

CEC NEW PRIORITY MESSAGE

(PRIORITY) SECRET ON NR 112 TO NEW ORLEANS FROM WASHINGTON

TO DIRECT FROM AIRCRAFT BY CITSIELSKI - CITE WA-9870

THIS IS NEW CASE 16683 RPT 16684 SUBJECT: MEETING WITH
 REPRESENTATIVES OF CARLOS PRIO SOCARRAS RPT CARLOS PRIO SOCARRAS.
 RE CONVERSATION SURGE-CHESNICKI ON 1 RPT SEPTEMBER 54. ACCORDING
 TO FI/WH RPT FI/WH DIVISION, **FRANK JACKSON, RPT FRANK JACKSON OF**
MIAMI, FLORIDA APPROACHED PRESIDENTIAL AIDE SHERMAN ADAMS RPT SHERMAN
 ADAMS WITH A STORY THAT INTELLIGENCE MATERIAL CONCERNING SOVIET PLANT
 IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH CARLOS PRIO.
 IT APPEARS THAT SHERMAN ADAMS TOLD **JACKSON** THAT IT MIGHT BE OF
 INTEREST TO CIA RPT CIA AND INDICATED THAT HE WOULD TAKE APPROPRIATE
 ACTION.

FRANK JACKSON IS REPORTED TO BE CONNECTED WITH AN ORGANIZATION
KNOWN AS WORLD SURVEYS; HE ALSO SERVES AS PUBLIC RELATIONS REPRESENTA-
 TIVE FOR PRIO. IN SPITE OF THIS BUSINESS CONNECTION IT IS BELIEVED
 THAT **JACKSON'S** MOTIVATION IS CORRECT. THIS CONCLUSION IS BASED ON
 THE FACT THAT HE HAS HAD SERVICE WITH ONI RPT ONI AND THE SECRET
 SERVICE, AND IS PERSONALLY VOUCHERED FOR BY A MEMBER OF THE CIA RPT
 CIA SECURITY OFFICE.

AS YOU KNOW, PRIO IS CURRENTLY INVOLVED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF
 JUSTICE AND SCHEDULED TO STAND TRIAL ON AN ARMS SNUCCLING CHARGE.

THE FI RPT FI AREA DIVISION HAS TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION THE POSSIBILITY
 THAT THIS CURRENT PRIO OFFER IS A MANEUVER DESIGNED TO PLACE THE US
 RPT US GOVERNMENT IN AN ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION. ON THE OTHER HAND,
JACKSON STATES THAT THE PRIO GROUP IS MAKING THIS OFFER WITHOUT ANY
 THOUGHT OF FINANCIAL RETURN OR POLITICAL FAVORS.

THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS FURNISHED FOR BACKGROUND. WE HAVE ASKED SECURITY TO COORDINATE WITH FBI SPT FBI ON A GRASS BASIS AND WILL ASK YOU TO TAKE NO ACT NO ACTION UNTIL THIS COORDINATION IS EFFECTED AT THE WASHINGTON LEVEL. PLEASE CONSIDER THIS WISE AS AN ALERT AND ADVISE US OF YOUR ESTIMATED DEPARTURE TIME SO THAT WE CAN NOTIFY YOU BY TELEPHONE THAT THE NECESSARY COORDINATION HAS BEEN COMPLETED. AT MIAMI JACKSON CAN BE CONTACTED THROUGH THE FOLLOWING TELEPHONE NUMBER: 44-6830 RPT 44-6830, AND TOLD THAT YOU ARE IN MIAMI AS A FOLLOW-UP TO THE MEETING HE HAD IN WASHINGTON WITH MR. HENRY THOMAS RPT MR. HENRY THOMAS (THOMAS IS THE SECURITY REPRESENTATIVE DESCRIBED ABOVE AS JACKSON'S FRIEND).

IT IS NOT RPT NOT KNOWN WHETHER PRIO WILL ATTEND PERSONALLY OR SEND REPRESENTATIVES. IT IS BELIEVED THAT A BI-LINGUAL REPRESENTATIVE WILL BE BROUGHT BY THE PRIO PEOPLE. AT THE MEETING YOU ARE ASKED TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

A. SECURE AS MUCH DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE OFFER OF SOVIET INTELLIGENCE PLANS AS POSSIBLE.

B. SECURE THE NAMES OF THE REPRESENTATIVES.

UNFORTUNATELY, YOU WILL BE IN NO RPT NO POSITION TO MAKE ANY COMMITMENTS AND THE PRIO REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD BE SO ADVISED BY

UNFORTUNATELY, YOU WILL BE IN NO RPT NO POSITION TO MAKE ANY COMMITMENTS AND THE PRIO REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD BE SO ADVISED BY YOU. YOU WILL ALSO ADVISE THOMAS ON THIS POINT AT YOUR FIRST MEETING WITH HIM. WE FEEL THAT IT WILL BE BEST IF YOU COULD LIMIT KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR CIA RPT CIA AFFILIATION TO JACKSON AND INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE PRIO MEN AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE US RPT US GOVERNMENT WHO IS VOUCHER FOR BY JACKSON.

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Chief, Contact Division

22 September 1958

Chief, New Orleans Office

Case 1663

1. Confirming and supplementing our several long-distance telephone conversations, I report herewith concerning my interview with Mr. Frank Jackson and two members of the Eric Soderma Group in Miami, Florida, on 18 and 19 September 1958. This portion of the report is concerned with the mechanics of the operation and the personalities involved. It would be, I presume, of little interest to SI. A supplemental section contains a description of the material offered by the Cuban refugees, which portion, I assume, you will turn over to SI/MI Division.

2. On arrival in Miami, I called at the office of the FBI with a view to informing that agency of my presence and of the general nature of the activities I proposed to engage in, so that the agents of the Bureau would not be unduly surprised if they learned of my activities from other agents who were presumably keeping my proposed contacts under surveillance. The SAC was absent from the office. I accordingly talked with one of the Duty Officers, a Special Agent named Schallacker, with whom I had met before and who has frequently cooperated with our representatives in Miami, John H. Ryan. Schallacker was most pleasant and cooperative. I informed him that the matter on which I was engaged had been coordinated with FBI headquarters through Mr. Charles Hates and that the Bureau interposed no objections. I then told him, in general terms, about the activities of Mr. Frank Jackson in Washington. The agent said that he had known Jackson for about 10 years and that he considered Jackson to be an unreliable person and a complete opportunist. He said that Jackson had been in Naval Intelligence during World War II and that since the end of his tour of active duty he had held a number of jobs in none of which he had been able to make a success. These jobs included the agency for a wine manufacturer, the position of County Sheriff in Miami Beach, the agency for a water of concrete blocks and several other enterprises. In one of his jobs Jackson had been suspected of pilferage and had been discharged on that account, although no prosecution was instituted. Jackson is now, according to Schallacker, operating a private detective agency and is also acting as public relations adviser to Pete and his group. He is believed to be the owner of a corporation known as "Enterprise Many, Inc." the exact operations of which are unknown.

3. Schallacker said that Jackson claimed to have excellent sources of information on Cuba and that he particularly had referred to a Captain Salvador Mas y Vercos, a political refugee from Cuba, who had engaged quite intensively in anti-Communist activities. Schallacker said that the "legal attache" (I assume that meant an FBI representative) at the US Embassy in Havana had at one time written to the SAC in Miami about Vercos and had said that the latter had once been in a position to obtain valuable information concerning the activities of the Communists in Cuba, but that, in his belief, Vercos was given to flights of fancy.

Chief, Contact Division

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22 September 1954

4. Schillinger pointed out that, although the criminal cases against Prio and Corti had been ended with pleas of solo contendere and fines, cases were still pending against four other Cuban exiles who are allegedly engaged in the gun-running plot. He said that inasmuch as the cases were primarily the interest of the Customs Department, the FBI was not immediately interested. He voiced the opinion that Customs representatives were maintaining surveillance on the defendants in the various suits.

5. Returning from the FBI office, I telephoned Jackson, as arranged, at 3:00 p.m. and identified myself as directed in 28-9779. Jackson said that it would be impossible to arrange a meeting with the Cubans that afternoon, since the leader of the group would not be available. He said that a meeting could be arranged for the following morning, Sunday, 19 September, at 11:00 a.m., and I accordingly arranged to meet the group in a room at the Columbus Hotel which I had reserved for that purpose. I suggested a preliminary meeting with Jackson so as to obtain information about the persons I was to see, but he said that that would not be feasible on Saturday and that he would drop in on Sunday morning a few minutes ahead of the rest of the group.

6. Jackson arrived at the designated room on Sunday morning at 10:45 a.m. He did not request the exhibition of credentials and I did not exhibit them. He said that the meeting with the Cubans would have to be postponed until 4:00 o'clock Sunday afternoon, inasmuch as the leader of the group was at that time engaged in preparing a speech. He said he would bring two members of the group to the Columbus Hotel at 4:00 p.m., and I agreed to meet them at that time.

7. Jackson said that the two men he wanted me to talk to were Senor Carlos Navia and a Captain Verson, whose full name Mr. Jackson did not know. He said that Carlos Navia is a leading Cuban consulting engineer and is a graduate of the US Military Academy of the class of 1919. For a short time he was President of Cuba and was subsequently Ambassador to the US. He is a member of Prio's Authentic Party, but belongs to the conservative wing which is highly critical of some of Prio's actions. Navia was exiled from Cuba when his name was found on an envelope in the possession of Ramirez Arevalo. He is under indictment in the US District Court but has pleaded not guilty to charges of gun-running growing out of the same incident concerning which Prio pleaded "solo contendere."

8. Captain Verson, according to Jackson, is and has been for many years the president of the Anti-Communist League of Cuba. During a part of the terms of Grau San Martin and Prio, Verson held the rank of Captain in the Cuban Army and was in charge of a counter-spying section dealing with Cuban Communists. Verson, in his official capacity, was largely instrumental in having the Soviet Embassy in Havana closed. He was removed by Batista from his Army post in 1952 and, after spending some months in sanctuary in the Uruguayan Embassy in Havana, he came to Miami in June of 1954.

9. Jackson also wished me to meet Prio, Dr. Pedro Martinez Varaga and his Ortega. Prio was currently in New York. Martinez was formerly Ambassador to the US and a delegate to the United Nations. He was described by Jackson as one of the most brilliant persons he had ever met and he said that I could obtain a

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great deal of information from him concerning the present political and economic situation in Cuba. He was not immediately available and had no connection with the documents allegedly possessed by Versam. Ortega, a former newspaper columnist and member of Batista's Consultative Council, was also described by Jackson as a prolific source of information on Cuban political matters. He too was not immediately available and had no connection with the Versam documents. In the circumstances, I told Jackson that I would defer interviews with Rivas and Ortega until some future time.

10. At 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, 19 September, Jackson returned to the room in the Columbus Hotel, bringing with him Senior Rovia and Captain Versam. Jackson introduced me as Mr. Eraton, a pseudonym I had supplied. He told them that I was a representative of the US Government and that we were interested in the documents in Versam's possession. He assured them that the information which they might give me would be treated as highly classified material, and he then left the meeting. It developed that Captain Versam could not speak any English (Incidentally, Jackson does not speak Spanish), so that it was necessary to converse with him through Rovia, who acted as interpreter. Rovia is fluent in English and Spanish.

11. The substance of the information supplied by Versam concerning the documents in his possession is contained in the second part of this report. Versam appeared to attach a very high historical value to the contents of his documents and record anxious to make them available to US authorities. He disclaimed any desire for a fee and merely said that he wished to retain the originals, since he considered that they constituted an authentic account of the growth of the Communist movement in Cuba, but that we would be entirely welcome to photocopy or otherwise copy the contents of his files.

12. At the conclusion of the interview, I thanked the two Cubans for their courtesy and cooperation and told Senior Rovia that I would get in touch with him later in the week either directly or through Mr. Jackson.

13. I enclose herewith a letter to Rovia confirming our interest in the Versam documents and asking him to notify me when it is expected that they will begin arriving, so that we may attempt to facilitate their entry. You will note that I have signed the letter with the name "Eraton" which is how I was introduced to Rovia and Versam by Jackson. I think the letter should be mailed in Washington rather than in New Orleans, so as to allay any suspicions that Rovia may harbor that I am not actually a government representative. You will note that I have suggested that Rovia write to me in New Orleans in care of Miss Joan H. Yates at Post Office Box 1016. He will, no doubt, assume that this is a letter-drop.

14. In view of the fact that I refer by implication to the Customs Department, I suggest that you hold the letter to Rovia until you or Ciesielski have discussed the matter with Mr. Emerick, who is the superior of Mr. Wyatt, the Supervising Customs Agent in Miami. I suggest that the letter be sent air mail, unregistered. I have left the date blank and I request that you insert it before mailing. If you wish to change the letter in any way, please do so. Rovia does not, of course, know my handwriting, so that the letter can be signed by anyone.

William P. Burke

Burke:gc
Enclosure