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TO : BELMONT

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SUBJECTS :

JUAN FERNANDEZ DE CASTRO RODRIGUEZ
ROLANDO MASFERRER

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Memorandum

- 1 - Belmont
- 1 - Donahoe
- 1 - Cotter

- Tolson _____
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- Tamm _____
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- W.C. Sullivan _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Gandy _____

TO : A. H. Belmont

DATE: February 2, 1960

FROM : S. B. Donahoe

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT
WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE.

SUBJECT: JUAN FERNANDEZ DE CASTRO RODRIGUEZ
 GEORGE VALDES L. AMABLE, AKA.
 ROLANDO MASFERRER ROJAS - VICTIM
 KIDNAPPING - CONSPIRACY
 INTERNAL SECURITY - CUBA

DECLASSIFIED BY SP8 MAC/KSL
 ON 5-16-94 (JFK)
 7/31/81
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 DATE OF REVIEW 7/31/91

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES AND FIELD OFFICES ADVISED BY SLIP(S) DATE 2/23/60

Reference my memo 1/28/60. By way of background, Fernandez (identical with MM 635-S, heretofore a valuable security informant of Miami) and Valdes were arrested by Miami 1/27/60 in connection with plot to kidnap Rolando Masferrer, prominent anti-Castro exile. Reference memo noted it was not clear whether Fernandez planned to advise Bureau of plot but was unable to do so because of circumstances. (u)

By teletype and airtel 1/28/60, Miami has furnished additional data concerning informant's role. Fernandez visited Miami 1/13-19/60 and supplied Miami Office with considerable data regarding Cuban intelligence activities and political developments (including information showing his own uncle is acting as Cuban agent in U. S.). Informant returned to Miami 1/27/60 and telephonically contacted Miami Office on arrival and again after processing by INS. At time of second call, he indicated he was late for appointment with unidentified individual but did not mention name of Valdes or indicate he was involved in Masferrer kidnap plot. MM 635-S did suggest meeting agent who handled him on evening of 1/27/60, but agent was unable to meet with informant due to other commitments and meeting was agreed on for following morning. (u)

Following arrest, Fernandez was interviewed privately by agent handling him, SA George Davis. He advised he had been instructed by his superior in Cuban National Police to meet Valdes concerning unidentified matter but insisted he was not aware of kidnap plot until he had met Valdes at which time he had no opportunity to contact Miami Office. He said he planned to advise Miami immediately following meeting but arrest prevented this. Fernandez claimed that he would not have actually taken part in kidnap plot and under no circumstances would he divulge his relationship with Bureau. Miami believes Fernandez gave plausible explanation and still has valuable potential as informant. Fernandez has just recently been promoted in Cuban National Police to position of assistant to head of confidential section. (u)

OBSERVATIONS:

58 FEB 9 1960 Question of whether MM 635-S is telling full truth will probably never be resolved since arrest of informant precluded independent action on his part. Possibility exists that informant's

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Memorandum Donahoe to Belmont
 Re: JUAN FERNANDEZ DE CASTRO RODRIGUEZ
 GEORGE VALDES L. AMABLE, AKA.

105-84265

current story may ^{BE} cover up. However, this informant has been operated by Miami since 1955, has produced valuable information, often of real significance, and has never previously given any indication of untrustworthiness or duplicity. Moreover, it is felt informant's story is very plausible if, in fact, he had no advance knowledge of kidnap scheme. (u)

There is little likelihood informant will divulge relationship with FBI since such action would seriously jeopardize his own safety. Under circumstances, it is felt we should not take any precipitous action to manipulate this matter for the benefit of MM 635-S or exert any influence on his behalf. It is believed, however, that we should furnish informant's account to Department and to U. S. Attorney, Miami, who is handling case (we have previously advised both Department and U. S. Attorney of fact Fernandez has been paid Bureau informant). Department should have this information to handle any problems which may arise if Fernandez does divulge his informant relationship. (u)

Possibility exists that Government may decide not to carry through on prosecution in this matter, especially since key Government witness would be Mrs. Catherine Taaffe who is of dubious reliability (we have also furnished Department full facts concerning her). Government may decide not to try subjects in favor of having them deported. In any event, it is felt we should await outcome of future prosecutive developments before making decision as to future operation of MM 635-S. (u)

ACTION:

Attached for your approval is letter to Criminal Division of Department with copy to Internal Security Division, outlining MM 635-S' account of this matter. Copies of this letter are being furnished to Miami Office which is being instructed to advise local U. S. Attorney handling this case. (u)