and polygraphing, to clarify doubts and then, when necessary, terminate those who are working for us but are not worthwhile;
- (4) tighten up our own operational and security procedures in connection with the AMLASH group.

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3. Preliminary Analysis: As pointed out in a preliminary analysis of the AMLASH complex, made in March 1965 when I was preparing for travel to [redacted] in connection with the QJHOPS-1 case: "...There is no convincing evidence that the group is working either for or against the regime of Fidel CASTRO. Reports on their contacts with us and their discussions among themselves are at variance. In 1962 Fidel CASTRO, reportedly knowing that they were plotting against him, talked to AMLASH-1 and seven members of his group to enlist their support against Anibal ESCALANTE Dellunde and the communists in Cuba. Possibly they are playing both ends against the middle. They certainly have been and are in contact with the two ends." The following comments are keyed to matters raised by ESPINOSA:

A. The AMLASH conspiracy - As detailed by [redacted]-3716 (IN 28634) on 6 April 1965, QUSPORT-1 reporting on a meeting of the AMLASH group, including AMWHIP-1 mentioned the following significant points:

- (1) KUBARK was criticized for "fooling around for years" without helping and for jeopardizing the operation;
- (2) the group was to be prepared to denounce ODYOKE as responsible if the operation fails and believed that the resulting scandal would make the Bay of Pigs seem insignificant; and
- (3) AMLASH-3 was in touch with Cuban Intelligence as established by coded messages which he exhibited.

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As reported by [redacted]-1532 (IN 82939) on 4 June 1965, based on meetings with ESPINOSA, the problem seen by [redacted] is that

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"the AMLASH circle is wide and each new friend of whom we learn seems to have knowledge of the plan." I believe that the problem is a more serious and basic one. As indicated in paragraph 3 of the present memorandum, Fidel CASTRO himself reportedly knew as far back as 1962 that the group was plotting against him and, knowing it, enlisted its support. Hence we cannot rule out the possibility of provocation. Assassination, obviously, is a dangerous game, not merely to the plotters in a physical sense, but to a sponsoring government which may suffer severe political repercussions at home and abroad if its involvement is made known. In the instant case, the risks of exposure of the ODYOKE hand would appear high, whether there is a provocation or not. Considering the individuals who are involved directly, their contacts with KUBARK officers, and their reported plan to expose ODYOKE, persisting in the plan could be highly embarrassing to KUBARK. (This is even more the case now that ESPINOSA has talked to ODENVY and ODURGE, although fortunately the tenor of his complaint was that KUBARK had not given adequate support to the plan.)

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B. The contacts at [redacted] and the matters affecting the [redacted] Station. - The "recruitment" of Maureen had been the subject of an exchange of cables between [redacted] and Headquarters and of discussions at Headquarters between WH/C and WE (See [redacted]-1071 (IN 66557) and DIR-10955). The annoying thing in this connection now is that ESPINOSA has talked about it to ODENVY and ODURGE and the danger that, if he is indiscreet, his story about this (and the other matters) could reach some curious newspaperman. (In this connection, it appears that the questionable decision to put Maureen in touch with the AMLASH group was made without the knowledge of STOCKWOOD.) ESPINOSA did not report any criticism of the KUBARKers at [redacted] but it is evident that the AMLASH group knows more about them than we might wish. What is new and of concern from ESPINOSA about matters in [redacted] is his story of AMWHIP-1 and UNSNAFU-19 dealings. The questions raised about AMWHIP-1 are of mutual concern also to Headquarters which has been running him and [redacted] which he has visited often. (On the occasion of my previous trip to [redacted] on the QIHOPS-1 case, GROWERY had voiced his doubts about the whole group and specifically about AMWHIP-1 and his connection with UNSNAFU-19.) At issue are two basic points, the knowledge on the part of UNSNAFU-19 about KUBARK's connection with AMWHIP-1 and the charge that AMWHIP-1 has been defrauding KUBARK in the jewelry transaction. Also to be kept in mind is the fact that ODENVY has an office in [redacted] which well might have been informed of the allegations and which might have been asked for comments - although ODENVY policy always has been to stay away from any investigation of other government agencies unless specifically directed by the Attorney General to investigate.

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C. Criticism of the [redacted] Station - Criticism of the [redacted] Station by the AMLASH group is not new. AMLASH-2 and -3 were in [redacted] and wanted direct contact, but the Station has had reservations about seeing them. The Station has been involved indirectly because of reporting by its sources about and involvement of Station targets with both the AMLASH and ANWORLD operations (both handled from Headquarters). (See [redacted]-2982 (IN 72256) and [redacted]-2998 (IN 73094) (both RYBAT).) Meetings among QUSPORT, QUSWIFT-1, AMWHIP-1 and AMLASH figures produced conflicting reports which previously were discussed at [redacted] and at Headquarters. Insofar as GROWERY himself is concerned, it must be kept in mind that he is a natural target on whom the AMLASH group would be inclined to focus its complaints. With regard to the specific complaint about "Tota", GROWERY has identified her as QUSWIFT-7 and has reported that no staffer from the Station ever had contact with her.

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4. Further involvement of ESPINOSA: On 10 June ODENVY notified KUBARK at New York that AMLASH-2 had telephoned ESPINOSA to ask whether he had succeeded in contacting "the proper people" - i.e., responsible KUBARK representatives - and to request notice of the resulting arrangements.

5. AMWHIP-1: Our plan calls for meeting him next week to obtain PRQ information and to obtain clarification of the roles played by those involved with him in the AMLASH operation. His dealings with UNSNAFU-19 also will be covered. Following this, an LCFLUTTER examination is planned. This may help to determine whether he has been truthful in his reporting.

Harold F. Swenson
WH/C/SP

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