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TO : Department of State

FROM : HABANA 1176 November 30, 1950

REF: Habana's 953, October 31, 1950

SUBJECT: CTC NATIONAL COUNCIL AGREES TO CALL GENERAL STRIKE 4 1950

Enclosure
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

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The National Council of the Cuban Confederation of Labor agreed to call a general strike at a meeting held in Habana on November 25, 1950. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the effects of the general strike called on October 28 (see reference despatch) and to decide what course to follow in view of the employers' apparent determination to form a National Federation of Employers.

The discussion was carried out under the direction of Eusebio MUJAL, Secretary General of the CTC, who urged the workers to call another general strike unless certain conditions were met by the employers. The following conditions were specifically mentioned: a) that the employers bind themselves to guarantee present working conditions; b) to withdraw all appeals against labor decisions which have been filed with the courts; and c) to agree to participate in a roundtable conference under the chairmanship of President Prio to reach definite understandings on these questions.

The delegates gave the CTC Executive Committee a vote of confidence and authority to call a general strike whenever it might deem it expedient to do so.

The consensus is that the employers will not agree to the above-mentioned conditions nor will the CTC attempt another general strike in the immediate future. There are attached copies of editorials appearing in the Havana Herald and Havana Post which reflect the general tenor of editorial comment on the strike threat.

For the Ambassador:

Ray H. Crane
Ray H. Crane,
Assistant Attaché.

RHCrane/elw
Nov. 30, 1950
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Enclosure: 2 Clippings

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ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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EDITORIALS

LABOR THREATENS

The XIII National Council of the Confederation of Workers of Cuba (CTC) yesterday agreed with its Secretary General, Senator Eusebio Mujal (Auténtico) that it might be necessary to declare a general strike if employers do not undertake to guarantee the "social conquests" of the workers.

The guarantee would consist in withdrawal of all appeals to the courts established by the employers against official rulings of which they do not approve; and to agree to meet at a round table conference with the President of the Republic and representatives of the workers to seek solutions.

This proposal, adopted by the Council, which immediately gave the Executive Committee of the CTC carte blanche to declare a general strike for such date as it may decide on, is much more important than it may seem at "prima facie."

For the strike would not be simply a step to force employers to grant demands legally made, however exorbitant they may be. It is the use of force to compel employers to abandon all the rights and protection which the laws of the country grant them. It is the use of the passive violence characteristic of the strike to compel employers to desist from resorting to the laws, which all should obey, in seeking redress for impositions. We do not ask how labor would feel if the positions were reversed, for labor seems to give not a whit for laws.

The proposal to meet with the President and representatives of the employers at a round table to thresh matters out sounds reasonable enough when considered with the simplicity with which it is made. But, it must be borne in mind that the meeting is intended to consolidate the proposed waiving by the employers of their right to resort to the laws. It is as if law breakers invited the damaged parties to meet with the chief of police to agree never to take their complaints to court.

The invitation to meet with the President is but a continuation of a bad custom that seems to have become rooted in Cuba. It is that of taking all labor conflicts to the Chief Executive as though he were his own Minister of Labor. A president should have his mind and time free for other problems of the nation. In Cuba there are many things which require attention by the President, but they have to be set aside while labor problems are considered—and we say "considered" instead of "solved" because there never seems to be any real, sound and lasting solution but merely hasty temporary measures which give rise to more "problems."

Sensible labor must awaken to the need of real labor leaders who are interested in real solutions of labor problems and not in vote-getting. These real solutions are the best for the worker, the employer and the nation. Let's have no more browbeating of governors and employers and flaunting of the laws.

THE HAVANA HERALD

NOV 27 1950

EDITORIALS

Too Big For Its Breeches

Announcement that the Cuban Confederation of Workers is threatening another general strike unless labor and government meet its most recent arbitrary demands indicates that it is getting a bit too big for its breeches.

The CTC (Confederación de Trabajadores de Cuba) is an organization with a great deal of potential for doing good which spends entirely too much of its time looking under the bed for possible employer enemies. Its boss, Eusebio Mujal, a man of considerable ability or he wouldn't be where he is, could do much to bring labor and management together, but he spends most of his time figuring ways to antagonize their relations.

The last threat of the CTC comes on the heels of a ridiculous "general strike" that turned out a general flop. Like the first one of this nature, this one also is touted as a "protest" against the infant employers' protective group, a sort of National Association of Manufacturers of Cuba.

Principal gripe of the CTC is that it fears the employers group will take some action against its interests. On this vague charge Mujal and his cohorts propose to call a general strike unless the employers' group guarantees to maintain labor's gains, which are guaranteed by law anyway.

There has been no indication that anyone wants to take from labor any of its legitimate gains. There is much indication that quite a few persons want to stop some of its abuses. In threatening to strike against imagined wrongs that might be contemplated, the CTC is getting out of hand and riding for a fall. Apparently it learned nothing from the last general strike, which showed plainly the apathy of the majority of workers to its far-fetched maneuvering.