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837.06/12-1752

XR 835.062

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

962  
DESP. NO.

December 17, 1952  
DATE

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

000183 Labor Developments

REF : Embdespatches 834 of 11/24/52, 2207 of 6/30/52

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	ARA	IN F O	OTHER	COMM	LAB	NSRB				

SUBJECT: Peronista Followers Expelled from CTC

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The Cuban Confederation of Labor (CTC) has taken a firm position against Peronista activities in Cuba by expelling seven members who attended the recent Argentine-sponsored labor conference or who have been prominent in the establishment of the local Subcomité de Unidad Sindical (SUS). This action by the CTC executive board thus goes beyond CTC Secretary-General Eusebio MUJAL's recent statement (see reference 1) which indicated that those attending the Mexico conference would be disciplined.

Peronista adherents, not only those who went to the Mexico meeting, were given the opportunity to renounce their Argentine affiliation; failing this they were expelled. Of the four CTC members who attended the Mexico conference, two refused to renounce their affiliation and were expelled. They are Fernandez PEREZ Vidal, member of the transport workers, who headed the delegation and who is secretary-general of the local group, and Luis VEGA Suarez, member of the hotel and restaurant workers' union. Both are unimportant in Cuban organized labor, but Perez Vidal has been an active member of Acción Revolucionario Guiteras (ARG), the ruthless terrorist gang which controlled the transport union for a long time. Its influence today is believed to have been diminished greatly by the BATISTA regime's action in placing the army in control of Autobuses Modernos (see reference 2). Perez Vidal is said to be a close friend of Marco A. HIRIGOYEN, former head of the Autobus Moderno union and prominent in CTC affairs. Hirigoyen's trial for the alleged murder of a Communist labor leader some years ago is to start this week.

Two others who went to Mexico but who have renounced all connections with the Argentine group are Aurelio RAMAS, so-called chief of propaganda for the bank workers' union, and Placido HERNANDEZ, propaganda secretary for the sugar workers' union. While these men are relatively unimportant, they will bear watching because of their ambitious nature and connections in the labor movement.

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Newspaper coverage of the CTC's action was in the main confined to the inside pages. Two interesting articles, however, appeared in the wake of the development. One reported a SUS statement denouncing Mujal as a "G man...an employee of the Department of State...and a defender of Communists". The other was a signed article by Prensa Libre's labor editor, Mario BARRERA, which criticizes the CTC's action and which recalls that when the Communists controlled the CTC they did not expel Francisco AGUIRRE, secretary-general of the Inter-american Organization of Workers (ORIT), for attending or affiliating with conferences sponsored by the AFL or CIO. In connection with Prensa Libre's writer, Aguirre recently told the Embassy's labor reporting officer that Barrera was "absolutely" on the payroll of the Argentine labor attaché in Habana.

COMMENT

The Embassy does not believe Argentine efforts in Cuba can make much headway, although a serious economic setback might give them some impetus, with the United States of course getting credit for the country's troubles. In that event the Argentine movement may be further complicated by Communist infiltration, which could become an important threat. At the moment, however, Peronista activities amount only to a minor nuisance, but one to be watched closely.

For the Ambassador:



Irvin S. Lippe  
Attaché