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TO: GALLAGHER, R. J.
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OBA, ASSOC

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COMMENTS:

SECRET

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

SECRET

TO : Mr. R. J. Gallagher

DATE: 10/12/76

FROM : J. G. Deegan

1 - Mr. Held
1 - Mr. Adams
1 - Mr. Moore
1 - Mr. Gallagher

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1 - Mr. Fehl
1 - Mr. Leavitt
1 - Mr. Ingram
1 - Mr. Kolombatovic
1 - Mr. Castonguay
1 - Mr. Deegan
1 - Mr. McHargue
1 - Mr. Graham

SUBJECT: UNSUBS; SUSPECTED BOMBING OF
CUBANA AIRLINES, DC 8, NEAR
BARBADOS, WEST INDIES, 10/6/76
NEUTRALITY MATTERS - CUBA
(ANTI-CASTRO) - WEST INDIES

CHILBOM
PFO - MURDER - EID
185-789

CLASSIFIED AND
EXTENDED BY
REASON FOR EXTENSION
FCIM, II, 1-2.4.2
DATE OF REVIEW FOR
DECLASSIFICATION

PURPOSE:

To advise of developments in connection with this matter

SYNOPSIS:

ST-108

REC-76 V-15

DE-6

On 10/6/76, a Cubana Airlines, DC 8, crashed into the sea 16 minutes after takeoff from Barbados, West Indies, killing all persons aboard. An explosion was reported prior to crash. Two Venezuelan citizens, Jose Vazquez Garcia and Freddy Lugo, were detained by Trinidad and Tobago Police as suspects in this matter. In Lugo's possession was name of Legat, Caracas. Lugo reported to be employee of Cuban exile, Louis Posada, former head of Venezuelan Counterintelligence Division (DISIP) Posada known for anti-Castro activities and his association with anti-Castro terrorist, Orlando Bosch Avila, leader of Coordinacion de Organizaciones Revolucionarias Unidas (Coordination of United Revolutionary Organizations) (CORU). A confidential source reported that Posada and Bosch engineered the bombing of captioned aircraft and that [Venezuelan Government] probably was privy to their activities. Posada known to Legat, Caracas, due to his previous position with DISIP. On 9/30/76, a Posada employee, Hernan Ricardo Lozano, requested Legat's assistance in obtaining a visa to U.S. On 10/8/76, suspect Vazquez Garcia was determined to be Ricardo Lozano. Ricardo known to Legat as casual acquaintance since 1974. Information received from MM 1337-S that CORU responsible for airline crash but that no credit to be taken by CORU until public reaction assessed.

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Classified by 6098

Exempt from GDS Categories 1, 2 and 3

Date of Declassification Indefinite

JPG:rsm
(14)

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ACTION

Continued Over

70 NOV 16 1976

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Department of State (DOS) initiated attempts to obtain deportation of Bosch, a Federal parole violator to the U.S. Venezuelan President Perez uncommitted as to whether or not Bosch will be deported. Perez told American Ambassador, Caracas, that Guillermo Novo Sampol and Ignacio Novo Sampol, two anti-Castro Cuban exiles, were in the employ of Chilean intelligence service and were responsible for the Letelier killing. Legat, Caracas, briefing Ambassador, Caracas, regarding Novo brothers in order that further details of killing may be obtained. On 10/10/76, Bosch was reported to have left Venezuela on 10/8/76, an anonymous female caller to the "Miami Herald" claimed credit in CORU's name for crash. No one from Miami or Puerto Rico known to be involved in plot according to MM 1337-S. Claim by "El Condor" group for crash responsibility believed to be without substance. 84

ACTION:

None. For information.

APPROVED: *[Signature]*
Assoc. Dir. _____
Dep. AD Adm. _____
Dep. AD Inv. _____
Asst. Dir.: _____
Adm. Serv. _____
Ext. Affairs _____
Fin. & Pers. _____
Gen. Inv. _____
Ident. _____
Inspection _____
Intell. _____
Laboratory _____
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Rec. Mgmt. _____
Spec. Inv. _____
Training _____

DETAILS:

On 10/8/76, a Cubana Airlines DC 8, Flight No. 455, crashed into the sea 16 minutes after takeoff from Seawell Airport at Barbados bound for Kingston, Jamaica and Havana, Cuba. All persons on board (78) were killed. Prior to the crash, the pilot announced an explosion on board and that he was returning to Barbados. 4

Trinidad and Tobago Police detained two Venezuelan citizens, Jose Vazquez Garcia and Freddy Lugo, in connection with possible sabotage against the Cubana Airlines DC 8. In the possession of Lugo was an address book with the following notation: "Embassy American 2846111-127 FBI Joseph Leo, 331511." (Leo is Legat, Caracas.) 34(u)

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cuba USA Nicaragua
A confidential source abroad, [redacted] (u) [redacted] (u)
Navarrette, Head, Counterintelligence Division, (DISIP),
Caracas, Venezuela, has reported that Lugo is employed by
former DISIP head Louis Posada. Posada is a Cuban exile
who is known for his anti-Castro activities and who has
reportedly assisted Orlando Bosch Avila, head of CORU, in
his terrorist activities. CORU was formed in June, 1976, by
five anti-Castro terrorist groups at a meeting in Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic. Since that time, CORU has publicly claimed
credit for numerous acts of terrorism, including bombings and
killings. CORU is headed by Bosch and Frank Castro. This
source all but admitted that Posada and Bosch engineered the
bombing of the airline and that it was almost certain that
the Venezuelan Government was privy to their activities. (u)

OTHER 1c

Association of Legat, Caracas with Suspects (u)

Legat, Caracas, became acquainted with Posada when
Posada was employed by DISIP. After resignation from DISIP
in 1973, Posada continued to contact Legat, Caracas, on rare
occasions, usually in order to obtain personalized service in
connection with visa requests. Posada has referred relatives
and associates seeking advice regarding visas to Legat.
On 9/30/76, one of Posada's employees, Hernan Ricardo Lozano
sought visa to travel to San Juan, Puerto Rico, on 10/1/76. (u)

On 10/8/76, confidential source [redacted], Supra, advised
that arrested subject, [redacted] Jose Vazquez Garcia is
actually Hernan Ricardo Lozano, and that Ricardo and Lugo were
part of the support group in the sabotage operation against
Cubana Airliner. According to this source, the bomb was suppose
to go off prior to the takeoff. (u)

OTHER 1c

(u) Legat, Caracas, advised that Ricardo Lozano became
known to him in June, 1974, when Ricardo sought visa assistance
for child of DISIP official. Legat led to believe that Ricardo
was an active member of DISIP. Subsequently Legat became aware
Ricardo was auxiliary member of DISIP and in personal employ
of Posada. Ricardo has also represented himself as newspaper
reporter and photographer affiliated with the magazine "Vision." (u)

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Ricardo contacted Legat approximately four times after initial visit and on two occasions furnished Legat data on members of Cuban Embassy which were obviously obtained from DISIP files. (S)

On 9/30/76, Ricardo appeared unannounced at American Embassy and requested assistance in obtaining a visa to U.S. since he had a photographic assignment for "Vision" Magazine in Jamaica and planned a two-day stopover in Puerto Rico. Ricardo stated that he intended to leave on 10/1/76 and since a travel agency told him the visa process would take three days, requested Legat's assistance. (S)

Review of Ricardo's passport reflected that Ricardo had traveled from Caracas to Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, on 8/29/76, and had returned to Caracas on 9/1/76. Legat recalled that the bombing of the Guyanese Consulate in Port-of-Spain had occurred at approximately 10:15 a.m., on 9/1/76, and wondered in view of Ricardo's association with Louis Posada, if his presence there during that period was coincidence. (CORU publicly claimed credit for this attack.) Legat informed Chief, Nonimmigrant Visa Section (NIVS), he wished no special consideration for Ricardo, and requested the issuance of a visa to him be considered on its own merits. (S)

On 10/1/76, at the request of Ricardo, Legat communicated with Vice Consul who wished to know if Legat believed Ricardo would return to Venezuela after his visit in the U.S., or if he was likely to remain there illegally. Legat informed the Vice Consul he had no reason to believe Ricardo would not return to Caracas. (S)

In a conversation with an official of DISIP on 10/1/76, Legat broached the subject of Ricardo and of the faint suspicion that Ricardo may have been somehow involved in the bombing of the Guyanese Consulate in Port-of-Spain. The DISIP official related DISIP had no reason to believe Ricardo was the caliber of individual that would be utilized in such an operation and that Ricardo was not known to be involved in such activities in spite of his association with Posada. (S)

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Department of State (DOS) Reaction

Since the escalation of CORU terrorist activities, DOS has sought the deportation of Bosch first from Nicaragua, and now, because of this incident, from Venezuela. Bosch is a Federal fugitive from the U.S., wanted for parole violation. He was originally sentenced to a ten-year prison term in 1968 on charges relating to conspiracy, extortion and bombings. On 12/19/72, Bosch was paroled after serving four years. Following an interview with a news reporter in which he publicly admitted sending letter bombs to Cuban Embassies, the U.S. Parole Board issued a warrant for his arrest. Bosch thereafter went underground (S)(u)

[On 10/9/76, Venezuelan President Perez was contacted by American Ambassador, Caracas, and urged to deport Bosch. Perez advised that Bosch had entered Venezuela clandestinely, but was now providing information on the Chilean Junta to the Venezuelan Government. Perez stated that Bosch claims to have carried out several terrorist acts for the Chileans but was no longer in their employ. Perez related, however, that Guillermo Novo Sampol and Ignacio Novo Sampol, two anti-Castro Cuban exiles living in the U.S., are still working with the Chileans, and, in fact, engineered the Letelier killing. (This information had previously been reported by confidential source, Morales Navarrette, and similar information linking the Novo brothers with Letelier's killing has been received from other sources.) Perez made no decision on deporting Bosch, saying that while he understood the concern of the U.S. Government, he would study the matter and meet again with U.S. officials on 10/11/76 (S)(u)]

Legat, Caracas, briefing Ambassador, Caracas, regarding Novo brothers in order that further details of killing may be obtained [from Perez.] (S)(u)

[On 10/10/76, confidential source, [redacted] advised that Bosch had already left Venezuela and complained bitterly that the U.S. had requested the deportation of Bosch inasmuch as he, [redacted] had been in the process of debriefing Bosch for the Venezuelan Government. [redacted] noted with some bitterness that the U.S. was about two years late in (S)(u)]

OTHER 1C

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(u) [its effort to have Bosch returned to the U.S., referring to Bosch's arrest on 11/19/74 by DISIP and of their efforts to deport him to the U.S. at that time. DISIP was informed then that Bosch, as an alien, would not be permitted reentry into the U.S. This decision was concurred in by Department of State and Department of Justice. (u)]
Further Reports on CORU Involvement

MM 1337-S, a CORU member, was told telephonically on 10/6/76, by a Puerto Rican CORU member, that CORU was responsible for the bombing of captioned airliner. Also, source was contacted telephonically on 10/7/76, by CORU leader, Frank Castro, who was then in the Dominican Republic. Castro told source that CORU should delay any news release regarding this incident until public reaction can be assessed. Source said no one from Miami or Puerto Rico is known to be involved in the bombing of the Cuban Airliner. (u)

On 10/8/76, an anonymous female caller to the "Miami Herald" daily newspaper took credit for the crash of the Cuban Airliner in the name of CORU. (u)

"El Condor" Organization Claims Credit

On 10/6/76, the "Miami Herald" received a telephone call at 10 p.m., from an individual who said the "El Condor" organization was responsible for placing the bomb. This call was received after extensive news coverage of the crash. (u)

There is no known "El Condor" organization in the Miami, Florida, area, and the only previous use of the name "El Condor" to claim credit for terrorist activities was by anti-Castro Cuban terrorist, Rolando Otero in "Military Communiques," he issued after several bombings in Miami in December, 1975. Otero is in jail in Miami awaiting trial on these charges. (u)

This claim is believed to be without substance; however, it has caused Caribbean countries to speculate freely that anti-Castro Cuban exiles in Miami were responsible for the crash of the airliner. (u)

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