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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

In Boston TCR
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10/28/49

TO : ARA - Mr. Miller, Mr. Woodward

DATE: July 28, 1949

FROM : CRB - Mr. Price

SUBJECT: Certain Background Information Regarding Marti Incident in Habana.

71137/7-2649

FW 711.37/7-2649

A memorandum from the Navy Department, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, dated July 26, 1949, transmitted to the Department encloses a report from the U.S. Naval Attache, Habana, dated March 4, 1946 describing charges made by certain organizations in Cuba to the effect that certain members of the complement of the U.S. aircraft carrier Princeton then in the port of Habana had desecrated the statue of Marti.

These charges which were completely unsubstantiated tend to reveal that at least three years ago certain anti-American elements in Cuba were deliberately attempting to arouse feeling against the United States by accusing American Navy personnel of precisely the same acts which were involved in the Marti incident this year. In the thought that this might not have previously been brought to your attention, I am doing so as of interest to you in the appraisal of the possibility that the entire Marti affair was deliberately planned.

CS/H

FW 711.37/7-2649

NR
811-3337
837-413

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ARA:CRB:EDesvernine:arp

ISSUED BY THE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION
OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
NAVY DEPARTMENT

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INTELLIGENCE REPORT BID NO 5503

Serial R-34-46
(Start new entries each year, i. e. 1-3, 2-42)

Monograph Index Guide No. 201-250
(To correspond with SUBJECT given below. See O. N. I. Index Guide.
Make separate report for each main title.)

From U.S. NAVAL ATTACHE of HAVANA, CUBA Date 6 March 1946, 19__
(Ship, fleet, unit, district, office, station, or person)

Reference (a) ALUSNA Havana R-34-46, 26 February 1946 (b) Alusna Havana R-89-44
(Objective, correspondence, previous related report, etc., if applicable) 18 February 1944

Source Press, Personal Observation Evaluation B-2 unless otherwise
(As official, personal observation, publication, press, conversations with—
Identify when practicable, etc.) Act to "S" etc. indicated
A9/EN 2-10; SER. 431246-11-10-42

Subject CUBA INTERNATIONAL ANTI-FEELINGS AND ATTITUDES HAVANA
(Station reported on) (Main title as per index guide) (Subtitles) (Make separate report for each title)

SUMMARY—(Here enter careful summary of report, containing substance exactly stated; include important facts, names, places, dates, etc.)

Encl: (A) Copy of "Manifesto" protesting alleged actions of U.S. Navy personnel,
and translation thereof.

1. As mentioned in reference (a) the anti-United States element among the Cubans capitalized on the recent visit of the USS PRINCETON, USS BAILEY, and USS PORTER to Havana to start an undercurrent of bad feeling by charging improper conduct on the part of the personnel on liberty. An example of this campaign is shown in enclosure (A), original of which was sent in to the American Embassy by a pro-U.S. Cuban, and which is forwarded for information. Copies of this "manifesto" were distributed about the city on 25 February, some reportedly (C-3) having been dropped from an airplane flying over the city on the afternoon of that day.

2. As to the actions attributed to the U.S. Navy personnel, it has been impossible to obtain a completely coherent account of the events referred to in the second paragraph of enclosure (A). Apparently some enlisted men in the vicinity of the Marti statue did become involved with some Cubans in an altercation concerning the actions of one enlisted man who was unaware of the reverence attached to the memory of Marti by the Cuban people, and who had no intention of insulting the Cuban people.

3. Of the three organizations whose signatures are appended to enclosure (A), "Comite Aprista de Cuba" is described by the Legal Attache as one of a number of "small revolutionary groups" of no particular importance. "Juventud Martiana" is an organization devoted ostensibly to the furthering of the study of the life and works of Jose Marti. The newspaper "Guiteras" is the publication of the "Accion Revolucionaria Guiteras", reported upon in reference (b). The membership of all three of these organizations consists principally of intellectuals, students, and political extremists, many of whom worked with the Partido Revolucionario Cubano (Autentico) during the difficult period prior to its rise to power, and are still associated with it.

COMMENT: This is an example of the lengths to which some of the extremists in Havana will go to stir up trouble and promote feeling against the United States, and it is an indication of how any improper act on the part of visiting U.S. Navy personnel is immediately seized upon and played up as much as possible by these extremists. Fortunately, the National Police have been most cooperative and have helped to keep most accounts out of the press.

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	Com. Task Force 100	

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C O P Y

AL HONORABLE SR. PRESIDENTE DE LA REPUBLICA.

A LAS AUTORIDADES DE LA NACION.

AL PUEBLO DE CUBA EN GENERAL.

MANIFIESTO

Queremos hacer constar nuestra mas enérgica protesta por los hechos BOCHORNOSOS y DENIGRANTES QUE SIGNIFICAN UNA VEJACION Y UN ULTRAJE A LA DIGNIDAD DEL PUEBLO CUBANO, ocurridos en la noche del domingo 17 del actual, en el Parque Central de la Habana.

Un grupo de MARINOS del Portaviones "Trinceton", de la armada de guerra de los Estados Unidos, despues de recorrer las principales Avenidas y Paseos de la Capital, en pleno estado de embrieguez insultando y vejando a las mujeres cubanas con palabras y gestos obscenos y en algunas ocasiones encimandocelos y TOCANDOLAS de mala fe, se dirigieron al Parque Central y se subieron sobre la Estatua del Apostol Marti, ORINANDOSE ENTONCES EN ELA. Algunos nativos que se hallaban por alli intervinieron para evitarlo, creandose con tal motivo, una fuerte alteracion del orden.

Este hecho es el ultraje y la afrenta mayor que se nos puede hacer a los cubanos y que lastima profundamente nuestra moral y nuestro sentimiento.

Llamamos por este medio AL PUEBLO DE CUBA para que se una a nosotros en esta protesta y que DIRIGIENDOSE a las AUTORIDADES de la Republica EXIJAN que se INVESTIGUE ESTE CASO y que se proceda, dandole un castigo ejemplar a los CULPABLES, y se evite de este modo que se repitan estos hechos bochornosos en el futuro.

Por el COMITE APRESTA DE CUBA,
JUAN CHAVEZ ROMERO,
Secretario General

Por "Juventud Martiana",
OSCAR V. PERAZA,
Secretario General

Encl: (A) to Alucna
Havana P-37-46, 4 March
1946

Por el Periodico "Guitares",
Al servicio de la Revolucion,
ALDO R. GARCIA,
Jefe de Circulacion.

Tip. Sandomingo. - Amargura 5. - Habana.

CRB

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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : ARA - Mr. Miller, Mr. Woodward

DATE: July 27, 1949

FROM : CRB - Mr. Desvernine

SUBJECT: Possible Navy Representation at Martí Ceremonies in St. Paul.

With reference to your inquiry on the above subject, the following brief background information may be of interest.

Following the unfortunate Martí incident at Habana several months ago, we have done a number of things to assuage Cuban feelings on this matter. In addition to the statements issued and the placing of the wreath on the Martí statue at Habana by Ambassador Butler, ceremonies were also held in other parts of the Island during the ensuing weeks in which our Navy paid homage to the memory of Martí. Not long ago at a session of the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman Flood delivered a long eulogy of Martí.

In discussions between members of the staff and Ambassador Butler in Habana about two months ago, it was agreed that it might be undesirable to continue to play up this theme, and it was the consensus that we had already gone as far as we should in making amends for an incident for which our Government was not responsible in the first place.

It is my impression that Navy representation at the ceremonies planned at St. Paul on Friday of this week might constitute too pointed a reminder of the Habana incident and that in view of the foregoing consideration it might not be appropriate to arrange for such representation.

I consulted Ambassador Butler on this point ^{today} by telephone and, while his first reaction was that it might be a good idea for the Navy to be represented at the ceremonies, he recognized that there were also considerations which might weigh against the desirability of such a move, and he stated that he had no strong feeling about it one way or the other.

After discussing this thoroughly with Mr. Desvernine, I think it would be more graceful and effective to leave the Navy out this time.

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