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28 September 1960

Sub-Eds-1

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Report of Meeting with Sergio Rojas

REFERENCE: ²⁰¹ [LORD] 3801 (IN 17910), 28 September 1960

1. When it was learned here that Rojas was intending to go to Miami and there to stay with Ricardo Lora, it was thought it might be best to talk to him before he visits Miami so as to ascertain condition his thinking before he is exposed to the full blast of left-FRD sentiment which he is expected to encounter in Miami.

2. On 26 September, using the incredible recollection furnished given in Paragraph 5 of reference, and he agreed to stop off in Washington en route to Miami 27 September.

3. I met with Rojas for several hours at the Sheraton-Capitol Hotel on 27 September. Rojas began our conversation with a lengthy discourse intending to establish a picture of himself as a complete neutral among the opposing Cuban exile groups, he not being a member of any group and heavily endowed with objectivity. As a matter of fact if the course of our discussion he spoke with seeming objectivity, but on balance clearly favored the point of view of those young revolutionaries of the type who now runs up the Alliance for Liberation, who find themselves rejecting and rejected by the FRD. He is well acquainted with the history of the LRA's part in the formation of the FRD, its initial rejection of ABANDON-1 to represent the LRA, and was extremely later to cross the split of the LRA with the FRD. He presented the usual argument that the LRA had made a bad mistake in allowing ABANDON-1 to be their representative in the FRD, and ABANDON-1 was subsequently captured by the politicians and came finally to a point of representation only his own view and interests in the FRD, largely to the exclusion of the LRA interests. (This argument, which was as well presented by Rojas as I've ever heard it, is accurate. It is the thing which we have tended to over-look. He has and perhaps have not taken sufficient notice of the fact that the LRA dissidents, so called, which were expelled from the FRD, was in fact a new sort of the original FRD.) Rojas spoke at length about the Alliance also and said that he had talked with a number of these people in New York the day before. He loudly lamented the fact that a number of reliable LRA men, particularly of the military type, are being turned as a result of these differences which exist between the young revolutionaries and the FRD, as he put it: I told him that I agreed with him but that I thought that the solution for these military types was simple -- i.e., if they would present themselves as individuals offering their services to the FRD that they would be accepted and their valuable services would be put to good use. Examples in this case were LAMORE, DIAZ, etc. Also DIAZ, et al. Interestingly, Rojas was completely unaware of DIAZ DIAZ's situation. I suggested in this connection that people of this type very easily victimized by such people as Luis Conte Aguiar who in support of their political aspirations are using these military types for their own ends and political bargaining powers.

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Rojas seemed somewhat impressed with this argument so I suggested that he might use whatever influence he had to influence people like Chinea, whom he described as being desperate in New York and depressed to the point of threatened suicide, to break away from the politicians and join the FPD.

3. Rojas then began to speak of the basic differences between again what he calls the young revolutionaries, meaning the original 26th-of-July Movement people, and the politicians, such as Vorone, Sanchez Arango, et al, whom they refer to as "Los Viejos". The young revolutionaries feel that with "Los Viejos" in power that Cuba will slide backwards toward the old political regime and that these latter are only paying lip service to the proposition that the original aims of the revolution must go forward but without Castro and, of course, without any Communist influence. Rojas curiously referred to these politicians to the FPD as being too far to the right. I said that this view of them was completely antithetical to the view held by most who consider them to be liberals considerably far to the left. I added that if these people were any more to the left, they would be a source of serious worry to the U. S. Government. Rojas changed the subject.

4. He wanted then to know if it would be possible for the U. S. Government to lend its support to more than one group. When I responded that the U. S. Government was not supporting any group, Rojas just shrugged. He went on to say that if support could be given to individuals such as the military types he had mentioned previously and perhaps to the Alianza, for example, as a whole organization (shades of Casteo Aguerre pitch!), that this would not only gain the services of very valuable people in the fight against Castro but might also see the seeds of political stability for the future. He pointed out that if the young revolutionaries who are now rejected by the FPD are stifled in their efforts to contribute to the anti-Castro struggle, they will represent a built-in anti-American Cuban element for the future, which could be very damaging to U. S./Cuban relations. I think there is a fair amount of substance to this argument and I told him so. In any case, Rojas was given the routine non-U. S. involvement in these exile affairs (which, of course, he does not buy) and advice that he do whatever he can to bring about unity as between several groups. He was told that the FPD appeared to be the group which had the greatest organization and greatest apparent potential for success, and that all concerned would be well advised to attempt to take pains with it. Rojas said that he had a strong feeling that unity on this basis was not possible at this time because the feeling among the young revolutionaries was running too high and too emotionally against the FPD. He said he thought these young revolutionaries feel that they have been let down by collaborating politicians, and their friends and contacts in the U. S. Government have turned their backs and abandoned them. Because of this they are suffering bitterness and disillusionment. Rojas then suggested that perhaps I would be willing to arrange a meeting for him with some representatives of the FPD, specifically this was not to be one of the five principals, who could meet with me in an attempt to reduce their differences and reestablish relationships and cooperation with the U. S. I told him that this was an interesting suggestion but I thought it was not possible inasmuch as the U. S. Government, while

it maintains a continuous interest in these affairs and has occasional contact with the several groups, is not and will not become involved. Rojas said he knows this to be untrue and is bewildered at the insistence that the U. S. Government is not sponsoring the PLO. I gave the committee suggestion to him that he induce his friends, e.g. Uribe Aguirre and Loria, to approach the YEM again and attempt on their own to make some accommodations. In doing so, I suggested they might consider obtaining the services of an older, more sophisticated, mature individual whom they could trust to represent them in these overtures to the PLO. I said I thought that the YEM's difficulties, for example, stem from poor representation. I believe that Rojas immediately mentally cast himself in this role. Our discussions ended at this point.

5. Rojas said that he was planning to stay in Moscow only a few days, after which he would return to London. He said further that if as a result of his visit here he became convinced that he could contribute substantially to this Cuban exile situation in the U. S., he would return; otherwise, he plans to remain in Europe and attempt to find employment there. In brief he stated he will stay with Loria, whose bar phone number is Canal 6-0880.

REDACTED IN FULL

MEMO (26 Sept 1960)

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