

diff-jfk: record 104-10214-10034 - Page 1 - (diff between 2025 and 2023)

Highlighted changes between 2025/104-10214-10034.pdf and 2023/104-10214-10034.pdf - fresh pages only

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

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~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

SECRET-EYES ONLY

to furnish minor details that are missing from the written records, we think it unlikely that they would be able to add significantly to the quite complete record that appears in the EMBED operational files.

Agency activities aimed at replacing the Trujillo regime were assigned the cryptonym EMBED. One segment of EMBED was known as **ENSLAV**, the cryptonym for the operation to remove Trujillo by violent action. We have reviewed the voluminous EMBED files. Most of this account is drawn from them. Many of the more significant documents were not put into the EMBED files but were kept in a private file by J. C. King. He made that file available to us. We also have studied another particularly useful document. The Dominican Military Intelligence Service (SIM) officer put in charge of the investigation of the Trujillo assassination was a navy lieutenant named Ortiz. The Dominican Republic assigned him to its embassy in Ottawa in November 1961 when the Trujillo family's attempt to regain power failed. The New York field office of the FBI held extensive interviews with him from 6 April through 10 May 1962. The result was a massively-detailed, 182-page report on the plot and on the assassination as reconstructed by the SIM from its interrogations of the persons it apprehended.

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

As a further prelude to a chronological review of operation
EXCELSIOR, we think it would be useful to identify the people
involved, especially since officers of the Department of State
played a very prominent role.

Washington - Department of State

Roy R. Rubottom	Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs
Frank Devine	Special Assistant to Rubottom
John C. Hill	Special Assistant to Rubottom

Washington - CIA

J. C. King	Chief, WH Division
Ned Holman	Chief, Branch III, WH Division

Ciudad Trujillo - Department of State

Joseph S. Farland	Ambassador until 26 June 1960. It is pertinent to note that King and Estes- line attribute U.S. and CIA involvement
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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

with the plotters in the Dominican Republic to Ambassador Farland. They describe him as a former FBI employee who considered himself quite a clandestine operator. Esterline, who later served under him in Panama, called him "a wild man who bugged the Agency to support a move to assassinate Trujillo." He had direct dealings with a number of the key plotters.

Henry Dearborn

Counsellor of Embassy until 26 August 1960 and Consul General thereafter. He used the code name DELTA in correspondence with the plotters.

John D. Barfield

Second Secretary until 26 August 1960 and a consular officer thereafter.

CIA cryptonym: **EMDAZE-1**

Ciudad Trujillo - CIA

Lear Reed

Chief of Station until October 1960

Robert Owen

Chief of Station from 20 January until 4 June 1961. Code name used with the plotters: GALGO

Charles Cookson

Operations Officer

Isabel Cintron

Administrative Assistant

Key Dominican Plotters

Dr. Jordi Brossa

Code names: SWORD and EL CHICO

Juan Vicini

Code Names: Mr. X, ABC, and YACUATE

Luis Eguero

Code name: SOCRATES

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

S. Thomas Stocker

An American in the Dominican Republic with whom the station had had an earlier unhappy experience. The consulsate preferred to have nothing to do with him, but the Dominican plotters brought him in as a cutout to the consulate. He took delivery from Lorenzo Berry of three carbines passed to Berry from the U.S. Consulate for use by the plotters. He held them for a few days and then gave them back when Berry insisted they be returned. Berry then passed them to one of the assassins.

Dr. Severo Cabral

Jose Francisco Tipia

Aulio Bres

Andres Freitas

Luis Amiana Tio

Jose Rene Roman

Juan Tomas Diaz

Donald Reid Cabral

Lorenzo D. Berry

Florida Berry

Code names: ECTOR and PLUTARCO

Code name: ANDY

Code name: CRISTOBAL

Code name: CIBAO

"Wimpy" - Berry is a U.S. citizen who owned Wimpy's Supermarket in Ciudad Trujillo. He was the main communications link between the plotters and the U.S. Consulate. The weapons furnished the plotters were actually passed to Berry.

Wimpy's wife - a Dominican citizen of Syrian extraction. She appears to have been even more active in the plot than her husband. It was she who had the contacts with the Dominicans involved.

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

Most communications between the Dominican plotters and the U.S. Consulate were by means of written notes. Mrs. Berry received the notes from or passed them to either the Consul General's secretary or the CIA Station's administrative assistant.

Two documents provide a useful point of departure, from an historical point of view. One is a semi-official letter from Ambassador Farland in the Dominican Republic to Assistant Secretary of State Rubottom. The other document is an internal CIA staff paper revealing the relatively passive role that had been played by CIA prior to 1960.

16 November 1959

Ambassador Farland wrote an "Official-Informal" memorandum to Rubottom reporting that "the underground is more active today than ever in the history of the Trujillo regime." He described the principal opposition group as being about 2,000 strong. He said:

" . . . within this group there is growing militant anti-American feeling based on the premise that the United States should actively aid the Dominican revolutionary (sic) for the overthrow of the Trujillo regime. Discussions I have heard on this subject show an appalling lack of understanding of the position of the United States and its adopted doctrine of non-intervention. . . . This group is in possession of clandestine broadcasting equipment which will go into operation when the strike is made. CAS has been informed and joins with me in suggesting that you pass this information to J. C. King."

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

them; transmission of armament and sabotage material . . . could fully substantiate this cooperation. . . ."

9 May 1960

A memorandum addressed to Chief, MI Division, reports steps taken or recommended for improving CIA's capabilities in the Dominican Republic. The paper refers to the need for covert action assets, principally to obstruct infiltration of Communists or Fidelistas. Among things recommended were: placement of a junior officer in the embassy; assignment of a full-time officer to the headquarters desk for the covert action program; authorization to use Jose Figueres in third country operations; development of a contingency PM plan in the event Trujillo fell and hostile forces attempted to seize power, and establishment of a "U.S. Committee for Democracy in the Dominican Republic."

A memorandum written of a debriefing of Ambassador Farland reads, in part, as follows:

"The dissidents need guns and ammunition from the United States. In particular they need a small number of high-powered rifles with telescopic lenses. The Ambassador said that he saw no problem in the purchase and delivery clandestinely of the arms to the dissidents. But he said, of course, this raises the question of whether the U.S. Government wants to engage in this activity.

"Col. King said that this of course is a policy decision. He said that CIA could deliver the arms if this is the group we want to support.

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

refused to abdicate, consideration should be given to other covert or overt actions designed to effect his removal from the scene." A deadline of 1 July was proposed for completing arrangements.

17 June 1960

Henry Dearborn, who was in charge in the Ambassador's absence, queried State through CIA channels, asking for confirmation on certain points for a meeting he was having with a dissident leader,

Dr. Jordi Brossa. He stated his understanding of the U.S. position as follows:

- a. The U.S. is not prepared to take overt action against the Trujillo government while it is in full control.
- b. The U.S. is prepared to assist the opposition clandestinely to develop effective forces to accomplish Trujillo's overthrow.
- c. Assistance must continue to be channeled covertly until such time as the dissidents establish a provisional government which controls a substantial section of the Dominican Republic.

20 June 1960

Dearborn, again through CIA channels, asked Rubottom and Farland if he could make the same statements concerning U.S. policy in a meeting with **Juan Vicini**, another dissident leader. Farland replied in the affirmative.

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

26 June 1960

Dearborn cabled the results of his first meeting with [Juan] Vicini. He said that Vicini felt that the time to concentrate on, for planning purposes, was the period extending through the "incapacitation" of Trujillo; too much planning for what would follow risked exposure. Dearborn said that he agreed.

Also on 26 June (although the first written record we find is a summary memorandum prepared on 18 October), Rubottom told J.C. King that the Government of the United States was prepared to participate in the overthrow of the Trujillo regime to the following extent: "to provide a small number of sniper rifles or other devices for the removal of key Trujillo people from the scene." Rubottom added that the U.S. Government was not prepared, at this time, to send arms, equipment, or paramilitary experts to assist the underground to accomplish a revolt.

29 June 1960

Dearborn cabled the results of his meeting with Dr. Brossa. He said that Brossa had recommended a temporary standdown on "action toward incapacitation of Trujillo" while determining Venezuela's reaction to the Trujillo assassination plot against Betancourt. #/#

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

added that, "If air drop delivery not possible, Rqs now studying means of effecting delivery by sea if deemed more practicable."

8 July 1960

Headquarters cabled Dearborn, in part:

" . . . imperative learn from Juan Vicini and/or Dr. Jordi Brossa what plans and capabilities are to be employed simultaneously with action to incapacitate Trujillo and what is needed in way of material support for implementation of plan of action. Of particular importance is info re extent of military participation in preparations. In spite of Nicini apparent lack of knowledge of opposition organization, most logical that he is actively collaborating with a group that must have some plan and capability for action which will assure stable interim government after removal of Trujillo. In your opinion are Vicini and Brossa members of same group or if not could the two groups be merged? "

8 September 1960

The Special Group discussed a letter drafted by the Department of State for delivery to Trujillo (copy in CIA files dated 6 September) proposing that he step down. The DCI (Mr. Dulles) doubted the wisdom of putting such a proposal in writing. He preferred a personal approach. The Group concluded that a personal approach would be best and discussed William Pawley as a candidate for the job.

18 October 1960

Chief, WH Division, prepared a memorandum summarizing approvals

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

31 January 1961

"Official-Informal" letter from Dearborn to Devine in State Department:

"With regard to the delivery of exotic equipment, my friends were of course delighted that such a decision had been made. I hope that it will not be necessary to play down too long the question of actual delivery since they are eager and expectant and too great tardiness on our part would only lead them to question our sincerity."

6 February 1961

Cable from headquarters:

"1. Realize details not now available but Hqs would appreciate [dissidents'] reaction to offer of armed assistance to include. [dissidents'] current plan . . .

"2. Also request [Robert Owen's] initial assessment [dissidents'] capability carry out plan of action once limited armed assistance provided."

10 February 1961

The station cabled its reply:

"No solid reaction except joy as of 9 Feb.

"Initial assessment is [Brossa and Vicini] could not carry out plan. But with access [Dr. Severo Cabral] he now approaching point when will better be able evaluate group potential for action. We some weeks away from being able make solid preliminary assessment.

"Suggest KULAK consider sending in each pouch one small

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

size high fire power weapon so at least gesture in right direction can be made if we all thrown out. Arms could come later."

14 February 1961

At the Special Group meeting of this date, Mr. Bundy:

" . . . asked that a memorandum be prepared for higher authority on the subject of what plans can be made for a successor government to Trujillo."

(Comment: We did not find a copy of such a memorandum in CIA files.)

15 February 1961

Ned Holman, the Headquarters branch chief, met with **Juan** **Vicini** and Donald Reid Cabral in New York City. Excerpts from his memorandum record of the meeting follow:

" . . . **Vicini** played down somewhat the necessity for delivery of arms, although he did say that it is desirable and should be a part of the planning. He said that members of the opposition could, if they wanted to, obtain small quantities of arms from Army contacts . . . but that any arms so obtained would have to be used very quickly before their loss is discovered. For this reason, he said it would be desirable to have arms delivered by us that could be stored for use at any moment desired.

Vicini said that the object of obtaining this kind of help anyway is the elimination of Trujillo and instead of using arms or grenades he began to speak of more exotic materials and methods . . . a powerful bomb that could be planted along the route of Trujillo's evening walk and could be detonated from a nearby

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

electronic device . . . (or) . . . the possibility of poisoning the dictator's food or of putting poison capsules in bottles of certain medicines that the dictator is known to take regularly. . . .

"A less exotic and more practical plan that they put forward was one that they said had already been planned at one time before. They said that when the dictator leaves his office for his home there are three automobiles in his procession with the dictator himself in the first automobile and the bodyguards in the following two. The idea that has been discussed internally is for several trucks to block the progress of these cars at a given intersection at which time young men who belong to the action groups would leap out of the trucks with fire arms and grenades to finish off the dictator."

4 March 1961

Headquarters pouches to the station a copy of Holman's memorandum of his meeting with **Vicini** and Reid. On 4 March, the chief of station cabled his assessment of the plan to intercept Trujillo's entourage and kill him with guns and grenades:

"**Vicini** idea . . . almost certain fail if applied. That type attack is precisely what bodyguards appear best qualified cope with. Their defense pattern and displacement vehicles plus police practice detour traffic blocks away from entourage make **Vicini** idea fatally childish in Owen's view."

(Comment: The assassination was actually carried out through a variation of this scheme. The assassins detected and took advantage of a stereotyped pattern in Trujillo's movements in which he rode at night, unescorted, on little traveled highways.)

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

The station cabled headquarters on 4 March:

" . . . if opportunity support pro-US group not to be lost, believe . . . imperative make sure arms with ammo ready for immediate entry DomRep . . . if necessary at air drop sites . . . "

5 March 1961

As a follow-up to that cable, the station cabled a communication from **Dr. Severo Cabral**: "We have in our hands chance to speedup events. Everything is being planned perfectly. Results may be assured as much as human fallibility permits."

7 March 1961

Headquarters cabled the field, in part:

"Existing authorization precludes introduction arms into Dom Rep by U.S. personnel. Order prepare contingency plans for possible alternate delivery method, request station determine additional drop zones and confirm those mentioned Request type and quantity arms desired."

8 March 1961

Cable from the station:

Brossa told Dearborn on 7 March that **Dr. Severo Cabral** and group plan try kill Trujillo by [intercepting his car] at point near **[Impy's Supermarket]**. Date not set and obviously depends on Trujillo travel . . . **Severo Cabral** not aware **Brossa** has told us but interesting that Charge' Papal Nunciatura also aware plot exists but possibly not of personnel involved."

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

6 March 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"Hqs deeply interested plan . . . and request urgently additional details in order make plans timely assistance. Uncertainty of plans, timing and chances of success precludes Hqs seeking commitment for such specific assistance as that requested"

13 March 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"Following elicited from DMOB-8 (Andres Freitas): Freitas speaks for Asiana Tio group which includes military members . . . in six brigade Hqs and which have capability, at appropriate time, of taking over military garrisons with arms already at hand, and appointing military/civilian junta in control provisional govt. . . . Regret following station action with respect Asiana Tio group: A. Identify military membership; B. Assess capabilities as claimed; C. Indicate if assets can be coordinated with overall effort. Hqs places special emphasis on identifying military membership Asiana Tio group. This important for vetting as well as enable assess realistically chances successful takeover."

15 March 1961

Cable from the station:

"Lorenzo (Wimpy) Berry asked [a consulate employee] for small supply fragmentation grenades 'for use in next week or so.' By note, the chief of station checked back with Wimpy and learned the dissident group must do ~~ESLEA~~ /kill Trujillo/ this month or drop it as number of fringe persons with loose mouths are apparently aware renewal plan Wimpy asked for five 45 mm (sic) rapid fire weapons or similar, 1,500 rounds ammo for

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-SIGS ONLY

name, . . . 50 fragmentation grenades, . . . ten 6mm tank rockets. . . .

16 March 1961

Headquarters cabled its reply:

"Re exploring possibilities for arms delivery and will advise ASAP. Meanwhile, request you clarify soonest: Is Berry making request on own initiative or is he speaking for
Dr. Severo Cabral"

17 March 1961

Cable from the station:

"For issue to several of the dissident group Consul General Dearborn requests three .38 caliber Smith and Wesson Special pistols or similar and three small boxes cartridges. If sending ammo complicates problem, advise and we will try get from Marines.

"Chief of Station reiterates suggestion to send in each pouch one small size high fire power weapon as Dearborn increasingly concerned lest momentum which group has now for assassination decline result lack tangible or too slow action on arms by the U.S. Government. Also security these people increasingly of direct interest US Government which each day more involved in the operation. Loss of one of key people thru capture could lead revelation details ODYCKE/EMEXED activity. Thus preferable we give them some chance defend themselves against SD4."

18 March 1961

Chief of Station Robert Owen met for the first time with Dr.

Severo Cabral. He cabled the results:

SECRET-SIGS ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY
SECRET-EYES ONLY

"His group [assassination] plan now this: Group knows identity Trujillo's mistress in capital. He visits her once week or once in two weeks. Goes her apartment avognito and lightly guarded. Group apparently has someone in building who can alert them to visit. Dressed as army officers, small group will go to entrance, distract guard with pretext, dispatch him or them in silence, enter apartment and try do [assassination], possibly including mistress, in silence.

"To do they need five M-3 or comparable machine guns and 1500 rounds amo for personal defense in event fire-fight. Will use quiet weapons for basic job. **Severo Cabral's** final position was U.S. Government get items here soonest via pouch or similar means. Evident he actually worried that delivery by other means would compromise entire project. Obvious he can count on only one group both receive arms and do [assassination].

[Dr. Severo Cabral] expects and willing risk chaos for period of undetermined length after [assassination] mainly because for security reasons his group cannot approach military and hope to get decisive agreement support before [assassination].

20 March 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"Regret no authorization exists to suspend pouch regulations against shipment of arms . . . Will deliver to the group's representatives outside the Dominican Republic if this feasible. Coordinated with State Department."

22 March 1961

The station replied, in part:

" . . . we realize permission does not now exist but Chief of Station knows that he at last two posts received pistols via pouch for worthy purposes, so it can be done. Judging from ref, W/H not prepared take this step. If this unalterably so then

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

please continue try get authorization for air drop of . . . arms . . . or import arms by [other] means. Completely negative plea for arms, whatever delivery method, will end cooperation [Severo
Cesar] and probably by [Dimpie and Mrs. Berry].*

25 March 1951

The above excerpt is the most significant point in the cable, but the excerpt does not fully reveal the contentious tone of the cable. On 25 March, Headquarters, in a cable released by the DD/P (Bissell) undertook to set Owen straight. The cable gives a fairly complete statement of U.S. policy and objectives and of Owen's responsibilities. It is summarized here. We support a program to replace the Trujillo regime; we wish to avoid precipitate action if planning is not well organized, as appears to be the case; machine guns and ammunition will be supplied to demonstrate good will to the dissidents; the requested revolvers are being pouched. Headquarters is planning with State against the eventuality of sudden action by the dissidents that might result in the forming of a new government. "If above clarifies Hqs position, Owen should proceed accordingly. In event major points remain unclear, State Department preparing orders permit return for consultations."

(Comment: We do not know whether Owen replied to this cable or not. We do not find a reply in the files. Owen did go to headquarters for consultations about 5 April, but we cannot

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* It is apparent from the EMEED operational files that no arms were ever air-dropped or delivered by sea.

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

establish that the trip was a direct result of this cable. There is some evidence that suggests that the trip may have been in connection with a request from the dissidents for submachine guns.)

26 March 1961

Cable from the station:

"For **Dr. Severo Cabral** request permission pass three semi-automatic M-1 carbines .30 caliber and supply ammo which available consulate from departed naval personnel. Would need from Hqs nine .30 cartridge magazines for weapons. Request prompted by **Severo Cabral** note 25 March which says he cannot hold group together beyond April 15 without arms delivery."

(Comment: It may be helpful to interrupt the chronology at this point. As we will later explain, these carbines were actually passed to the dissidents. They were in the hands of Antonio de la Maza, who worked out the details of the assassination and was the lead figure in carrying it out. They almost certainly were taken to the scene of the slaying by the assassins. We have no evidence that any of them were actually fired during the shooting. The little evidence we have suggests that they were not actually used. These three carbines are the weapons referred to by various sources as having been passed to the plotters by CIA. We find no evidence of any other weapons having been passed.)

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

27 March 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"FYI, ref hardware [the three pistols the station asked be pouched] makes fairly sizeable package if lumped single shipment. Request soonest COS estimate of risk involved sending one package; or whether split shipment preferable."

(Comment: We find no indication in the files that these revolvers were ever actually pouched. We suspect they were not, because the request for them was overtaken by subsequent events.)

29 March 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

". . . Hqs inclined to favor passing **Severo Cabral** ref carbines and ammo. Are carbines carried on local installation inventory, thus requiring paper work which may blow CIA's ultimate use? How does station propose to pass weapons in secure manner order avoid other ODACID installation employees becoming witting they being made available to Dominicans? Require Consul General Dearborn's concurrence... Advise.
Pouching . . . nine magazines . . ."

31 March 1961

The station replied:

"No inventory problem. No paper work to show CIA in act in anyway. Plan file off serial numbers. Will handle packaging after hours. Only consulate person who knows disposition is Dearborn. Delivery to Wimpy Berry **by the station's female administrative assistant or other CIA officer** depending on what steps seems best here. Dearborn concurred in request and in this message. We cannot emphasize enough that we must make gesture of

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

good will to Severo Cabral now. These items are not what he asked for but they are an investment in operational continuity. The security risk in his having these items is no greater than his having similar items delivery which done by more complicated and less secure cache or drop."

Headquarters cable to the station:

"Passing the three carbines approved. Advise Hqs when passing of this equipment completed.

(Comment: This cable was released by the DD/P (Bissell).)

7 April 1961

Cable from the station:

"The pouch forwarding magazines for the three carbines contained 15-bullet magazines rather than 30-bullet magazines as requested. Pls expedite pouching 9 latter type M-1 carbine magazines."

9 April 1961

Cable from the station:

"The station's female administrative assistant passed the three carbines to Nippy Berry April 7. No complications."

(Comment: The files do not contain an account of how the carbines were actually passed. As we will later see, headquarters subsequently pouched submachine guns for passing to the dissidents. Headquarters asked for the station's plan for securely passing the submachine guns to the dissidents. The station replied: "Propose use essentially same technique as that for the three carbines."

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

The station's female administrative assistant [driving own car] will go to local supermarket [Wimpy Berry's] for usual Saturday morning purchases. Then to consulate to get mail. Will get assist from Chief of Station in loading package or packages into car trunk with groceries. [Station operations officer] will then accompany to administrative assistant's apartment, help take groceries in. If no danger signal given by operations officer, [Wimpy Berry] will arrive in personal car, pick up items from operations officer at partially concealed entrance to administrative assistant's apartment and promptly leave. Cover for his visit will be commercial delivery.")

7 April 1961

Chief, WH Division, submitted to Chief, RI, a memorandum requesting waiver of pouch restriction on pouching weapons. "The above request is submitted for the following reason: Station Ciudad Trujillo has requested that Headquarters provide four M3 machine guns and 240 rounds of ammunition on a priority basis for issuance to a small action group to be used for self protection."

(Comment: The entry for 18 March 1961 refers to a request for submachine guns, but there was no follow-up on it from the station. This pouch waiver request was submitted while the chief of station was

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

at headquarters for consultations. It is probable that he made the plea in person. As will be seen later, the submachine guns (the so-called "grease guns" of World War II) were pouches but approval was never given the station to pass them to the plotters.)

12 April 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"Equipment for **Severo Cabral** [submachine guns] which subject of Chief of Station conversations HQs being pouches . . . 14 April. Prior to passing equipment, advise HQs what scheme of delivery proposed."

(Comment: The delivery scheme is explained in comment on the 9 April entry.)

13 April 1961

An extract from a note sent to Consul General Dearborn from **Juan Vicini**:

"The three Leica cameras, model M-1 [**the three carbines**], with their accessories, should be in the proper hands in a day or two. . . . With the small amount of equipment which they are receiving they can only take action at a few specific places and therefore the probabilities are considerably reduced and the time factor considerably extended accordingly. With the rest of the equipment (four Leicas, model M-3) [**the submachine guns**] the possible places of action are multiplied and the lost time greatly reduced."

14 April 1961

Extract from a note from SOCOPATES **Luis Baquero** to DELTA

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET EYES ONLY

Consul General Dearborn:

"The three Leica cameras and accessories are in the hands of the ones that will take the pictures. They need more cameras in order to do a better and faster job. We hope that the memo we sent two days ago might help in Wash. in this regard."

17 April 1961

Note from YAGUATE Juan Vicini and SOCRATES Luis Baquero to
POLCA Dearborn:

"The last word, up to the minute in the matter of cameras: CRISTOBAL General Juan Tomas Diaz says that with the 3 Leica cameras already delivered it is impossible to do the photographic job. He needs to have the rest of the equipment (the 4 M-3 Leicas) before he undertakes the job. The ones already delivered he sees them as good complementary equipment (defensive) but he needs the others for the aggressive part of the job. It is my belief that the ones already delivered have served a psychological purpose also: the men involved have always been in doubt the good faith of your people in Wash. Their feeling was that in several months all they have obtained were promises. Now they see that you actually mean business. So, now, all they are doing is waiting for the heavy cameras."

17 April 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

" . . . most important the submachine guns not be passed to Severo Cabral without additional HQs approval. Please advise when equipment received and proposed scheme and timing of delivery." repeat not

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

20 April 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"Submachine guns should be held in station custody till further notice and not repeat not be passed to Jimmy Berry. This Hqs decision based on judgment that filling vacuum created by assassination now bigger question than ever view unsettled conditions in Caribbean area.

"Request station provide foll info soonest: (a) Have the three carbines been delivered to Severo Cabral? (b) Details on an alternate plan to deliver Submachine guns which would involve ground caching."

(Comment: It might be noted that this cable was sent just three days after the failure of the landing at the Bay of Pigs.)

20 April 1961

Note to DELTA [Dearborn] from YACUATE and SOCRATES:

"The officers that were to do the photographic job are not only disappointed but really angry at the refusal of the delivery of the other Leicas. They have decided to give up the plan and disperse, because they cannot take any more risks for nothing."

20 April 1961

Cable from the station:

"Submachine guns here 19 April with no entry problems whatsoever. Excellent basic wrapping means station's plan can be simplified even more. The administrative assistant, the operations officer, and the chief of station can share delivery direct to drop. Request Hqs advise when we may begin."

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

(Comment: The precise nature of this "excellent basic wrapping" is not further clarified in the file. Norman Gall, writing in The New Republic, said that the weapons were shipped to Wimpy Berry in food cans. This sounds to us as if the sub-machine guns were packed in food containers for pouching. If so, we wonder how Gall learned of this. We can state with fair confidence that these submachine guns were never passed out of the consulate. As late as the very day of the assassination, Bob Owen sent a cable protesting the policy that forbade his passing them. This sounds as if there must have been a leak from the consulate--from one of the very few who knew of the submachine guns. We cannot confirm that the submachine guns were actually packaged in food containers for pouching. TSD has no record of having done so. Jake Esterline has a faint recollection of food containers, but not in connection with pouching.)

21 April 1961

Cable from headquarters to the station:

"Submachine guns" should be held in station custody till further notice and not repeat not be passed to Wimpy Berry. [REDACTED]

22 April 1961

The station replied to headquarters' query of 20 April regarding disposition of the three carbines:

" Wimpy Berry has given the three carbines to intermediary who holding until Severo Cabral picks up "

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

(Comment: This "intermediary" appears to have been Thomas Stocker. The significance of this and the security problem it posed will become apparent from one of the later entries for 31 May.)

25 April 1961

Cable from the station:

"Foll from Dearborn: 'I believe political consequence of not delivering [submachine guns] so serious I plan go Washington within next few days for discussion with Department and CAS Hqs!'"

26 April 1961

Cable from the station:

"[Wimpy Berry] told Chief of Station . . . Antonio de la Maza plans try assassination between 29 April and 2 May. **Severo Cabral** possibly not yet aware plan. No solid info other members assassination effort but General Juan Tomas Diaz probably will aid. Will use the three carbines plus whatever else can get. De la Maza asks Berry add the submachine guns if possible"

30 April 1961

Cable from the station:

"Following from Dearborn: April 28 Lorenzo Berry as emissary **Juan Vicini** and **Severo Cabral** called on me with foll info: . . . main mission Berry was plead with me release submachine guns they believe in Dom Rep and under my control. Action group has 3 carbines, 4 to 6 12-gauge shotguns with 120 rounds and some small arms. . . . Action entails roadside ambush near San Cristobal

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

4 May 1961

The Director, at a meeting of the Special Group, reported a new anti-Trujillo plot, saying that we never knew if one of these would work or not.

5 May 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"Regret delay but release [of the submachine guns] awaits high level State Department decision."

8 May 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"State Department has disapproved passing [submachine guns]."

16 May 1961

Cable from the station:

"For Achilles and Coerr from Dearborn: Thomas Stocker called on me night May 15. Stated he emissary from action group which plans execute action against Trujillo night May 16. Stocker's mission was urgently request me to furnish group with few machine guns which it understood US agents have in Dom Rep"

(Comment: There is an unsigned and almost incomprehensible memorandum in the ENDER files. It is dated 17 May 1961 and concerns a meeting with **Mrs. Florida Berry**. The transmittal dispatch makes

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

it clear that the author was Isabel Cintron, the station's administrative assistant. This is our interpretation of what Miss Cintron was trying to say: Sometime during the second week of May, Wimpy Berry asked Thomas Stocker to return the three carbines Berry had given Stocker for the plotters. Stocker at first refused but finally agreed. [Presumably Berry then passed them to Antonio de la Maza.] On 15 May, Stocker again saw Berry at the supermarket, said he had the carbines back in his possession, and his group planned to carry out the assassination the following night. The group that was to do the job was not the group that Berry had been working with on behalf of the consulate. SOPATES [Luis Baquero] arrived at the supermarket while Stocker was still with Wimpy. After Stocker left, Mrs. Berry asked Baquero if he had given the carbines back to Stocker. Baquero said he was certain not, although he and the man who had the carbines and was to do the job did not know each other's identities. While Mrs. Berry was talking with Baquero, the man to whom Berry had last given the weapons [presumably Antonio de la Maza] arrived at the supermarket. Mrs. Berry asked him if he had returned the carbines to Stocker. He replied that he had not that that, if she wanted confirmation, she could look in the trunk of his car where he always carried them.)

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

16 May 1961

There was discussion at a Special Group meeting of planning with respect to the Dominican Republic. Chester Bowles said he thought that an internal State planning paper outlining an ambitious paramilitary plan (and alleging Special Group approval) exceeded the Special Group's action. Mr. Parrott's notes supported that impression. The following is an excerpt from the minutes:

"General Cabell noted that the internal dissidents were pressing for the release to them of certain small arms now in U.S. hands in the Dominican Republic. He inquired whether the feeling of the Group remained that these arms should not be passed. The members showed no inclination to take a contrary position at this time." *

25 May 1961

The agenda of the Special Group meeting for this date proposed discussion of "further guidance to Dearborn re contacts with dissidents." The minutes of the meeting, however, make no mention of the subject.

27 May 1961

The station cabled:

"Despatch from Dearborn: 'May 26 I had long talk with **Andreas Freitas**. **Freitas** made no request for arms which indicates group has accepted fact it must do with what it has."

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* The small arms to which General Cabell referred were the submachine guns, which were pouches to the station but were never passed to the dissidents.

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

His only statement on this subject was that group has arms but is somewhat concerned whether enough.

"He stated action group planning overthrow Trujillo for past 3 weeks and representing anti-communist pro-democratic elements of which he member remains on brink final performance and determined as ever. Said he could give me no date because action depends when Trujillo follows awaited pattern which not known in advance. Group has arrangement for being informed sufficiently in advance to get into assigned positions once signal given. He asked if United States prepared assist pro-United States Dominicans quickly if they succeed overthrow Trujillo.

"I replied . . . speed with which assistance could be given would be increased considerably if we could have prior info on such subjects as timing, plans for action, personalities involved and identity of proposed Junta. He replied participants were not prepared give their names until afterward and could not give time for reasons stated earlier.

"Re timing **PreItas** stressed event could happen any day and could in fact have happened 3 times in last 2 weeks except that necessary juxtaposition of forces did not materialize."

29 May 1961

Headquarters cabled the station:

"For Dearborn from State We must not run risk of U.S. association with political assassination, since U.S. as matter of general policy cannot condone assassination. This last principal is overriding and must prevail in doubtful situation. You must request and receive further specific instruction for any specific covert activity. At the present time we are unable to transfer arms to dissidents."

(Comment: Both Dearborn and the chief of station sent cables commenting on this guidance cable. Their cables were filed

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

31 May 1961

Received in Headquarters Signal Center at 0341 hours,
Washington time:

FLASH SECRET CRITIC CIA CIUDAD TRUJILLO NUMBER 1. APPR 2.
SOURCE DISSIDENT IN DIRECT TOUCH WITH DISSIDENT ACTION GROUP (C).
SOURCE AT 2330 HOURS LOCAL TIME 30 MAY RECEIVED PREARRANGED SIGNAL
WHICH MEANT TRUJILLO KILLED BY ASSASSINATION SAME NIGHT. AMERICAN
CONSULATE PERSONNEL ENCOUNTERED ROADBLOCKS ON CIUDAD TRUJILLO RIO
HAINA SUPER HIGHWAY AT ABOUT 0030 HOURS LOCAL TIME 31 MAY.
INDIVIDUALS FORMING BLOCKS APPEARED HASTILY ORGANIZED MILITIA ONLY
FEW OF WHOM ARMED WITH FIREARMS OTHERS WITH AXES. NO
CONFIRMATION TRUJILLO ASSASSINATION AS OF 0100 MAY 31. FILED 0600Z.

[0200 Washington time]

(Comment: The station's follow-up operational cable
identified the source of Critic's No. 1 as Lorenzo (Wimpy) Berry,
who gave the information in person to Consul General Dearborn
and Chief of Station Owen at the consulate. At about 0100 hours,
Dominican time, **Andres Freitas** telephoned Dearborn "to ask
cryptically whether we had the news." **Freitas** said he would add
details when he had them.)

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SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

these interrogations was the name of American Consul Hill in connection with the telegram that General Diaz wanted to send to Betancourt.

" . . . the source noted that the telegram never reached Consul Hill because Diaz tore it up after the incident in Dr. Reid's house.

"(. . . the source commented that the interrogators themselves did not believe at this time that the U.S. Department of State was in any way involved with the plot. They thought the disclosures concerning the alleged involvement . . . was simply a method by which Amiana induced General Roman to give his approval to the plot. it was the interrogators opinion at that time that if the North Americans had been involved in this plot, the plot would have been much better organized and the coup would have succeeded.)

" . . . by the latter part of June 1961, the investigation had pretty well established the identities of all the individuals involved in the plot, many of whom had been arrested and interrogated. The only ones not accounted for were Luis Ariana Tio and Antonio Insert Barreras. As previously related, General Juan Tomas Diaz, Antonio de la Maza, and Lieutenant Amado Garcia Guerrero were killed when resisting arrest. (At this point the source related that if General Diaz, Lieut. Garcia, de la Maza, Ariana, and Insert had been captured, and made to talk, it is certain that many many more prisoners would have been taken.)

"As far as the source is aware, the only individuals who were arrested as a result of the assassination of Trujillo, who were brought before the courts were Tavares and General Roman. As far as the source is aware, no other individual arrested in connection with this plot was brought before any Dominican court. "Wimpy," the North American, was to have been brought before a court to be deported; however, Ramfis ordered that he was not to be molested in any way and as far as the source is aware, no action was taken against "Wimpy."

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

c. On 17 March 1961, the chief of station cabled a request of Consul General Dearborn for the pouching of three .38 caliber Smith and Wesson Special pistols for delivery to key members of the dissident group. Headquarters was preparing to pouch the pistols but apparently did not do so. There is no indication in the EMEED operational files that the pistols were actually pouched. The request for pistols appears to have been overtaken by a subsequent request for submachine guns.

d. On 26 March 1961 the station cabled a request for permission to pass three semi-automatic M-1 carbines plus ammunition to **Dr. Severo Cabral**. The carbines and ammunition were in the consulate, having been left by departed naval personnel. The station requested that headquarters pouch magazines. Headquarters approved passing the carbines and ammunition and pouched the magazines. The cable authorizing passing the carbines was released by the DD/P (Bissell). The station said it would file off the carbines' serial numbers. The station cabled that the carbines were passed to "Wimpy" Berry by the station's female administrative assistant on 7 April 1961. Berry, at the request of the dissidents, gave the carbines to S. Thomas Stocker for temporary safekeeping. Berry later recovered the carbines from Stocker and gave them to Antonio de la Maza, who reportedly kept

SECRET-EYES ONLY

SECRET-EYES ONLY

them in the trunk of his automobile. It is probable that at least one of the carbines was taken to the scene of the assassination by de la Maza, but we have no evidence that it was actually used in the shooting. Ortiz, the SIM investigator, told the FBI that the assassins who were apprehended and interrogated spoke only of the firing of a sawed-off shotgun, revolvers, and pistols.

e. While at headquarters for consultations in early April 1961, Chief of Station Robert Owen evidently prevailed upon headquarters to pouch four M-3 submachine guns and ammunition to the station. The submachine guns were pouches and arrived at the station on 19 April 1961. Headquarters cabled the station on 17 April that the submachine guns were not to be passed to the dissidents without additional headquarters approval. Despite repeated pleas from the Chief of Station and from the Consul General, Washington continued to refuse authorization to pass them. We think it is safe to conclude that the submachine guns were never passed to the dissidents.

A final, and rather sorry, footnote: We do not know the motivations of men such as **Jordi Brossa, Juan Vicini, Severo Cabral, Aniano Tio, and Antonio Imbert**. The SIM interrogations of the plotters it captured revealed that they were not greatly motivated by a desire

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