

FBI

Date: 3/7/67

Transmit the following in _____

(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL

AIRMAIL

(Priority)

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Mr. Callahan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Conrad	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Felt	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Gale	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Rosen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Sullivan	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Miss Holmes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miss Gandy	<input type="checkbox"/>

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (62-109060)
 FROM: SAC, NEW ORLEANS (89-69) (P)
 SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
 JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY,
 NOVEMBER 22, 1963,
 DALLAS, TEXAS
 MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION CONCERNING

REC-58
 Walsworth
 1-11-67
 1521

The Times Picayune, a New Orleans daily newspaper, in its issue of March 5, 1967, carried an article captioned, "No New Action Reported in Kennedy Death Probe", in which it was stated that the assassination plot case reportedly had focused its attention on a group of men involved in a 1963 FBI raid on a cache of war materials in Lacombe. According to the article, the report followed questioning on Friday of a 42 year-old, DANTE MURACHINI, an employee of the Chrysler Corporation Space Division at the Michoud Assembly Facility.

The article stated that GARRISON is reported to be looking for at least one American who was believed to have been involved in the group that boarded munitions at Lacombe. According to the article, among the items seized in the July 31, 1963 raid at an unoccupied cottage in Lacombe were 20 empty 100-pound bomb casings, 48 cases of dynamite, napalm and firing caps. The article said the FBI had stated the explosives were designed for use by persons planning a military operation against a foreign country with which the U. S. is at peace".

- 3 - Bureau (RM)
- 1 - Dallas (89-43) (RM)
- 2 - New Orleans

REC-56

ECW:srl:sab
(6)

ST-105

MAR 8 1967

62 MAR 27 1967

Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

Section 117

UNRECORDED COPY FILED IN

1 - New Orleans
VHN:JS 3/10/67

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La

89-69-1521

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62-109060-4758

NO 89-69

BCW:arl

The files of the New Orleans Office show in the case entitled, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] advised the Miami Division on [REDACTED] had been contacted [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] whom [REDACTED] declined to identify, regarding a possible bombing raid against an unknown strategic target at Cuba. [REDACTED] was asked to examine the bombs which were to be used on this raid and were allegedly located near New Orleans, La., to determine if they were suitable for this purpose.

According to [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] was picked up by two Cubans, one of whom was known to [REDACTED] only as CARLOS, aka "Batea" and an unknown Cuban in a green 1963 Chevrolet station wagon which they told [REDACTED] had been rented from Hertz U-Drive-It Co.

Upon arriving in New Orleans, La., one of the Cubans placed a telephone call and shortly thereafter, they were met by another Cuban driving a 1963 beige Chevrolet station wagon. They followed this car proceeding over a bridge 24 miles in length, all over water, for which they paid a \$1.00 toll charge.

After crossing this bridge, they turned right and proceeded about six miles along a first-class highway. On the left side of this highway, about one-half mile off the road, they came to a large light gray one-story wooden house arriving there late [REDACTED]

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The following day, [redacted] examined the bombs noting there were 24 M38A-2 type bombs, 2,500 pounds of dynamite, as well as fuses but no detonators. After making an examination of the bombs, [redacted] told the three Cubans it would be impossible to utilize such equipment on a bombing raid.

[redacted] was made to understand this was an operation of the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil (DRE), an Anti-Castro organization and the plan was as follows:

Two B-26 airplanes were located some distance from New Orleans, La., possibly in the Houston area. Although [redacted] was not certain of this. After [redacted] approved the equipment to be used in this raid, [redacted] would arrange for the bombs to be flown to an airstrip located about ten miles from the house where the bombs were located. After the bombs were loaded, the planes would take off for the bombing mission to Cuba. It was indicated to [redacted] this operation would be a "one time deal" and to avoid any problem with U. S. authorities, the planes would not be returned to the U. S. but proceed to an unknown destination or be ditched in the ocean.

[redacted] whose identity should be protected, confidentially advised the [redacted] Division that he believed one of the pilots on this mission to be ANTONIO SOTO VASQUEZ, a Cuban exile and former Cuban Air Force pilot who had participated in the Bay of Pigs invasion.

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PCW:arl

Carlos Hernandez Sanchez

WALLACE SHANLEY, U. S. Customs Service, Miami, Fla., advised that on July 19, 1963, EDGAR OWENS, U. S. Customs, Miami, had observed CARLOS EDUARDO HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ, aka "Batea" at Miami, Fla. in a green 1963 Chevrolet station wagon, bearing 1963 Florida license 7E-40. At that time, SANCHEZ was accompanied by VICTOR ESPINOSA HERNANDEZ and FNU BASULTO. Mr. SHANLEY advised that HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ and ESPINOSA HERNANDEZ were two of five subjects involved in preparations for a bombing raid in June 1963, against a Cuban oil refinery when they were detained and U. S. Customs seized their plane and bombs in a rural area of Southwest Miami. *Cuba*
aka P. B. H. O. A.
Fla. Cuba
Victor
Dominador
ESPINOSA
HERNANDEZ

Regarding FNU BASULTO, it is noted that one JOSE DE JESUS BASULTO LEON, born 8/8/40, participated along with CARLOS HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ in a raid against Cuba staged by the Anti-Castro organization known as the Directorio Revolucionario Estudiantil (DRE) on August 25, 1962. *13 8/27/63*
ANGUZA Cuba
Cuba
Fla

Through investigation conducted by the New Orleans Division [redacted] a single story pink house located in the area generally known as the Forest Glen Subdivision of Lacombe Park, the property of WILLIAM JULIUS MC LANEY, was identified as the location where the bombs and explosives were stored. *Cuba*
La

WILLIAM JULIUS MC LANEY, 4213 Encampment St., on interview of 7/31/63, advised he had permitted JOSE MARTI, also known as Jose Hernandez Ruiz, to store personal belongings in his former home at Lacombe. *La*

On July 31, 1963, on the basis of a search warrant issued by U. S. Commissioner FRITZ H. WINDHORST at New Orleans, La., Special Agents of the FBI searched the above-described property owned by WILLIAM JULIUS MC LANEY and found 20 100-pound practice bombs, type M38A-2, 48 cases 50 lbs. each of dynamite, one 50-pound can of "nuodex 472", a

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substance used to make napalm, 24 modified M-60 mortar fuses with .30 caliber cartridges crimped onto approximately 30-inch pieces of primer cord, 26 striker assemblies for fuses, 18 locking nuts, 24 firing devices, 25 pieces primer cord, each approximately two feet long, 24 commercial percussion-type blasting caps, 20 pieces of arming wire assemblies, a group of 3-inch pipe clamps, one roll of friction tape and one small carton of stove bolts and nuts.

Records of the Atlanta Army and Navy Supply Co., Atlanta, Ga., reflect under invoice #80-14, that 24 100-pound practice bombs were shipped on 6/20/63, to Tropic Trades, Inc., 1060 Southwest 27th Ave., Miami, Fla., by Delta Air Freight. On the same date, two additional practice bombs were shipped under invoice #80-12, with other merchandise, to Tropic Trades, Inc. via Terminal Motor Freight.

Fla. A partner in Tropic Trades, Inc., doing business as PX Army Surplus, 1060 Southwest 27th Ave., Miami, advised that the order for the above-described bomb casings were placed by an unknown Cuban, and that it was a cash transaction.

Investigation developed that the dynamite was ordered from the American Cyanamid Co. by RICH LAUCHLI of 2012 Keebler St., Collinsville, Illinois. The dynamite was picked up by LAUCHLI and an unidentified man at the Millstadt Illinois Magazine on 7/10/63. The dynamite was paid for in cash in the amount of \$642.09. The employee of American Cyanamid handling the transaction was not able to identify the man with LAUCHLI as being identical to a photograph of VICTOR DOMINADOR ESPINOSA HERNANDEZ.

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RICH LAUCHLI, 2012 Koebler St., Collinsville, Illinois, advised on 8/19/63 that a man named VICTOR LNU, but who possibly could be ESPINOSA, contacted him in July, 1963, concerning the purchase of 2,400 pounds of dynamite. LAUCHLI ordered the dynamite through American Cyanamid in St. Louis, Missouri. VICTOR was accompanied by a young blonde female and was driving a late model station wagon and they proceeded to the Millstadt Illinois Magazine with LAUCHLI to pick up the dynamite. VICTOR paid for the dynamite with about \$600 in cash. LAUCHLI helped him load the dynamite into a U-Haul trailer which VICTOR rented from a service station in Collinsville, Illinois. VICTOR did not tell LAUCHLI what he planned to do with the dynamite. LAUCHLI said he had never met VICTOR prior to this transaction.

RALPH W. FOLKERTS, Proprietor, Jasper's Mobil Station, 404 St. Louis Road, Collinsville, Illinois, advised on 8/19/63 he rented a U-Haul trailer, serial number 2002Lv9070, on July 11, 1963, to VICTOR ESPINOSA, 50 Sutton Place South, New York, New York, and that ESPINOSA presented New York driver's license E19602-77943-925560. ESPINOSA was driving a new white Chevrolet station wagon, bearing Florida license WE868. ESPINOSA advised FOLKERTS his destination was New Orleans, La., and furnished his telephone number there as 721-1441. FOLKERTS identified a photograph of VICTOR DOMINADOR ESPINOSA HERNANDEZ as the person who rented this trailer.

Investigation at Hertz Rent-A-Car Agency, Miami, developed information that a 1963 Chevrolet station wagon, bearing 1963 Florida license 7040 was rented by JOHN KOCH, 1027 Southwest 12th Ave., Miami, Fla., on 7/13/63, from that agency and was returned 7/20/63, having been driven 2,075 miles.

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Fla

JOHN KOCH GENE, 110 Southwest 18th Ct., Miami, born 5/20/40, Havana, Cuba, who claimed to be an American citizen, on interview of 7/30/63, stated he had previously attended the University of Havana prior to coming to the U. S. as an exile from the Castro regime on 6/16/61. After entering the U. S., he became a member of DRE but terminated affiliation about eight months prior to date of interview. KOCH admitted renting 1963 Chevrolet station wagon at the request of CARLOS HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ but denied knowing purpose for which rented. Later on 7/20/63, CARLOS HERNANDEZ, accompanied by a person known to him as HUMBERTO whose last name he thought was SUAREZ, contacted him and asked him to return the vehicle to the Hertz Company in Miami, which he did paying for rental with money given to him by HERNANDEZ.

VICTOR DOMINADOR ESPINOSA HERNANDEZ, born 8/27/37 at Matanza, Cuba, who claimed residence at 50 Sutton Place South, Apt. 15C, New York City, on interview 7/31/63, stated he came to the U. S. from Cuba in 1959 because of the Communist direction of the government under FIDEL CASTRO and engaging in activities against CASTRO. He admitted being picked up by the U. S. Customs at Miami on 6/15/63, while preparing an airplane and explosives for a strike against Havana oil refineries.

VICTOR ESPINOSA stated that a follow-up of the plan thwarted by Customs Service on 6/15/63, was being undertaken by him but had been cancelled because the FBI was known to have undertaken an investigation and because he had been unable to enlist pilots or to obtain an airplane for the raid. VICTOR ESPINOSA stated he had obtained 1,200 pounds of TNT, not dynamite, for the raid but declined to state where it had been obtained or where it was located. ESPINOSA

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stated he considered himself the coordinator of the plan but was not aware of all of the details because the preparations were deliberately compartmentalized so that no one member of the group could divulge all of the details.

ESPINOSA admitted telephonic contact with about 12 Cuban pilots, none of whom were willing to engage in this raid. He stated in his opinion, the only ones who were willing to take the risk of such a raid were his companions of the infiltration team in the Cuban invasion which included CARLOS HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ and MIGUEL ALVAREZ JIMENEZ. VICTOR ESPINOSA denied that his brother, RENE JOSE ESPINOSA or JOSE BASULTO LEON were participants in these plans for a raid.

ESPINOSA also denied that MICHAEL J. MO-LANEY of Miami Beach had donated funds or assisted in plans for the raid. He declined to state who had financed the purchase of explosives to be used in the raid but claimed funds were solicited from friends in New York.

He declined to identify the other individuals involved in this plan but stated that two were members of his infiltration team with whom he had trained in Panama and with whom he had infiltrated Cuba prior to the invasion of April, 1961.

Investigation showed that VICTOR ESPINOSA rented a 1963 Chevrolet station wagon, Florida license #7E868 from Avis Rent-A-Car, St. Louis Airport Branch, St. Louis, Missouri, 7/11/63, which was to be checked in at Avis Rent-A-Car, New Orleans, La.

CARLOS EDUARDO HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ, 155 Pennsylvania Ave., Miami Beach, Fla., on interview, 7/30/63, stated he was born 10/15/39 at Havana, Cuba.

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and came to the U. S. in November, 1959, after his safety became jeopardized as a result of his counter-revolutionary activity. He claimed he was connected with MANUEL ARTIME in Anti-Castro activity, had received guerilla training in the U. S. and had engaged in training of infiltration teams in Guatemala. Upon being questioned concerning plans and activities for the purpose of executing a raid against Cuba, HERNANDEZ stated that he did not wish to make any statement but would assume the protection of the Fifth Amendment. However, he admitted participating in an attempted raid against Cuba which had been thwarted by U. S. Customs in Miami on June 15, 1963. HERNANDEZ denied making any recent trips out of Florida or any knowledge concerning rental of a station wagon from Hertz Rent-A-Car, Miami, Fla.

MIGUEL ALVAREZ JIMENEZ, 726 Northwest 32nd Ct., Miami, Fla., on interview 8/1/63, stated he was born 1/19/28, at Havana, Cuba, and came to the U. S. in 1959. He stated that he had not been actually detained in the round-up of Cuban exiles by U. S. Customs Service on June 15, 1963, but had been at the location and drove out of the area when he observed what he believed to be officers. ALVAREZ denied any knowledge of additional explosives in the possession of VICTOR ESPINOSA and CARLOS HERNANDEZ or any knowledge of a plan to bomb Cuba with explosives in Louisiana.

ELK SAM BENTON, 1800 South Treasure Dr., Miami Beach, on interview, 8/2/63, stated he was born 7/4/20 in Poland and migrated to Cuba in 1934 where he remained until he immigrated to the U. S. in 1939. BENTON claimed he served in the U. S. Army and as a result of military service, became a naturalized citizen at Watertown, New York, in August, 1945.

BENTON stated that prior to the Cuban invasion of April, 1961, and for a short period thereafter, he did what was in his power to assist the Anti-Castro

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Cubans because he was definitely sympathetic to their cause. He admitted contact in the recent past with VICTOR "PAPUCHO" ESPINOSA, CARLOS HERNANDEZ and MIGUEL ALVAREZ, Cuban exile who entertained plans for military action against Cuba. BENTON denied furnishing funds for material or other expenses incurred by the group but claimed he acted in a consultant capacity and did make inquiries for the Cubans.

BENTON admitted knowledge of a plan to bomb the oil refinery at Havana, Cuba, and being located with VICTOR ESPINOSA and several other Cubans on a farm Southwest of Miami on 6/15/63, by U. S. Customs Service but denied being instrumental in obtaining the plane or materials. BENTON stated he intended to take pictures of the scene as part of a film which was to be sold to defray the expenses of the exiles.

BENTON admitted that VICTOR ESPINOSA told him he had about 2,400 pounds of dynamite located on a farm in Louisiana, where it could not be discovered which ESPINOSA claimed he had purchased in Chicago, Illinois. ESPINOSA also told him he had obtained some napalm material for fire bombs and detonators.

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~~EVELIO ALPIZAR GONZALEZ~~, 3625 N.W. 11th Street, Miami, Fla., on interview 8/1/63 stated he was born 11/27/31, Havana Province, Cuba, and had served in Cuban Air Force for six months in 1958 and then came to the United States as an exile on 1/1/59.

ALPIZAR stated that in beginning of June, 1963, he had been contacted by MIGUEL ALVAREZ and VICTOR "PAPUCHO" ESPINOSA to be the pilot in a bombing action planned against Cuba and that these individuals indicated their plan was to bomb oil refineries at Havana, which action was under the sponsorship of the U. S. Government.

ALPIZAR stated that SAM BENTON was introduced to him as an associate in the plans for the bombing.

ALPIZAR stated that the principal individuals involved were SAM BENTON, VICTOR ESPINOSA, and MIGUEL ALVAREZ. He denied knowing CARLOS HERNANDEZ.

ALPIZAR denied any knowledge of a new effort being undertaken to carry out the bombing raid against Havana.

~~ANTONIO SOTO VAZQUEZ~~, 1270 S.W. 60th Terrace, Miami, Fla., on interview 8/1/63 stated he had been a Captain in the Cuban Air Force during the regime of FULGENCIO BATISTA until that government collapsed, and he came to the United States on 1/1/59.

SOTO stated that on or about 7/6/63 MIGUEL ALVAREZ JIMENEZ asked him if he would be interested in serving as the pilot of an airplane to fly over Cuba and drop bombs on an oil refinery there. According to SOTO, he asked ALVAREZ for additional details and was told that the bombing material was dynamite which would be placed in a bomb casing with a detonating device.

SOTO claimed he contacted a friend known only as [redacted] experienced in the arming of military aircraft, who advised that the material was not suitable, could be dangerous, and recommended against SOTO's participation in such an operation.

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Fla. ... ESPINOSA

RENE JOSE ESPINOSA HERNANDEZ, 5000 S.W. 69th Avenue, Miami, on interview 8/5/63, stated he was born 2/11/39 at Cardenas, Cuba, and was admitted to the United States at Miami, Fla., 10/15/60. ESPINOSA denied knowledge of any plan to make an attack on Cuba or any knowledge of the transportation of dynamite and other related materials, including bomb casings, to New Orleans, La.

[redacted] whose identity should be protected, advised the Miami Division on 7/5/63 that several days prior to 6/15/63 he was contacted by VICTOR ESPINOSA HERNANDEZ in connection with a proposition that [redacted] pilot a twin-engine Beechcraft airplane on a bombing mission against Cuba. ESPINOSA disclosed at that time that MIKE MC LANEY had supplied the money and the Beechcraft airplane to be used in this raid. [redacted] stated that MIKE MC LANEY formerly operated a gambling concession at the Hotel Nacional, Havana, Cuba, until the BATISTA Regime was ousted and MC LANEY was living on Pine Tree Drive, Miami Beach, Fla.

The records of the Avis Rent-A-Car Co., New Orleans, La., revealed that a 1963 Chevrolet Station Wagon which was rented in St. Louis, Missouri, on 7/9/63 by a VICTOR ESPINOSA was turned in at the Avis Office, Moisant International Airport, New Orleans, La., on 7/17/63 having been driven a total of 1,138 miles.

The Avis records further reflected that a white 1963 Chevrolet Station Wagon bearing 1963 Florida license 7E-868 was rented on 7/18/63 by ARTURO MENLENDEZ, 846 Riedel Drive, Houston, Texas, with a business address of 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York 20, New York. This car was turned in to Avis Rent-A-Car at Miami, Fla., 7/20/63, having been driven 933 miles.

JOSE DE JESUS BASULTO LEON, on interview 8/6/63 at Miami, Fla., stated he was born August 8, 1940, at Santiago de Cuba, Cuba, and that he was at that time serving as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army stationed at Fort Benning, Ga. He claimed he was on furlough at the time and was residing with his father JOSE DE JESUS BASULTO CRUZ in Florida. BASULTO denied that he was aware of any plan to bomb Cuba utilizing dynamite located in the vicinity of New Orleans, La.

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He stated that he is a single engine pilot and had not been contacted in connection with flying an airplane on an alleged plan to bomb Cuba.

On 8/20/63, JOHN KOCH identified a photograph of CARLOS HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ as the person for whom he rented the 1963 station wagon from Hertz Rent-A-Car, Miami, Fla., on 7/13/63.

On 8/20/63, [REDACTED] identified a photograph of CARLOS HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ as one of the two persons he accompanied to New Orleans on or about 7/15/63. On 8/21/63, [REDACTED] identified a photograph of VICTOR ESPINOSA HERNANDEZ as the person who met [REDACTED] CARLOS HERNANDEZ SANCHEZ and another unknown Cuban from Miami in New Orleans, La., and who led them to the site where the dynamite and bombs were located.

WILLIAM JULIUS McLANEY was reinterviewed 9/18/63 and advised that he did not recognize the photographs of any of the individuals involved in this case as being identical with the person who left explosives at his summer home in Lacombe, La.

FRANK BARTES, 1608 Mason Smith Avenue, Metairie, La., advised on 9/26/63 he met RENE and VICTOR ESPINOSA in Coral Gables, Fla., in June, 1963. They told BARTES they had previously been picked up by Federal authorities for attempting to bomb an oil refinery in Cuba. BARTES advised neither RENE nor VICTOR ESPINOSA mentioned having any explosives in Louisiana. BARTES denied any knowledge of a cache of explosives at the residence of WILLIAM J. MC LANEY in Lacombe, La., and denied knowing WILLIAM MC LANEY or his brother MIKE MC LANEY. BARTES also denied knowledge of any plans by anyone to bomb Cuba.

The U. S. Department of Justice recommended to the office of the U. S. Attorney, New Orleans, La., that the dynamite and explosives located in this case be seized by the U. S. Customs Service under 22 USC 1934, followed by the filing of a Liberal of Forfeiture under 22 USC 401.

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MICHAEL J. MC LANEY, 4855 Pine Tree Drive, Miami Beach, Fla., advised on 10/17/63 that he was not involved directly or indirectly in an alleged plot to bomb Cuba utilizing 2400 pounds of dynamite or other related material which was seized on 7/31/63 on the property of WILLIAM J. MC LANEY, LaCombe, La. MC LANEY advised that he could not speak for his brother WILLIAM J. MC LANEY regarding possible participation in this plot. MC LANEY further stated that he did not finance this plan. He admitted being well acquainted with VICTOR ESPINOSA, having known him in Cuba and, in addition, helped him when he first came to the United States.

AUSA HOWARD McCURDY, New Orleans, La., advised on 11/13/63 that U. S. Customs had seized the 2,400 pounds of dynamite and related material which was originally removed from WILLIAM J. MC LANEY's residence at LaCombe, La., 7/31/63. On December 30, 1963, Mr. McCURDY advised that he had filed a Liberal of Forfeiture in December, 1963, in U. S. District Court, New Orleans, La.

On February 28, 1964, the U. S. District Court, New Orleans, La., issued a judgment directing that the above seized material was condemned and forfeited and was to be delivered to the Secretary of Defense as provided for by Title 22, U. S. Code, Section 401 (c).

By letter dated 1/3/64, the Internal Security Division, U. S. Department of Justice, advised that since the plan of the subjects to undertake an aerial attack of Cuba was effectively thwarted by the seizure of the material on 7/31/63, criminal action in this matter was not being contemplated at that time.

The above information is being furnished to the Bureau in view of the fact that District Attorney GARRISON is directing his investigation concerning the assassination of President KENNEDY into the activities mentioned above.