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SUBJECT: CTC Anti-Communist Resolution

The meeting of the Executive Committee of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), which on the night of June 7 unanimously passed the anti-Communist resolution, copies and translation of which were forwarded with the despatch under reference, was open to newspapermen. Only the weekly Bohemia in its issue for June 13 attempted to give any sort of story of what took place at the meeting, but the newspapers Pueblo, Alerta and Tiempo carried scraps about it. The account of the meeting that can thus be pieced together is of interest as throwing light on the thinking of the CTC leadership regarding not only the Communist problem but other matters of concern to the labor movement.

In the current anti-Communist operation MUJAL seems to be taking special pains to avoid any possibility of the charge being laid that ex-Communists or crypto-Communists are sabotaging the campaign. In line with this policy, in cases where unions are headed by ex-Communists, he invited to the meeting of the Executive Committee other officers of the same union with clear anti-Communist records. Thus, in the case of the Tobacco Workers, the only federation on whose executive Communists are known to hold seats, he invited in addition to Secretary General Luis SERRANO Tamayo, an ex-Communist and a member of the CTC Executive, Dora RAMOS, Secretary of Finances of the Federation and a union leader with a long record of fighting the Communists. Miss Ramos, by the way, is leaving for Washington on June 23 on a leader travel grant.

Mujal opened the meeting of the Executive Committee with a long and wide-ranging exposition. (He is, of course, seldom brief.) He referred to the anti-Communist law decree recently promulgated and said that President BATISTA had talked to him before the promulgation of the law and had intended to extend its provisions to cover the unions. Mujal had protested and asked the President to allow the unions to clean house themselves. The President had agreed to give the unions this chance. Therefore, the CTC, Mujal affirmed, must do the job. However, Mujal

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(Classification)

Page _____ of
Encl. No. _____
Desp. No. _____
From _____

was of the opinion that the situation in the unions was not serious; it was substantially worse in the public service and among the teachers. But, through its action, the CTC would no doubt give a spark to the entire campaign. At the same time Mujal admitted that perhaps the CTC, after intensive campaigns against the Communists, had dropped its guard.

Mujal tied the anti-Communist campaign he was proposing to the resolutions of past CTC congresses. He said that a file should be started of all union leaders, so that the CTC leadership could have a line of which were Communists or Communist sympathizers, or had histories of association with Communist points of view. This job should be undertaken by a Committee of which no Communist or ex-Communist, or anyone who had served on the CTC Executive when Lazaro PENA was Secretary General, ought to be a member. Particular attention should be paid to ex-Communists, beginning with himself. In the course of his speech Mujal also touched extensively on the entire world situation: China, the British Labor Party, NEHRU and especially Guatemala.

On the question of Guatemala Mujal said several interesting things. That the country presented a Communist threat, he asserted, was beyond question. Bohemia quotes him as continuing: "Clearly the CTC always supports strikes against companies that exploit native labor, but we remember that at the beginning of his term of government President ARBENZ became aware of the Marxist threat and sent us a letter asking for Cuban union activists to cut short the Stalinist influence in his country!". Mujal also said that there was Guatemalan influence at work in the Honduras strike, the first time he has said this in public. He went on to say that the Communist danger existed not only in Guatemala but in other parts of the Americas as well, and that this circumstance was a measure of the failure of United States policy in Latin America.

Mujal apparently had come to the meeting with his anti-Communist resolution written out. But a few modifications and additions were made at the meeting. The most important amendment was suggested by Javier BOLANOS, Secretary General of the Railway Brotherhood. This was clause six of the resolution, which calls for the replacement of workers dismissed under anti-Communist Law-Decree No. 1456 by another worker at the same salary and in the same conditions of employment.

Some observations and warning were voiced about exaggerating the Communist danger or persecuting workers affiliated with parties opposed to the Batista regime on false grounds that they were Communists; but it seems clear from all accounts that the

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

OFFICIAL USE ONLY
(Classification)

Page _____ of
Encl. No. _____
Disp. No. _____
From _____

unanimous sense of the meeting was that action against Communists was called for and should be vigorous and determined.

Calixto SANCHEZ, Secretary General of the Federación Aérea Nacional, wanted the CTC to set up a body that should determine who was and was not a Communist in order to avoid persecution of workers opposed to the Government. This was opposed by Jesús ARTIGAS, Financial Secretary of the CTC, on the ground that the CTC would then be doing the Government's dirty work. Sánchez replied that on occasion he had reported Communists in his ranks to the Military Intelligence Service (SIM) only to have it reply that the men were not Communists, because, as Sánchez knew, they were affiliated with the PAP or, earlier, the PAU. José ALVAREZ Michelterona, of the Gastronómicos said that he wanted to be sure he wasn't labelled a Communist simply because he had been a founding member of the Partido Revolucionario Cubano.

In his opening address Mujal had referred sarcastically to Minister Without Portfolio de la Fe's anti-Communist campaign, saying that in one place near Guantánamo de la Fe had given a figure for Communists living there that exceeded the total population. Calixto Sánchez made an interjection regarding de la Fe that alluded to "political adventurism."

As passed, the resolution seemed to take account of all these cautionary considerations, for: 1) the CTC will under Clause 4 have its own Special Committee keeping a file on Communist, fellow-travelling, and ex-Communist union leaders, 2) under Clause 5 in cases of dismissal under the anti-Communist decree the Government or the employers should consult with the Federation involved, 3) a Committee of Anti-Communist Activities is to be set up with labor and non-labor representation to purge totalitarian ideas in all activities, and 4) Clause 8 is "specific notice of ample guarantees to all workers of democratic ideology whatever their political thinking . . ."

One of the subjects that kept cropping up during the meeting and which obviously was charged with the greatest potentialities for making trouble was that of Communist infiltration of the President's Progressive Action Party. Mujal, Sánchez and others did not hide their belief that not only was the PAP infiltrated but that it was a pretty safe place for a Communist to ensconce himself. Gilberto GALAN, of the Maritime Federation and Secretary of Statistics of the CTC, who is one of the PAP labor leaders, got up to defend the party from the charge of harboring Communists. He took the line that those who had been Communists and were now in the PAP were all honest converts. This led to ironic interjections by Mujal and Calixto Sánchez. The exchanges between Galan and Mujal and Sánchez, although incisive, seem to have

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been made in good spirit and are perhaps illustrative of the relations that obtain in the highest circles of the CTC, where unity is maintained despite divergent personal interest and political sympathies that would seem certain to disrupt most Cuban organizations.

Some interest attaches to the role at the June 7 meeting of Conrado BECQUER, Acting Secretary General of the Sugar Workers in the absence of José Luis MARTINEZ in Europe. It has been observed that while in charge of the Sugar Workers Becquer has been very much in Mujal's company, and both Bohemia and Pueblo report that at the meeting Becquer was most zealous in backing Mujal's every proposal. The question naturally arises whether, with relations between Mujal and Martínez strained, Becquer is not attempting to get the support of Mujal for a possible future effort to displace Martínez. Becquer is popularly counted a very able and energetic trade union leader, and he certainly has a gift for self-advertisement. Tiempo quotes him as making the interesting observation with regard to the Communist issue that the political point of view had been entering too much into CTC affairs lately, to the detriment of purely trade union considerations. In the context of the Tiempo report what Becquer apparently meant is that with PAPIstas trying to get ahead in the labor movement at the expense of Mujalistas and other non-PAPIstas, the Communists as such had been overlooked with the result that they had had presented them excellent opportunities for infiltration. Becquer, however, also warned against tying the red tag onto persons who were merely political opponents of interested parties. (It is rumored that Becquer will run with Grau for senator or representative from Las Villas.)

Samuel POWELL, Secretary of Welfare and Accidents of the CTC, and Pedro DOMENECH of the Motion Picture Workers, spoke of the need of applying to the Communists their own merciless tactics; and Antonio BOSQUE of the Sugar Workers warned that the Communists were giving an example among the country's port workers of what they might do in any industry in the country.

It is striking in reviewing the meeting of the CTC Executive and the comment of the press afterwards, how free Cuba is from anti-anti-Communist hysteria. At the CTC meeting what warnings were given about persecution were apparently based on knowledge of the turns that a campaign of proscription might take because of Cuban political rivalries. No one seems to have indulged in sentimentalism regarding the civil rights of the Communists. The press has taken a similar point of view. Even Tiempo's labor columnist, something of a left-winger on the Cuban scene, though he showed that he has reservations about CTC condemnation of Guatemala and is opposed to inquisitorial tactics, seems to regard

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Page 5 of
Dgsp. No. 1556
From Habana

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(Classification)

Page _____ of
Encl. No. _____
Desp. No. _____
From _____


the CTC resolution as a triumph over McCarthyism and demagoguery. He is principally pleased with the CTC's resolution in its totality because he thinks it reflects a proper understanding of how to fight the Communists effectively.

It now remains for the CTC resolution to be put into effect. On the morrow of its passage, June 8, it was immediately applied to the congress of the National Maritime Workers Federation, which was just opening. Communist delegates were not allowed admission. (According to one paper, fifteen delegates were thus turned out; a copy of the notarial certificate of the congress which has been made available to the Embassy states that only four delegates were rejected on the grounds of the June 7 resolution. It would seem that more than four Communists might have been elected delegates to this Federation's national congress.)

Mujal has also summoned a meeting of the Tobacco Workers Executive for June 22 with the express purpose of applying the June 7 resolution by expelling its Communist members and getting Communists out of office in its local unions. (Despite the presence of Communists on the Tobacco Workers national executive, only three or four of its locals, according to one good source, are under their control.) The Embassy will report to the Department on the progress of the CTC campaign.

For the Ambassador:


Juan de Jengoteta
Second Secretary


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