AGENCY INFORMATION

AGENCY: FBI
RECORD_NUMBER: 124-10206-10352
RECORD_SERIES: HO
AGENCY_FILE_NUMBER: 2-2173-22

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

ORIGINATOR: FBI
FROM: LEG. CAR
TO: DIRECTOR. FBI
TITLE:

DATE: 10/07/1976
PAGES: 8
SUBJECT: CUBANA AIRLINES, BOMBING, ACA, OBA, ASSOC, SUSP, BKG, TRA, PEP

DOCUMENT_TYPE: PAPER. TEXTUAL DOCUMENT
ORIGINAL_CLASSIFICATION: Secret
NEW_CLASSIFICATION:

REVIEW_DATE: 05/11/1998
STATUS: Redact
UPDATE_DATE:

RESTRICTIONS:
JFK Act 6 (1)(C)
JFK Act 6 (4)

COMMENTS: INC NOTE
Attached from Legat, Caracas advises of crash, possibly caused by a bomb, of Cubana Airlines Flight 455 (DC-8 Aircraft leased by Cubana from Air Canada), in the Caribbean Sea off the coast of Barbados at about 1:45 p.m., 10/6/76, shortly after takeoff from Seawell Airport, Barbados, en route to Havana, Cuba, via Kingston, Jamaica. No survivors among 78 passengers. Airport official at Barbados reportedly informed that pilot told tower there had been an explosion in one of the rear lavatories of the plane. Flight log recovered after crash noted power failure in #4 engine but no mention of explosion. Trinidad and Tobago Police (TTP) are holding two Venezuelan citizens, Jose Vazquez Garcia and Freddy Lugo, whom they believe may be connected with this crash. TTP request any information of these individuals. Legat, Caracas files negative re individuals. On 10/7/76, a confidential source abroad advised Lugo, supra, is employed by Louis Posada, former head Venezuelan Counterintelligence, who resigned in 1973. Posada is Cuban exile known for his anti-Castro activities. This same confidential source advised that in view of arrest of Vazquez and Lugo, the Venezuelan Government is arranging for Posada and Orlando Bosch Avila (leader of Coordinacion de Organizaciones Revolucionarias Unidas (CORU) to leave Venezuela as soon as possible. The source all but admitted that Posada and Bosch had engineered the bombing of the airline. From statement of source it appears almost certain that Venezuelan Government was privy to activities of Posada and Bosch. Appropriate dissemination being made. FBI Identification Division records negative re Lugo and Garcia. Lugo at time of arrest had in possession address book with Legat Caracas' address. Legat, Caracas has no recollection of ever having met Vazquez-Lugo.

Legat, Caracas has had limited contact with Posada while employed with Venezuelan Counterintelligence and after his resignation from Venezuelan Counterintelligence in connection with visa request. FBIHQ files negative re Garcia, however, files indicate Lugo was approached by Cuban Agents (connected with Embassy in Caracas) in 1975, and volunteered information. Lugo then offered services to Venezuelan intelligence officials. Legat Caracas has been advised.

1 - Mr. Held
1 - Mr. Adams
1 - Mr. Leavitt

JBL:pdh:sas

APPROVED: Ext. Affairs
Assoc. Dir.
Fln. & Pers.
Dep. AD Amd.
Gen. Inv.
Dep. AD Invest.
Ident.
Asst. Dir.
Intell.
Admin. Serv.

Laboratory
Legal Council
Pian. & Insp.
Rec. Mgmt.
Spec. Inv.
Training

REVIEWED BY JFK TASK FORCE
DOS:Release In Full
CONTINUED OVER ON 9/17/66 1156
RELEASE IN FULL
RELEASE IN PART
TOTAL DENIAL
SECRET

Classified by:

Declassify on: OADR 9-1-83
(CS: RMB/GER - 9/11/80 - SF)
"PAGE IN POSSESSION OF LUGO APPEARENTLY FROM ADDRESS BOOK WITH LETTER "E" ON IT CITED FOLLOWING: EMBASSY AMERICAN 2846111-127; FBI JOSEPH LEO 331511.

"TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE ARE FINGERPRINTING BOTH SUSPECTS AND COPYING ALL DOCUMENTS IN THEIR POSSESSION.

"TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO POLICE REQUEST URGENTLY ANY INFORMATION OF THESE PERSONS, PARTICULARLY ANY CRIMINAL RECORDS. NO OBJECTION TO LEGAT CONTACTING LOCAL POLICE/SECURITY SERVICES. POLICE REQUEST AT LEAST INTERIM REPLY BEFORE 1700 LOCAL TIME. PLEASE SEND REPLY NIACI IMMEDIATE.

"POLICE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF ANYONE FROM LEGAT OFFICE PLANS TO COME TO TRINIDAD ON THIS CASE, OR HOW YOUR WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE COPIES OF FINGERPRINTS, ETC."

VENEZUELAN IDENTIFICATION BUREAU ADVISED ON OCTOBER 7, 1976, THAT PASSPORTS ISSUED TO VAQUEZ AND LUGO ARE VALID. PTJ, CARACAS, INFORMED THAT NEITHER HAS PRIOR ARREST RECORD. LEGAT HAS NO RECOLLECTION OF EVER HAVING MET VAQUEZ OR LUGO. CARACAS FILES NEGATIVE REGARDING THEM. (5)

ON OCTOBER 7, 1976, A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE ABROAD ADVISED THAT..."
FREDDY LUGO IS A VENEZUELAN NEWSMAN WHO IS ALSO EMPLOYED AS AN INVESTIGATOR BY LUIS POSADA, FORMER HEAD OF THE COUNTERINTELLIGENCE DIVISION, DISIP, CARACAS. HE RESIGNED FROM HIS POSITION WITH DISIP IN 1973, AFTER THE ELECTION OF VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PÉREZ. POSADA IS A CUBAN EXILE WHO IS KNOWN FOR HIS ANTI-CASTRO ACTIVITIES, AND HE REPORTEDLY ASSISTED ORLANDO BOSH AVILA IN 1974, SHORTLY BEFORE BOSCH WAS ARRESTED BY VENEZUELAN AUTHORITIES.

LEGAT BECAME ACQUAINTED WITH POSADA WHILE THE LATTER WAS AFFILIATED WITH DISIP AND AFTER HIS RESIGNATION, POSADA CONTINUED TO CONTACT LEGAT ON RARE OCCASIONS, USUALLY IN ORDER TO OBTAIN PERSONALIZED SERVICE IN CONNECTION WITH VISA REQUESTS. IN VIEW OF LUGO'S EMPLOYMENT BY POSADA, LEGAT ASSUMES HIS NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER WERE FURNISHED TO LUGO BY POSADA. LEGAT ESTIMATES HE HAS SEEN POSADA IN PERSON ON PERHAPS THREE OCCASIONS SINCE 1973, THE LAST TIME BEING ON JUNE 10, 1976, WHEN POSADA VISITED LEGAT OFFICE TO INQUIRE IF FBI HAD INTEREST IN CARLO BORDONI (SUBFILE 29168654; OARFILE 29-15). INFORMED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE, POSADA REVEALED BORDONI HAD HIRED TWO OF HIS OPERATIVES AS ARMED BODY GUARDS AT HIS HOME. THAT INFORMATION WAS SUBSEQUENTLY PASSED BY LEGAT TO VENEZUELAN POLICE WHO WERE INVOLVED IN THE ARREST ACTION AGAINST BORDONI.
POSADA MORE OFTEN REFERRED TO LEGAT RELATIVES AND ASSOCIATES SEEKING ADVICE REGARDING VISAS, THE LAST BEING ONE OF HIS EMPLOYEES, HERNAN RICARDO LOZANO, WHO SOUGHT A VIS A TRAVEL TO SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO, ON OCTOBER 1, 1976. LEGAT WILL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFO DEVELOPED REGARDING RICARDO IN A SUBSEQUENT COMMUNICATION.


ADMINISTRATIVE: CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE IS RICARDO MORALES NAVARRETE, HEAD, COUNTERINTELLIGENCE DIVISION, DISIP, CARACAS, VENEZUELA.

FROM STATEMENTS OF MORALES, IT APPEARS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT WAS PRIVY TO THE ACTIVITIES OF POSADA AND BOSCH AND THAT IT NOW WILL ATTEMPT TO DISASSOCIATE ITSELF FROM THEM FOR FEAR OF RETALIATION BY THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT.

SECRET