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Chief, Contact Division Atta: Support Branch (Crowley)

24 March 1961

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Chief, Washington Office

Interview with AREC Committee

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

2. The exertitee had been meeting with various United States officials in Veshington, D. C., to sopress its views. Its members are worried over Cestro propaganda, which, although untrue, has been accepted as fact, i.e., twenty thousend killings by Batista shi the claim that Castro's was a social revolution rather than a political one. They pointed out that the Cuisa economy was foreerly prospering with an enlarging middle class, so that the term social revolution has been used by Castro primarily to promote Luiist measures. 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 Outen labor was primarily the seasonal one crop economy. Now the people have less pay, less composities available, no claims against anyone 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 errors at controlled prices, which are paid when and boy the government pleases. This is merely an initation of what Castro promised.

3. The constitute feels that supporters of the revolution actually were socking honesty in government and the liberty outlined in the 1940 constitution. In this regard, the norman feel that the Commists may try for a second round in any provement replacing Costro. 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 supported and re-emphasized that the axile leaders be most carefully screened by the United States before their return to Cuba. 4. A sajor concern has been unification of the verious exiled factions. This has now started, but the committee fools that businessees such as they represent abould 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. Refuses 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 morely a Cuben one, but is a Currentist springboard against the United States. They urged that the United States is what they, the burinessmin, failed to do in Cube - to take the offensive. Developments in Cube have followed the classic Currentist 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 effectively aggressive. To date, propagands has been the Currentists' must effective weapen and the United States has lost to the point that it is threatened by a serious loss of respect in Letin America. Although it has long been the basis ideal model, some Letins 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 vorry of the constitute scene to be the leftst orientation of leaders who have taken over the government in exile during recent days. They appliested that take needs a democratic government and they feer a tyvenny of the right or the left. The United States must realize that some of the exile leaders participated as ministers in the Cantro program.

7. Silvio Samehria 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 offered 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

Enclosures: 3 APEC documents

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