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20 September 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR: Henry Hecksher

I regret that I wasn't able to spend more time on this case, interesting as it was. I do have some reservations, however, in expressing an opinion on Ray since the files are not complete and extensive research should be undertaken first; but even with this reservation I am convinced that one can see the picture clearly of the hesitation on the part of this Agency to support Ray. When support was offered it was always with some condition, one of which was for Ray to join the FRD. Although Ray was a supporter of Cuban-exile unification, he was not going to be forced into joining the FRD with threats of non-support.

As you know, Ray was Minister of Public Works for Castro until he resigned his post in August 1959. He hightailed it into the Escambray Mountains where he began the now unsuccessful fight to unseat Castro. Through intermediaries, Ray had asked the Havana Station for military assistance, but in almost every instance he was denied this aid. I say almost simply because the file is not clear on whether we condescended and dropped supplies.

Ray's political philosophy is somewhat equivocal, but by-and-large he is strongly for a democratic system of government and for strong economic and social reforms. He reportedly would respect individual liberties and a representative government. He would reportedly maintain close ties with the United States and remove Communism from Cuba. Unlike Castro, there is nothing in Ray's background to suggest that he is a communist or sympathizer. A new government in Cuba, especially one whose aim is to rid Cuba of Communism, will, without question, ask the United States for economic assistance. I tend to doubt if we will provide this assistance without some caveat and the question remains then whether Ray would be willing to accept conditions to United States aid. I think he will for he will soon realize that without it he will have no alternative but to turn to the Soviet Union and I doubt if he will be willing to continue the economic and social chaos now so prevalent in Cuba.

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Ray file
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If the decision were mine, I would suggest running an operation similar to the one using AMBIDDY-1. We should ask Ray to put together a list of people whom he would select for certain government positions if Castro were overthrown. It should not take long for one to determine the type of an administration Ray would have. Each of the individuals he lists could be checked to determine his political feelings and his feelings toward the United States. This is important.

In any case I would support him if for no other reason than to test his determination, strength and to gain further knowledge of his political ambitions.

[REDACTED]

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YGP