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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

DATE: January 25, 1953
Havana, Cuba

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

SUBJECT: AMERICAN GAMBLING ACTIVITIES IN CUBA
GLIF - Cuba

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As the Bureau is aware, NORMAN ROTHMAN, FBI No. 152585B, has been the front man at the Sans Souci cabaret in Havana for the past several years. Efforts to develop him as a PCI of value to date have been negative. OTHER 4

During the summer of 1953, ROTHMAN advised on several different occasions that he and the Sans Souci were in bad shape financially and he did not know at that time whether he would be able to continue operations.

The fact that ROTHMAN and the Sans Souci were in bad shape economically was borne out by PCI [redacted] FBI No. 2198122, American floor man at the Tropicana night club, who in September, 1953, advised that he was trying to work out a deal to take over the Sans Souci. It is to be noted that the Tropicana is strictly a Cuban operation, being owned by two Cuban brothers named MARTIN and PEDRO FOX, a Cuban named OSCAR ECHEMENDIA and a Cuban named ARDURA, and there has always been a strong rivalry between it and the Sans Souci, both of which have gambling casinos.

To date, ROTHMAN continues to operate the Sans Souci; however, it appears that there still exists the possibility that the Sans Souci will be taken over by the Tropicana. The 1-24-54 issue of the Havana daily, "Prensa Libre," in a section called "OIGA" ("LISTEN"), which is a Winchell like column on the theatrical and cabaret world in Havana, contained the following paragraph:

"It results that there are almost permanent conversations between NORMAN ROTHMAN of the Sans Souci and MARTIN FOX, ARDURA or ECHEMENDIA of the Tropicana. There is never lacking a suspicion that they might be speaking of unification, of interchanges, of management, etc."

Efforts will be made to ascertain through [redacted] and ROTHMAN whether the Tropicana is taking over the operation of the Sans Souci.

As an indication of the financial situation of ROTHMAN, on 1-25-54, Lt. HERIBERTO HERNANDEZ of the Cuban Bureau of Investigations exhibited a letter dated 1-11-54 written by the firm of Nathan, Nathan & Nathan, 6 Maiden Lane, NYC, to the Chief of Police, Havana. The firm solicited the

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January 25, 1954
Havana, Cuba

To: Director, FBI

Subject: ~~AMERICAN GAMBLING ACTIVITIES IN CUBA~~
~~GIIF~~

assistance of the police in locating ROTHMAN, apparently in connection with a bill in the amount of \$622.79 owed by ROTHMAN to the Hotel St. Moritz in NYC. (S) (u)

As a further example of the expansion of operations of the Tropicana and/or [redacted] the following is set forth (S) u

OTHER 4

In November, 1953, [redacted] advised that he had tried to obtain the gambling concession in the Jockey Club of the Oriental Park Race Track for the 1953-54 season but that the owners of the track told him that they had felt obliged to give the concession to one GEORGE LEVINE, who had held it the previous season. Our CI HAV-4-C, who operates an armored car service, subsequently advised that his company had been employed by LEVINE and one SALVATORE GRANELLO to take the money of the gambling operation to and from the track on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays when the track is in operation. (S) (u) Cuba

On 1-25-54, HAV-4 advised that on that date LEVINE, GRANELLO, and a Cuban named ANGEL GONZALEZ FERNANDEZ had appeared at his office and made arrangements for the money to be delivered to [redacted] and FERNANDEZ on race days and source gained the impression that LEVINE and GRANELLO were pulling out of the operation and returning to Miami on the same date. (S) (u) Cuba

The above is for the Bureau's information. Two extra copies of this letter are attached for forwarding by the Bureau to the Miami office for information.

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