

CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION
(Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

737.00/1-3152

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

1256

DESP. NO.

January 31, 1952

DATE

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. enc.

REF : Despatches 1177, Jan. 18 and 1208, Jan. 24

SUBJECT: Ortodoxos and Communists reportedly Failed to Reach Accord as a Result of Political Conversations. Portell Vilá Strongly Opposes Any Alliance with PSP.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
PRIORITY
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
FEB - 6 1952

5
For Dept.
Use Only

FEB
7

In the despatches under reference the Embassy reported that there was increasing evidence that certain elements in the PPC(O) had entered into conversations with PSP (Communist) leaders concerning a possible political alliance between the two parties in the coming presidential election. On January 28 Dr. Herminio PORTELL Vilá, important Ortodoxo leader, called at the Embassy and spoke of his grave preoccupation regarding the efforts of Ortodoxo left wingers to bring Communists into the party. He said that, specifically, they were trying to get the Communist Representative Salvador GARCIA Agüero not only into the Ortodoxo party but to run as an Ortodoxo candidate for the Senate. Portell said that he had been approached by a group of Ortodoxos concerning this matter and he had told them that he would resist such a move with all his strength. Portell said that he felt so strongly on the matter that he had set forth his opinions in an article entitled "Más Comunisterías". The article, a copy of which is enclosed, appeared in El Mundo on January 29.

Subsequent to Portell's visit to the Embassy, the conversations between Ortodoxo leaders and the Communists became general public knowledge. The press reported that Carlos MARQUEZ Sterling and Pelayo CUERVO 1/, both of whom have now officially been named candidates for Senator from Habana Province, met with Salvador García Agüero to discuss a possible Communist-Ortodoxo coalition. Later, it was alleged that presidential candidate AGRAMONTE had vetoed the entrance into the Ortodoxo party of García Agüero. The following day both Agramonte and García Agüero denied that any such veto had been exercised because García Agüero had never sought entrance into the Ortodoxo party.

1/ Portell stated that if the Ortodoxos should win the elections Pelayo Cuervo would become Prime Minister.

A
C
T
I
O
N

I
N
F
O

ARA*

DCR

OLI

EUR/X

mob

Central Files

737.00/1-3152

Confidential File

FILED

FEB 26 1952

HAHoyt:WJN
REPORTER(S)

CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION

PREPARATION TIME

ACTION COPY - DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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

The Communists then issued a statement outlining their position in the whole matter. It contained the following points: a) They had entered into the conversations in conformity with the PSP campaign for a single front of opposition against the Government. b) They had insisted that any alliance effected should not be limited to the Ortodoxos and Communists but should include other opposition forces. c) The PSP would agree to place its senatorial candidates on the Ortodoxo slate and call on its militants and affiliates to vote for AGRAMONTE if the foregoing bases were accepted. d) The entrance of PSP members into the Ortodoxo ranks was never mentioned. e) The PPC was not willing to accept the bases stipulated by the PSP although they indicated their willingness to admit Salvador García Aguero as an Ortodoxo member providing he renounced his Communist affiliation.

Following the issuance of this statement the Communist press launched an all out attack against the Ortodoxos. They claimed that the failure of the PPC to unite with the Communists was evidence that the Ortodoxos really do not wish to defeat the Government. Aníbal ESCALANTE, Director of Hoy, even suggested that the PPC had a secret understanding with the Government which would provide for the victory of HEVIA in June. The Communists also could not fail to include the United States in their attack. Escalante said that there are those within the Ortodoxo party obedient to "Yankee imperialism" (undoubtedly having Portell Vilá in mind). Escalante concluded that the failure to reach an accord with the PSP is an indication that the policies of the Ortodoxo party are being determined "not on the basis of Cuban considerations but instead in the interest of the powerful millionaires of the United States, the sugar barons and by importers who are, in the end, the owners of Prio and Company".

COMMENT

Agramonte's announcement and the PSP attack on the Ortodoxos make it appear certain that there will be no over all agreement between the PPC and PSP, at least for the present. The strong protests of the Communists indicate that the failure to reach an agreement with the Ortodoxos is a serious blow to them. It is not clear whether the refusal of the Ortodoxos to join in an alliance was brought about by 1) the opposition of Portell Vilá and certain other Ortodoxo leaders 2) the fact that these supposedly secret negotiations were disclosed prematurely or 3) recognition of the fact that a known alliance with the Communists might lose the PPC more votes than it would gain.

Page 3 of
Desp. No. 1256
From Habana

CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION
(Classification)

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

It seems certain, however, that one of these factors or a combination of them influenced the decision.

Simultaneously with the announcement that the PPC would not align itself with the Communists there has been renewed talk of a possible PAU-Cubanidad-PSP accord. Although such an alliance cannot be discounted, it is possible that such rumors are being started by the Communists themselves in the hope that they will be able to get a foothold in the last remaining opposition group. Failure of the PSP to form an alliance of any kind will place the party in a very difficult position vis à vis the elections.

For the Ambassador:

Henry A. Hoyt

Henry A. Hoyt
Second Secretary of Embassy

Enclosures:

1. Editorial from El Mundo of Jan. 29
2. Editorial from El Mundo of Jan. 19
3. Editorial from Hoy of Jan. 31

CONFIDENTIAL
SECURITY INFORMATION

Herminio Portell Vilá Más Comunisterías

PERSONAS que me merecen buen crédito me dicen que se ha publicado un manifiesto de protesta por los recientes actos de terrorismo cometidos en la Florida, Estados Unidos, contra prominentes norteamericanos de color, en el que se ha incluido mi firma junto a la de comunistas y comunistoides bien conocidos, con los cuales han firmado esas personas de buena fe que todavía no han llegado a conocer las tácticas poco escrupulosas de que se valen los comunistas para sus siniestros fines de propaganda.

Para protestar de los actos de terrorismo de que son víctimas los norteamericanos de color nunca he necesitado la iniciativa ni la compañía de los comunistas, especialmente porque sé que no actúan de buena fe, ya que si les interesan la seguridad de las personas, las libertades de sus semejantes y los derechos de la humanidad, no llevarían a cabo las atrocidades que se cometen en la propia Unión Soviética, en las soledades junto al Mar Blanco, o en Siberia, o en el Turquestán, contra millones y millones de sus compatriotas cuyo único "delito" es no ser comunistas. Los sentimientos humanitarios de los comunistas soviéticos deberían comenzar por casa. Los horrores del genocidio, de los asesinatos y las torturas en masa, auspiciados oficialmente, son cosa corriente y permanente en la Unión Soviética y no tienen punto de comparación con los condenables brotes racistas del Sur de los Estados Unidos, que son esporádicos y los persigue el gobierno federal.



PORTELL VILA

Lo que yo he dicho en contra del racismo que impera en ciertas regiones de los Estados Unidos y que no es cosa general en el país, está en estudios publicados con los títulos de "Los prejuicios raciales y la integración nacional norteamericana", "La población negra norteamericana como factor de la vida nacional", "Problemas de población y de razas en los Estados Unidos", así como en artículos que han aparecido en "Bohemia" y comentarios hechos por mi sección de "La Palabra Internacional", de "Unión Radio". Nadie ha dicho más ni con más datos, en Cuba, sobre este tema; pero los comunistas afectan preocuparse por los norteamericanos de color para su propaganda, nada más, al mismo tiempo que exterminan a millones de anticomunistas.

Quiero aclarar, pues, que la inserción de mi firma en un documento de esa clase es otra de las indignidades de ciertos comunistas criollos, contra la cual me propongo proceder judicialmente hasta descubrir quién fué el que la llevó a cabo para que sobre él caiga el peso de la ley, en este régimen democrático, que no es tan indefenso como se creen los que abominan de él; pero que saben aprovecharse de sus libertades.

Estos comunistas saben que me anticipé hace dos semanas a decir desde estas páginas de EL MUNDO la realidad de sus maquinaciones para infiltrarse en los partidos políticos cubanos convencidos de que habían llegado a su fin las intrigas que les habían permitido pactar con Batista, con Grau San Martín, con Castellanos y hasta en cierto modo con Prío Socarrás, también. Chibás tenía legítimo orgullo cubano en decir que él era el único candidato presidencial y su partido, el Partido del Pueblo Cubano (Ortodoxo), el único partido que nunca había pactado con los comunistas. El los conocía muy bien y nunca pudieron engañarle. El Profesor Agramonte está en esa misma actitud. Ni que decir tiene que cuando publiqué mi artículo en EL MUNDO, tratando de poner en guardia a todo el mundo, sabía lo que hacía, ya que se iniciaban gestiones y contactos tendientes a lograr el ingreso en la ortodoxia del doctor Salvador García Agüero y algunos otros comunistas, con vistas a las postulaciones que desesperadamente quieren lograr los secuaces de Stalin, y era preciso salir al paso a esa maniobra, que al mismo tiempo se realiza cerca de los demás partidos. La palabra de Chibás orienta a la ortodoxia y Chibás nunca se equivocó en cuanto a lo que tenía que hacer o decir respecto a los comunistas.