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Chief, Contact Division Atta: Dupport Branch (Crowley)

Chief, Washington Office

Interview with AREC Committee

1. At the request of Mr. Ashcraft for Meichait, MH Division, Frank Sheridan interviewed the constitues for AFEC at the Washington Field Office on 24 March 1961. They consisted of Abel Mastre. Victor Pedroso, Silvio Sanabris, fealls Partin, Carlos Garcia del Tran, and Paul Heilman. Mestre stated that the organization was founded about June 1960 in Miand as a clandestime spolitical group with the objective to ovurthrow Castro, to unite the various Cuban axile groups and to create laws for the effective reconstruction of Cuba. Membership is comprised of individual businesses rather than representatives of large organizations.

24 March 1961

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2. The constitutes had been meeting with various United States officials in Seshington, D. C., to express its views. Its members are worried over Cestro propaganda, which, although untrue, has been accepted as fact, i.e., twenty thousand killings by Batista and the claim that Castro's was a social revolution rather than a political one. They pointed out that the Cuisa economy was formerly prospering with an enlarging middle class, so that the term social revolution has been used by Castro primarily to promote lufist mussures. In addition, labor legislation was in effect which actually put employers at a disadventage with employees, expared to the other countries of Letin America. The problem facing Cuban labor was primarily the seasonal one crop economy. Now the people have less pay, less composities evaluable, no claims against enyone and merely work for a Castro-Communist government. The farmer has not been helped by agrarian reform, but has been obliged to enter cooperatives or to bell his crops st controlled prices, which are paid when and how the government pleases. This is merely an initation of what Castro promised.

3. The constitute feels that apporters of the revolution actually were seeking honosty in government and the liberty outlined in the 1940 constitution. In this regard, the meaburn feel that the Commists may try for a second round in any provincent replacing Castro. Such an interim regime must develop careful measures to promote true democratic elections. This government may include covert Commists who would be a constant threat. For this reason, it was emphasized and re-emphasized that the axile leaders be most carefully screened by the United States before their return to Cuba. 4. A major concern has been unification of the various exiled factions. This has now started, but the committee fools that businessees such as they represent should be proportionately represented in any new government during the susters period of reconstruction. They believe that no lefists of any shake should be included in the provisional government. Requess representatives of the economic classes should participate for the first time in Cuban politics and should be consulted at all stages.

5. They explasized that the problem is not sevely a Cuben one, but is a Carsumist springboard against the United States. They urged that the United States is what they, the businessens, failed to do in Cube - to take the offensive. Developments in Cube have followed the classic Communist techniques, so that it should not be difficult to enticipate future moves. United States propagands must be overhauled. It should be less passive and more affectively approxime. To date, propagands has been the Communists' most effective weapon and the United States has lost to the point that it is threatened by a serious loss of respect in Latin America. Although it has long been the basis ideal model, some Latins are beginning to wonder whether they are right about the United States and whether they should witch mides. Fidel Castro won his revolution by propagands and not by arms.

6. The primary corry of the constitute scene to be the leftst orientation of leaders who have taken over the government in exile during recent days. They explasized that taken pools a democratic government and they from a tyranny of the right or the left. The United States must realise that some of the exile leaders participated as ministers in the Cantro program.

7. Silvio Samebria consented that, although CIA appeared to be in touch with all of the other Cuben groups, no one had approached his organization to essist or to learn must it was doing. The whole committee affered to be of any possible assistance to CIA at any time. No effort was made to collicit information or funds from CIA during this session.

7. J. Swriden

Inclosures: 3 AFEC documents

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Association for the Reconstruction of the Cuban Economy (AREC)

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