

3,000 Cubans March In D.C., Honor Bolivar

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An estimated 3,000 Cuban exiles walked silently down Constitution Avenue yesterday to lay a wreath at the statue of the famed South American liberator, Simon Bolivar.

The march, to demonstrate to the meeting of the Organization of American State foreign ministers the exiles demands for the liberation of Cuba, fell short of the anticipated 4,000 to 10,000.

Both the U. S. Park and the Metropolitan police forces were out in full strength to prevent an occurrence of the rioting that took place during a similar demonstration in July 1964, when 5,000 exiles turned a silent demonstration into a rock-throwing, riotous clash with mounted police.

90 Men Posted

The park police canceled all days off and 90 men were detailed to the march. The Metropolitan police refused to reveal the number of men assigned and would only say the number "is sufficient."

Some estimates put the number at nearly 400.

The Cubans gathered on a grassy field between the Lincoln Memorial and Constitution Ave.

Both Cuban and American flags were in evidence and signs identified delegations from New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts.

The march was led by a girl dressed in a long gown depicting the blue and white stripes of the Cuban flag and wearing a red triangular-shaped hat with a white star. Her wrists were bound in black paper chains to symbolize "Cuban people in chains."

Women Carry Flag

A number of women wearing widow's black carried a super-sized Cuban flag.

The march began at 2 p.m. and moved down the avenue in a slow, silent hesitation step, pausing frequently to allow police to move traffic along the east-bound lane of Constitution Avenue.

It took nearly an hour for the marchers to reach the Bolivar monument, where two large floral wreaths were placed before the statue of the Venezuelan-born liberator.

The marchers then gathered in Constitution Hall.

Dr. Enrique Huertas of Miami, leader of the Free Cuban Medical Association explained that the demonstration was called in hopes of impressing the OAS foreign ministers to write resolutions taking a firm stand against Communist Cuba.

"We want to be free again," he shouted to the newsmen.

"Our main purpose is to be back in Cuba at any price."

We want the OAS to permit the Cubans to fight in every way possible to free their fatherland, including use of force."

A five-man delegation was permitted to enter the OAS building at 17th Street and Constitution Avenue to meet with Secretary-General Antonio Mora.

Later, in a brief press conference on the steps of the OAS, Dr. Huertas said that the exiles had asked the member nations to give the exiles the same resources that Castro is receiving from the Red bloc.

They also asked for expansion of provisions of the Rio Treaty, which he explained would give Latin American countries more freedom in acting against Communist infiltration in Latin American nations.

Among their demands was a call for a total sea and air blockade of Cuba.

Heavy Cordon

Police had carefully put a heavy protective cordon around the OAS headquarters and would allow no one on the sidewalks around the building.

Even employes and delegates had to present their credentials at a special checkpoint at the entrance to the building's driveway.

Included in the march were about 20 members of the militant nationalistic Cuban exiles who have been accused of firing a mortar shell at the United Nations building in New York City, firing a bazooka at the Cuban Embassy in Ottawa, Canada and threatening to blow up the Cuban pavilion at Expo 67.

They carried a banner which called for freedom for their jailed leader Felipe Rivero.

Among the marchers were a number of veterans of the Assault Brigade 2506 who participated in the abortive 1963 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba.

When one man was asked if the khaki uniform indicated he was a veteran of that invasion, he answered:

"Correction, the First Bay of Pigs invasion."