

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY : UNCLASSIFIED

PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

DEPARTMENT OF STATE	
BUREAU OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS	For Dept. Use only.
FEB 13 1950	FEB 9
CPW	RH
ACTION	

TO : Department of State

FROM : HABANA 271 February 7 1950

REF :

SUBJECT : RESOLUTIONS OF SEVENTH NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AIR TRANSPORT WORKERS.

The Seventh National Congress of the National Air Transport Workers Federation (Federación Aérea Nacional) was held recently in Habana. Delegates from air transport syndicates throughout the Republic were in attendance. At the termination of the congress, a copy of the resolutions agreed upon was presented to President PRIO. The text is as follows:

1. To request all airlines to comply with labor contracts registered with the National Air Transport Workers Federation.
2. To permit the Airport Chauffeurs Union to affiliate with the National Air Transport Workers Federation.
3. To recommend the dissolution of the National Transport Commission and the creation of a Ministry of Transport.
4. To recommend the derogation of Decree 2878 of 1946 and Resolution 233 of 1949 issued by the Ministry of Defense, with the purpose of preventing the continuance of existing 'pirate practices' at the Military Airport at Columbia.
5. To recommend the organization of a secondary network of radio stations, to better serve airplanes and to avoid confusion in this important service.
6. To present a draft social security bill to Congress for approval during its next session.
7. To oppose the proposed obligatory syndicalization requested by the President of the Republic.
8. To struggle for the unity of all workers.

RHCrane/dts
1 0 1/4
2/7/50

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

FR
DCR
ITP
TRC
OLI
OFD
COM
LAB
CAB
FRB

837.062/2-750

FAP

FEB 21 1950

FILED

UNCLASSIFIED

2 Habana 271

9. To support the sugar workers in their demands and protest the violence of the army in the sugar growing areas.
10. To recommend the regulation of the air transport industry by means of an Air Transport Problems Commission, comprised of government representatives, employers and workers, whose duties would be to prevent unloyal competition, clandestine practices and rate wars.

For the Ambassador:

Ray H. Crane
American Vice Consul

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY : RESTRICTED

TO : Department of State

FROM : HABANA 400 August 18, 1950

REF : Embassy's despatch 1483 of June 29, 1950

SUBJECT : CUBAN LABOR UNIONS MOVE TO EXPEL COMMUNISTS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
PRIORITY MAIL
SEP 15 1950
837.062/8-1550
OFFICE OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS

28
For Dept.
use only.
AUG
23
R
E
C
D
A
C
T
I
O
N
I
N
F
O
FR
DCR
OLI
EURK
LAB

Subsequent to the outbreak of hostilities in Korea and the issuance of a statement by the non-Communist CTC (see Embassy despatch 19 of July 6) condemning the attack on the Republic of Korea and appealing to the Cuban workers to seek the complete eradication of Communism from Cuba, several labor unions have taken steps to remove known Communists from their ranks.

The National Federation of Electric, Gas and Water Plant Workers was the first to institute proceedings against known Communists (see despatch under reference). Formal dismissal proceedings have been registered with the Ministry of Labor against seven of the ten persons originally accused of Communist affiliations. That the seven workers accused of having Communistic leanings are definitely Communists appears to be confirmed by an editorial appearing in the Communist daily Hoy which states, "These workers are being dismissed from their jobs not because they have failed to meet required work standards, but because they are good Communists and refuse to agree with the political ideas of the company and the Yankee Embassy."

Other labor organizations which have adopted resolutions permitting the expulsion of Communists from the labor unions and in some cases have already instituted proceedings against workers are the following: 1) The National Federation of Medical Workers at a meeting held recently in Camaguey adopted a resolution providing for the expulsion of all Communists from the labor unions and in addition agreed to request the Government to outlaw the Communist Party and return the newspaper Hoy to the non-Communist CTC; 2) The General Syndicate of Warehouse Workers of Habana has reportedly informed the Ministry of Labor that all Communists are to be removed from the syndicate. The spokesman stated that the legal rights of the workers would be respected, but that all workers found guilty of adhering to anti-democratic ideals would be deprived of their syndical rights; and 3) The Executive Committee of the Woolworth Workers Union (this union includes all employees of ten-cent stores in Cuba) recently adopted a resolution which denies all syndical rights to Ada PEREYRA, described by the Committee as a notorious Communist agent.

RHCrane/dts
6 0 1/2

RESTRICTED

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R file with an endorsement of action taken.

837.062/8-1550

VJ

RESTRICTED

2. Habana 400

The resolution also provides that Sra. Pereyra shall be removed from her position as union delegate of the store in which she is employed. The Committee reported that, although all of its members were in complete accord on the question, a general assembly would be called so that all members of the syndicate would have an opportunity to express themselves and arrive at a majority ruling. The Committee added that its decision had been reached after due deliberation and consideration of alleged acts of sabotage and insubordination by the accused.

Comment:

It is encouraging to note that some labor leaders are apparently moving toward the ousting of Communists from labor unions. However, it is doubtful as to what degree of success will be achieved through the measures described above, since neither labor leaders nor Ministry of Labor officials are noted for enforcing resolutions.

For the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim:

Ray H. Crane
Ray H. Crane
Assistant Attache

RESTRICTED

B/B

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY : RESTRICTED

PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

26
For Dept.
use only.

TO : Department of State

837.062/10-3150

R
E
C
D
A
C
T
I
O
N
I
N
T
ONov.
2

FROM : HABANA 953 October 31, 1950

Encl. Clippings

REF : Habana's 940 October 27, 1950

SUBJECT : GENERAL STRIKE FAILS TO PREVENT EMPLOYERS' MEETING BUT
ACHIEVES CERTAIN MEASURE OF SUCCESS AS DEMONSTRATION OF
WORKERS UNITY.DCR
OLI
EUR/X

LAB

cc

The general strike of Cuban workers which was called from 5:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon on October 28 in protest against a meeting of employers for the purpose of forming an organization to oppose unwarranted encroachments by organized labor achieved a controversial degree of success.

Insofar as preventing the meeting of the employers the strike was a failure. However, as a display of worker unity and as an indication of the potential power of labor, it was successful to a fairly large degree.

The transportation system in Habana and, according to early unconfirmed reports, throughout the Island was virtually paralyzed. The only exceptions were taxicabs and some privately owned busses operating in the interior villages.

Work at the docks was completely stopped during the seven hours the strike was in effect. Rail transportation was at a standstill and plane service was disrupted.

Work stoppage among other industries and employee groups was sporadic. The caterers union failed to issue a definite resolution on the stand it would assume and, as a result, several of the larger public restaurants which depend exclusively on hired help were closed while private club and hotel restaurants and smaller eating establishments operated by owners and families remained open. Garages were closed but service stations which are generally operated by individuals on a percentage basis were kept open to the public.

Although the leaders of the National Association of Government Employees had previously agreed to support the strike, Saturday morning found the majority of them at their desks. Radio announcers were also on the job in spite of a

RHCrane/elw
Oct. 31, 1950
5 0 1-1/2

RESTRICTED

837.062/10-3150

HH

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

previous statement that they would adhere to the strike movement. Most commercial establishments and offices were open but were short staffed. It is rather difficult to assess to what extent those workers absent from their jobs supported the movement since many of them undoubtedly were unable to reach their respective places of employment because transportation was not available. Drugstores were about evenly divided with only one or two of the larger downtown establishments being able to open because many employees did not appear for work. (Again transportation may have been responsible for their failure to report for work.) Smaller drugstores in the outlying districts appeared to open or close at the will of the proprietors. Many grocery stores and food markets, including the large public markets, were closed until noon when the strike officially terminated.

The electrical workers, headed by Angel COFIÑO, remained faithful to their prior commitment (see reference despatch) and cut off the power supply for ten minutes on the evening preceding the strike. Although this action would indicate support for the movement it is questionable whether the workers would be able to deprive industry of power for any prolonged period of time in the event of further demonstrations of this sort.

The Barbers Union which is Communist-dominated was the only workers organization publicly to denounce the strike.

Shortly after twelve o'clock on Saturday Senator Eusebio Mujal, Secretary General of the CTC, issued the following statement to the press:

"All the sectors of the thirty national federations of industries belonging to the CTC have followed the strike order issued by the central organization. In the interior not only the organized workers but many who have escaped the orders issued by the Communists have also responded. In Habana some commercial centers have worked as well as some grocery stores that were opened by the police.

"We protest against the abuses committed by the police who unjustly arrested hundreds of workers and many leaders of the CTC and we demand their rapid release since in most cases their only offense was to go about in automobiles bearing CTC legends.

"At all events we want to avail ourselves of this opportunity to answer the slander of a few petty Communist leaders and orthodox leaders to the effect that this national strike movement of protest had been carried out in collusion with the employers. It would hardly be necessary to clarify

RESTRICTED

these facts because it cannot be conceived that in this struggle of ours against the employer sector we should act in accord with it.

"The CTC always acts firmly, truthfully, and out in the open. Our objectives have been declared publicly in the exposition handed to all the national press. Here are our objectives and our opinion in this struggle: 'Against employer reaction and that of their allies, the Communists, and for the maintenance of all the advances gained by the workers.' Therefore, in fulfilment of the resolutions of the Secretariat of the CTC the movement of protest which started at 5:00 o'clock in the morning is considered at an end at 12:00 noon. Eusebio Mujal Barniol."

Some five thousand merchants and industrialists met on Sunday morning, October 29, as scheduled, to discuss the problems confronting them and to formulate plans for the establishment of an employers organization.

The three main topics of discussion were as follows:
1) the action of the Administration in setting aside a Supreme Court decision in a labor dispute; 2) certain statements made by the Minister of Labor which the employers claim incited the workers to take action against the order of the nation; and 3) determining what action the employers should take in view of the present situation.

Aurelio MARTINEZ Arizala, a member of the organizing committee, (Arizala is also one of the owners of Omnibus Aliados which was directly affected by the Supreme Court's decision) gave the opening speech in which he said: "We cannot permit anyone to push us around, nor do we propose to abuse anyone. We only ask the government for the same protection any citizen is entitled to and we hope to construct, in an atmosphere of calm and understanding, a better future for everyone concerned."

Other speakers strongly criticized the Administration for its indifferent attitude toward the strike and blamed it for not having prevented it. Senator Eusebio Mujal was also the object of severe attacks by the speakers.

The following resolutions were passed by the assembly:

1. To take the necessary steps for immediate organization of an Employers' Confederation.

2. To declare "socially dangerous" the attitude of any government representative who incites the masses against democratic procedures. (This was aimed directly at Mujal, who is

RESTRICTED

a Senator, and indirectly at President Prio, who didn't refute statements by his CTC boss that he backed the strike objectives.)

3. To label as irresponsible and provocative any act that tends to ignore the right of the employer class to organize under the laws and constitution of the country.

4. To appoint a committee to integrate the work of organizing the employers and set forth the principles which inspire such organization.

5. To reject belligerent statements by Eusebio Mujal concerning Judge Riera Medina, "an honest and capable official." (Mujal had condemned Medina for attempting to enforce a decision of the Court of Constitutional Guarantees pertaining to wages and hours of bus workers.)

6. To thank the press for publishing news of the gathering despite opposition of the CTC.

The employer group has indicated that it feels the meeting was a definite success and that the full cooperation of perhaps ninety-five percent of management could be counted on in the event a showdown between labor and management should emerge from the present situation. The employers also feel that Senator Eusebio Mujal's and, consequently, labor's position has been seriously weakened since Mujal's avowed purpose of preventing the meeting of the employers was thwarted. Also, the fact that many people were seriously inconvenienced by the strike may have a profound effect on their heretofore sympathetic attitude toward labor.

The Administration remained silent throughout the strike period and has not yet found it expedient to issue any sort of statement either approving or condemning the actions of the workers.

There were no serious conflicts as a result of the strike, although a few minor disturbances were registered when those workers adhering to the strike movement attempted to persuade employees in commercial establishments to leave their jobs. Unconfirmed reports indicate that between fifty and eighty persons were arrested, but all were released shortly after the work stoppage terminated.

The press has been unanimous in denouncing the strike as illegal, unwarranted, and as a complete failure. All papers have carried editorials and front page articles on the question, copies of which are being enclosed.

For the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim:

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

Enclosures: *AM*
✓ Clippings.

RESTRICTED

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY : UNCLASSIFIED

PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

837.062/11-3050

24
For Dept.
use only.

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

RECEIVED
DEC 2
ATA*
FR
DCR
OLI
EURX

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
1 0 1/4

Enclosure: 2 Clippings

UNCLASSIFIED

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

837.062/11-3050

HH

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.

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY: UNCLASSIFIED

PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

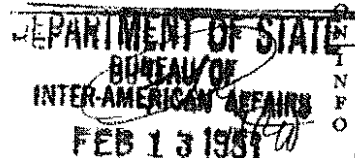
TO: Department of State

837.062/2-951
XR-937.52

FROM: HABANA, 1679, February 9, 1951

REF:

SUBJECT: THREATENED STRIKE CIA. CUBANA DE AVIACION.



RECD ACT INFO

For Dept. use only.
FEB 12

ABA

FR DCR OLI E L

CAB BOM LAB NLRB

A strike threat of pilots, mechanics, and ramp personnel throughout Cuba of the Cia. Cubana de Aviación in protest of various developments considered prejudicial to the interests of the Company and of the employees was called off after representatives of the workers conferred with President PRIO about the following points:

1. Failure to obtain a permit for Cia. Cubana to fly from Habana to New York. President Prio is reported to have promised to renew efforts to obtain such a permit from CAB. The workers demanded that if the Government was unsuccessful, it should revoke permits in effect for United States lines serving Cuba.
2. The authorization by the Government of two Cuban airlines, Aerovias "Q" and Cuba Aeropostal to utilize Camp Columbia airfield, which is a military field in close proximity to the center of Havana. The President is reported to have promised not to grant any additional authorizations to use this field and to investigate those already in effect.
3. The proposed increase in Cuban taxes on airplane tickets from Cuba to foreign destinations. The President is reported to have promised full reconsideration of this matter.
4. The authorization by the National Transport Commission of a Jewish airline to operate under the Cuban flag between Rome and Tel-Avis with foreign personnel. It was reported that the President promised to revoke this permit.
5. The existence of two radio stations that interfere with Radio Aeronautico de Cuba and the transmission of weather and other information for pilots. Elimination of this interference was reported to have been promised.

837.062/2-951

RMConnell:dml

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

HH

FEB 9 1951

1679, Habana, February 8, 1951

President Prio is understood to have promised that he would propose at today's Cabinet meeting the formation of a five-man aeronautical commission, composed of two representatives of the workers, two of the companies, and one of the Government to study and coordinate all of the above questions.


R.M. Connell
First Secretary of Embassy

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

ACTION COPY

5-M

TELEGRAPH BRANCH

CONFIDENTIAL

Action

ARA

FROM: Habana

Control: 2304

Rec'd: March 5, 1951
9:37 p.m.

Info

E

P

L

OLI

CIA

DCL

DCR

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 397, March 5, 6 p.m.

Following receipt DEPTTEL 395, March 2 and letter March 2 from Wellman, discussed today with Warren Pine and Sergio Clark of Compania Cubana and Carlos Parraga, company's legal counsel, action of labor union in attempting force through company's application for NY-Habana permit. Cubana officials believe feeling on part union members has now reached point where threatened strike March 10 can only be averted by favorable decision CAB or some indication such decision will be forthcoming shortly.

I pointed out to them unfavorable impression which strike would create and possibility of adverse effect upon CAB's decision. They replied action on permit had been pending so long and deferred so frequently that workers are now determined carry out threat.

All three officers expressed anxiety over possibility permit may be granted after (repeat after) strike declared and credit for obtaining it claimed by union, thus weakening management in future negotiations with labor. They expressed desire talk immediately with Rentzrl or acting chairman CAB, hope they could obtain sufficient assurances forestall strike.

Following telephonic conversation with Wellman I informed Pine visit to Washington would probably not produce desired results, but that Department official would be available discuss matter if he insisted on going. Pine said he and Clark had decided go tomorrow arriving Washington Tuesday p.m., that company feels this effort should be made chiefly for psychological effect it might have on union members here. I feel they now do not expect any concrete results from talks they may have with CAB.

ELBRICK

RSP:VH

827.062/3-551

DC/R Central Files

Confidential File

PERMANENT
RECORD COPY

CONFIDENTIAL

• This copy must be returned to DC/R central files with notation of action taken •

REPRODUCTION OF THIS
MESSAGE IS PROHIBITED

CB