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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

**Memorandum of Conversation**

DATE: July 20, 1950

**SUBJECT:** Request of Cuban Government for U.S. Assistance  
in Defense Arrangements for Cuba.

**PARTICIPANTS:** Señor Dr. Luis Machado, Ambassador Designate  
Señor Dr. Joaquín E. Meyer, Minister Counselor  
ARA - Mr. Barber  
AR - Mr. Dreier  
MID - Mr. Desvernine

**COPIES TO:** ARA - Mr. Barber  
AR - Mr. Dreier  
IAD - Mr. Anderson  
AIR - Mr. Carroll  
American Embassy, Habana (informally)

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Dr. Machado said that President Prío was gravely concerned about the inadequacy of Cuba's military establishment - particularly in the field of aviation - for defense purposes, particularly in the light of the deteriorating international situation and Cuba's strategic position in the event of a world conflagration. The President had, therefore, requested him to take up with the Department the possibility that a United States military mission be sent to Cuba.

Mr. Barber inquired whether Dr. Machado was referring to a long-term mission for the purpose of offering training to Cuban air force personnel or to a mission - composed of representatives of our military establishment - which would visit Cuba and determine Cuba's defense needs and how best to meet them. Dr. Machado said that he thought both types of mission would probably be needed, but that the latter should precede the former.

Dr. Machado referred to Cuba's vulnerability in case of war with Soviet Russia and stated that it appeared particularly important that the United States should have some specific plans for the defense of the area which could be coordinated with Cuba's defense plans. He said Cuba was glad to participate in, and cooperate with, the Inter-American Defense Board, but that, in addition thereto,

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Cuba's special strategic position would appear to require special attention on the part of the United States.

Dr. Machado was informed that our Senior Military Attaché in Habana, Colonel Glenn, was currently in touch with the Cuban military authorities on the question of an air mission, and that the Department would take up with our National Military Establishment the matters brought up by Dr. Machado in today's conversation.

Dr. Machado cautioned against any publicity on this subject, which he said his Government wished to have maintained in strictest confidence.

ARA: MID: ED<sup>op</sup> Desvernine: arp 7-21-50

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