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837.06/7-3052
JUL 30 1952

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA
TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.
REF : 000183 Labor Developments
Habana 2090 of 6/9/52; 2207 of 6/30/52; 78 of 7/14/52 ; 93 of 7/16/52

160
DESP. NO.

July 30, 1952
DATE

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	REC'D JUL 31	OTHER COMM FRB LAB NSRB

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
AMERICAN AFFAIRS
AUG - 1 1952

SUBJECT: CTC National Council Brings No Immediate Changes
Organization

The twenty-first National Council of the Cuban Confederation of Workers (CTC), held July 19 and 20, failed to produce any immediate changes within the labor federation but indications still point toward some kind of a pact (see reference 4) between the CTC and Bloque Obrero of Partido Acción Unitaria (PAU), the BATISTA party, with eventual accession of PAU members to the CTC hierarchy.

Despite the known dissatisfaction of CTC leaders (see reference 1) with CTC Secretary-General Eusebio MUJAL's rapprochement policies toward the Batista Government, they refused to accept his resignation and in fact gave him a vote of confidence. This, however, is viewed more as an expression of union solidarity than one of affection. It probably also means that the union leaders are convinced that for the present at least there is no alternative. This is emphasized by the almost docile (for a labor union) attitude displayed when a transport union delegate demanded a renewed protest in the Autobuses Modernos case (see reference 2). The demand was rejected.

The vote on Mujal's resignation was 27 to 6, each affiliated federation having one vote. Among the 6 dissenters were the electric plant workers, headed by Angel COFINO; the telephone workers, headed by Vicente RUBIERA; and the retail clerks, headed by Raquel VALLADARES. Cofiño and Rubiera have long been openly hostile to Mujal and have recently been joined by Valladares. Cofiño was recently reported as conspiring with certain PAU elements to get rid of Mujal.

The exact status of the CTC negotiations with PAU is not known but it is significant that there was not one speech at the meeting in which Paupistas were attacked. Mujal himself attacked the Communists for their divisionary tactics and praised the leaders of Bloque Obrero for their constructive

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attitude towards the "crisis within the syndicate group". Mujal told the gathering that labor is facing a stiff employer resistance "in which underground forces are moving in political, social and economic spheres to promote friction between workers and the Government. The CTC should openly oppose employers' resistance and call upon the Government to stand beside it in accord with the social policy which the President of the Republic, General Batista, has announced on repeated occasions".

COMMENT

Despite this show of unity the CTC is rife with confusion, frustration and dissatisfaction (see reference 1). Although there has been only one real crackdown on labor (Autobuses Modernos, where it was abundantly justified), many grievances are still reportedly gathering dust in the Ministry of Labor while Batista continues to promise full attention to labor's problems. On the other hand, employers have not been the recipients of special Batista favors so far as labor is concerned. The Autobus "blitz", however, has stiffened employer attitudes toward union demands, according to union leaders.

Francisco AGUIRRE, in a surprisingly conciliatory tone (in view of what he had previously told the Embassy's labor reporting officer), told the Council delegates, "If we expect to get anything from Batista we must be prepared to give him something". This was taken to mean that the CTC must not only give some Paupistas important jobs but also orient itself to Batista's politics.

Recently, in discussing the proposed political party of labor, which reportedly is to be headed by Mujal, Aguirre said that the party would support Batista if he follows a "social line" but oppose him when he did not. Aguirre said that this was the only way the CTC could go since outright opposition to Batista would mean the end of the CTC as it is now known. At any rate, a "deal" of some kind between PAU and the CTC still appears to be in the making. It is believed that when a definite agreement is reached the Government will again start subsidy payments to the CTC, thus partly taking care of the financial crisis (see reference 3) through which it is passing.

For the Ambassador:

Irvin S. Lippe
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Attaché

Green