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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FROM :

AMEMBASSY, HABANA
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

JUN 11 1954

1492
DESP. NO.

TO :

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

June 10, 1954

DATE

REF :

25 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.				
	REC'D	N F OTHER				
	6-14	0	USIA-10	Cia-7	Navy-3	Army-3

SUBJECT:

Minister Ernesto de la Fe Begins Anti-Communist
Campaign and Founds Anti-Communist Organization.

OCB-1

Lab-3 Com-6

Minister Without Portfolio Ernesto DE LA FE has undertaken an anti-Communist campaign which he launched on June 2 with the first of what is to be a series of radio talks broadcast for fifteen minutes every Monday, Wednesday and Friday over the COCO network. On June 7 at a meeting in Habana he established an anti-Communist movement called Movimiento de Integración Democrática Americana.

The June 2 talk was announced in large advertisements in the papers, running for several days before that date. These stressed that de la Fe in discussing the Communist danger would name names. The first talk and the two that have so far followed have justified the advertisement.

While Communism has been the principal point of attack in de la Fe's talks, he mixes in them a fine share of praise of President BATISTA and his achievements and of vehement disparagement of PRIO, SANCHEZ Arango and their supporters. The main object of the talks seems in fact to be the building up of de la Fe for political purposes.

In his talk of June 2 de la Fe gave as an example of the extent to which Communism is making inroads in Cuba the following figures for the Guantanamo region of "sympathizers with Communism, who believe (in it) and repeat its slogans against the United States and against Batista":

Realengo 18	15,000
Caridad de los Indios	4,000
Realengo 37 (including La Ninfa and Lemlié)	2,000
La Hembrita	500
El Vinculo	300
Hondones	1,000
Cerrajon	1,000
Santa Catalina	9,000

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Puriales	5,000
Sierra Canasta	200
Arroyo Blanco	200

This, summed up de la Fe, made a total of 50,000 (sic) people "swinging in the Soviet orbit, converted into instruments of Russian imperialism." In a conversation with USIS mentioned below, de la Fe admitted that he had picked ~~up~~ his metaphor about "swinging in the orbit" advisedly. In other words, there are, in de la Fe's opinion, a considerable number of country people in the region of Guantanamo who may not be Communist but are under the influence of Communist leaders. The Embassy is not informed on this matter, but the Department will recall the reports transmitted with Despatch No. 1802 of May 18, 1953 to the effect that just to the west of Santiago, in the El Cobre region, villagers and colonies of squatters are tightly and resolutely organized under Communists. It may be that such a situation obtains also in the Guantanamo district.

De la Fe made an attack on Eusebio MUJAL, accusing him of helping the Communists in the labor movement by mistakenly playing them off against other fractions. That is why, de la Fe alleged, the Communists were allowed to get office in the Tobacco Workers' Union and why they have made headway in the National Maritime Workers' Federation, the members of which are "shifting towards the Communists". De la Fe then asserted that as a result of Mujal's policy, "a good number of unions are controlled from below by the Communists," even though only anti-Communists appear in the top national offices. The Embassy may add that, as it will shortly report in a separate despatch, it has received from CTC sources confirmation of much or all of what de la Fe charged regarding the situation of the Communists in the Cuban labor movement.

One of the most significant aspects of de la Fe's speech - rendered so by his position as a Minister Without Portfolio and his role in the political forces of President Batista - was the evidence he supplied that there has indeed been infiltration of Communists into the Batista parties, particularly, it would appear on the basis of his evidence, the President's own Partido Acción Progresista. Significant, also, and for the same reasons, was de la Fe's assertion that "Communist sneaks disguised as Batistaites" are to be found in the offices of the Ministry of Labor.

De la Fe then specified, in what no doubt was meant from the publicity point of view as the high point of his speech, several unions in Santiago in which Communists held office, with the names of the Communists involved and of the legal political parties in which they are now, as he claims, enrolled. This

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information, and more of the same, from a later broadcast of de la Fe's, is given in an enclosure to this despatch.

Immediately after giving his first radio talk de la Fe called on the Embassy's Public Affairs Officer. He explained his views on the urgency of combatting Communism and of making people appreciate the nature and the extent of the Communist danger. These efforts, he considers, must be undertaken through "indigenous organizations", since "official government and Embassy propaganda was impugned by the people." He plans to call an anti-Communist congress in Habana to be followed by a continental anti-Communist congress which ought to be held in a Latin American country. He proposes also to establish an anti-Communist magazine for circulation in Latin American countries. A particular effort will be made by de la Fe to enlist the cooperation of papers, magazines and media.

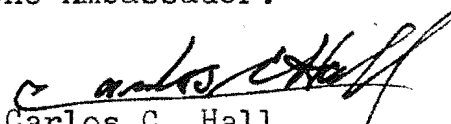
De la Fe alleged to the PAO that there are 400,000 Communists in Cuba and that he has a file of 214,000 of them. This, the Embassy believes, is surely an exaggeration.

It is hardly likely that the founding meeting on June 7 of the Movimiento de Integracion Democrata Americana was very large, since it was held in de la Fe's office. The newspapers gave the meeting wide, though brief, coverage. They reported that the new movement would comprehend workers, farmers, students, intellectuals and all democratic elements.

USIS will try to get all de la Fe's scripts and the Embassy will report any further revelations or views of his that may appear of interest to Washington.

ACTION REQUESTED: Department please pass to USIA.

For the Ambassador:


Carlos C. Hall
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure: 

✓ 1. List of Communists.

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Communists holding office in the trade unions in Oriente Province together with the legal political party, if any, with which they have affiliated, as charged by Minister Without Portfolio Ernesto de la Fe in his talks of June 2 and June 7, 1954 over Station COCO, Habana.

<u>Union</u>	<u>Name and Position Held</u>	<u>Political Party</u>
Sindicato Provincial de la Aguja y sus Derivados	Manuel Navarro Brossard Secretario General	PAP
	Hermógenes Cuevas Secretario Organizador	PAP
	Lorenza Cobián Secretaria Financiera	PAP
	Inocencio Bueno (not given)	PAP
Sindicato Metalúrgico de Santiago de Cuba	José Octavio Muñoz Secretario General	PAP
Sindicato de Jornaleros de Obras y Construcciones de Santiago de Cuba	José Ramon Lorié Secretario Organizador	PAP
	Juan Tasis García Delegado ante los Organismos Oficiales y Patronales	PAP
Sindicato de Empleados del Comercio e Industrias de Santiago de Cuba	Modesto Carballo Cerdá Secretario General	PAP
Sindicato de Dependientes de Viveres y Ferreterías de Santiago de Cuba	Serafino Portuondo Secretario de Finanzas	-
Sindicato de Pintores y Similares de Santiago de Cuba	Carlos Manuel Cos Secretario General	PAP
Sindicato de Seguros y Fianzas de Santiago de Cuba	Enrique Gonzalez Inza Secretario General	-
	Rafael Cervantes Secretario Organizador	-

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Union

Name and Position Held

Political
Party

Sindicato de la Industria
de Artes Gráficas

Nicolas Torres
Secretario General

Liberal

Union de Trilladoras de
Frutos Menores

Amparo Hernandez (fem.)
Secretario General

-

Gremio (?) de Albañiles
de Santiago de Cuba

Argimiro Soler
Vice Presidente
Santiago Monier
Secretario de Actas

PAP

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