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ORIGINATOR : FBI  
FROM : LEG, HAVANA  
TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

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MZF, ASSOC, B/F INT, GAMBLING

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# Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

**CONFIDENTIAL**

DATE: May 3, 1955  
Havana, Cuba

FROM : Legal Attache, Havana, Cuba (64-153)

DECLASSIFIED BY SP8 Muf/ndk  
ON 8-26-94 (JFK)

*Handwritten:* G.I.I.F. - Cuba

SUBJECT: AMERICAN GAMBLING ACTIVITIES IN CUBA

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN  
OTHERWISE

*Handwritten:* 1ST slot machines  
ITOSM JATIXO

Reference Havana letter March 21, 1955, which, among other things, pointed out that Cuban Law Decree No. 2019 dated 1-27-55 authorized gambling in clubs and cabarets which were certified as suitable for such purposes by the Cuban Institute of Tourism. (S)(u)

On 4-28-55 CI HAV-11 advised that he had been informed that a concession to bring slot machines into Cuba and set them up had been granted by Minister of the Interior, SANTIAGO REY, to MARTIN FOX, one of the owners of the Tropicana Night Club in Havana. He said this information had been given to him by GEORGE EVINE, FBI No. 382915, who is most upset because he claims the slot machine concession had been promised to him. (S)(u)

Source said that he had further been informed that DINO CELLINI, FBI No. 2198122, American floor man at the Tropicana gambling casino, had made a trip to Las Vegas, Nevada, and had made the necessary arrangements for the shipping of the slot machines to Cuba. (S)(u)

On 4-29-55, Mr. EDMUND CHESTER, confidant and confidential adviser to President FULGENCIO BATISTA of Cuba and a good contact of the Havana office, was in the office on another matter. He was questioned as to whether the above mentioned Law Decree authorized the use of slot machines in Cuba. Mr. CHESTER said that he, himself, had been interested in the matter and had made inquiry and was told that the Law Decree apparently authorized all types of gambling devices, including slot machines. (S)(u)

Mr. CHESTER further advised that he had been informed that considerable pressure had been put on the Cuban Institute of Tourism to obtain the passage of the above Law Decree, with the thought that Havana might be converted into another Las Vegas. He said that a great deal of this pressure was brought by MEYER LANSKY, FBI No. 791783, notorious American hoodlum, some of whose activities were reported in reference Havana letter (S)(u)

Extra copies of this letter are attached for forwarding by the Bureau to the Miami and Salt Lake City offices. It will be appreciated if the latter office receives any information through informants concerning the shipment of slot machines from Las Vegas to Cuba, that the information be furnished to the Bureau for forwarding to this office. (S)(u)

*Vertical handwritten notes:*  
Class. & Ext. By SP-1 CSK/...  
Reason - FCIM 11, 1-2.4.2  
Date of Review 3/29/77

*Vertical handwritten notes:*  
Classified by SP6 BJA/bcl  
Declassify on OADR 12/17/84  
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*Vertical handwritten notes:*  
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MAY 6 1955

INDEXED - 83

MAY 13 1955

EX-126

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*Handwritten initials:* m... -6