

~~SECRET~~

19 NOV 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Office of Legislative Counsel

VIA :

(b)(3)

FROM : Raymond A. Warren
Chief, Latin America Division

SUBJECT : Background Information on Cubana
Airlines Bombing

Attached herewith is a copy of a blind memorandum concerning four persons under indictment in Caracas, Venezuela, for alleged involvement in the 6 October 1976 bombing and subsequent crash of a Cubana Airlines flight near Barbados. This information is for your background use only.

(b)(3)

Raymond A. Warren

Attachment
As Stated

WARNING NOTICE
SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES
AND METHODS INVOLVED

~~SECRET~~

(b)(3)

S E C R E T

SUBJECT: Cubana Airlines Bombing, 6 October 1976

1. On 6 October 1976 a Cubana Airlines plane crashed shortly after take-off near Barbados with the resultant loss of all 73 persons aboard. It was established that a bomb exploded causing the crash. Subsequent investigations ultimately led to the arrest and indictment in Venezuela of four persons allegedly involved in the incident. The Castro Cuban Government has claimed that CIA directly participated in the bombing incident, and Cuba subsequently unilaterally suspended the 1973 anti-hijacking accord with the U.S. Fidel Castro accused the persons under indictment of being CIA agents. Neither CIA nor any other entity of the U.S. Government had fore-knowledge of the terrorist incident, nor were any of the four indictees current CIA agents. Past CIA relationships with two of the four indictees are detailed below.

2. Luis Posada Carriles, a Cuban by birth who now holds a Venezuelan passport, is one of the two key figures mentioned as being involved in the terrorist incident. Posada arrived in the U.S. in February 1961 as a political refugee. Soon after his arrival, Posada joined the 2506 Brigade and received paramilitary training in Guatemala under CIA auspices in preparation for the Bay of Pigs invasion. Posada probably received at least rudimentary familiarization training in demolitions in the Guatemala camp. From March 1963 to March 1964 Posada was in the U.S. Army at Fort Benning, Georgia, finishing up as a Second Lieutenant and Commanding Officer of a Weapons Platoon in a Ranger Battalion. In the latter function Posada would very likely have received demolitions training. In March 1965 Posada was recruited by CIA to serve as a Maritime Training Branch instructor in Florida. His file indicates that he was reported to be a "demolitions expert" (at the time of his hiring in March 1965). Posada was also utilized as a source on Cuban exile activities. In 1965 Posada was involved with Luis Sierra Lopez who was working with Roberto Alejos Arzu, a Guatemalan citizen who was attempting to overthrow the Guatemalan Government. Posada

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

was of interest to the Sierra/Alejos group because of his knowledge of demolitions and weapons. Posada reported fully to CIA, and later to the FBI, on his involvement in and the activities of this group (and subsequent other Cuban exile activist organizations with which he became affiliated). As of August 1966 Posada was used solely as an informant on the activities of the Cuban Representation in Exile (RECE), a Miami-based Cuban exile group. He was formally terminated in July 1967. In August 1967 Posada was mentioned in a Havana Radio broadcast as a liaison man between CIA and RECE. In August 1967 Posada moved to Caracas, Venezuela and secured a position with DIGEPOL, the Venezuelan security service (now known as DISIP). [redacted]

[redacted] 1974

when a change in Venezuelan Government administration resulted in the loss of his position with DIGEPOL/DISIP. He was formally terminated [redacted] on 30 June 1974. Infrequent contact was maintained with Posada, however, until February 1976 because of certain outstanding U.S. Federal Income Tax problems Posada had because of his (then) status as a Permanent Resident Alien (PRA) of the U.S. In mid-February 1976, Posada recontacted [redacted] to volunteer a report on the whereabouts of Orlando Bosch Avila, Frank Castro, and on a threat to the life of Salvador Allende's nephew. The final contact between the Agency and Posada occurred on 22 June 1976 when Posada contacted [redacted] to request visa assistance for his wife and himself; the assistance was denied.

3. Orlando Bosch Avila is a well-known Cuban exile activist who is subject to arrest upon re-entry to the U.S. as a parole violator. The Agency was in contact with Bosch in Miami from approximately January to November 1962. Bosch was under consideration as an "external coordinator" in the Evelio Duque exile group. Bosch was to assist the Agency and Duque in formulating operational plans for infiltration (into Cuba) teams. Bosch did obtain safehouses and procured food supplies for the Duque teams, and assisted Duque in drafting operational plans for the infiltration teams. Available information in Bosch's file does not indicate any Agency contact with Bosch subsequent to November 1962 for this purpose. Later, on 31 October and 1 November 1963, a representative of the

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

Agency met with Bosch in New York City twice. These two meetings were in connection with efforts by Bosch to secure financial support for air strikes (mounted from Central America) against Cuba. Bosch at this time was the General Coordinator of the Insurrectional Movement of Revolutionary Recovery (MIRR). Bosch was informed through an intermediary on either 2 or 3 November 1963 that no financial support would be forthcoming. There is no available information in Bosch's file that indicates any Agency contact with Bosch subsequent to 1 November 1963.

4. The Agency has no information to indicate that there was any contact or relationship with Herman Ricardo Lozano or Freddy Lugo, the other two persons currently under indictment in Caracas in connection with the 6 October Cubana Airlines bombing.

UNCLASSIFIED

INTERNAL USE ONLY

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Background Information on Cubana Airlines Bombing

FROM:

Raymond A. Warren
Chief, Latin America Division

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

19 November 1976

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

[Redacted]

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

19 Nov 76

[Signature]

2.

Office of Legislative Counsel

3.

Attn: [Redacted]

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

13.

14.

15.

1-2: I want to acquaint the DDO with these facts and open the inquiry which brought them to light. Please let me know before you use them in any way with either Senate FR Cttee or SSCI. Thanks.

[Signature]