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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

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FROM : Embassy Havana

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DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WASHINGTON

November 7, 1958

DATE

REF : CERP: Section 5, Item 1, A-2, Biographic Section (B)

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SUBJECT: Statement of José B. LACRET

1. There is enclosed for the possible interest of the Department and other agencies, a free translation of a significant statement made by José B. LACRET y Figueredo to supplement his recent application for defector's status under Section 212(a)28 of the Immigration and Neutrality Act.

2. José B. Lacret is chief of the National Office of Sugar Affairs in the Ministry of Labor. He is also an attorney at law. Before taking employment ~~in the Ministry of Labor~~ in the Ministry of Labor, he served as a legal adviser to the Confederation of Cuban Workers.

3. In his present post in the Labor Ministry, Señor Lacret deals with both labor and management officials; and he has an excellent reputation for competency and fair play among all parties. This is a fact attested to by statements tendered in support of his application for defector's status by the following well known persons: (1) Dr. Ernesto FREYRE y de Varona, labor lawyer with the Gorriñ, Mafias, Macia y Alamilla law offices; (2) Arturo MANAS, President of the Cuban Sugar Stabilization Institute; (4) José M. LACALLE, Vice President of the Cuban American Sugar Mills; (5) Raúl VALDIVIA and José A. COSTA, high officials of the National Federation of Sugar Workers; (6) Eusebio MUJAL, Secretary General of the Confederation of Cuban Workers.

Comment: Señor Lacret has been very cooperative with the Labor Attaché. On several occasions he has furnished him with reliable information not accessible elsewhere.

Señor Lacret is fairly young, extremely personable, and has a dynamic nature. These traits, together with the important position that he is now fulfilling in the Ministry, indicate that he probably will move on to even more important assignments in the future.

For the Ambassador:

John F. Correll
Labor AttachéEnclosure: all m. m.
Translation of Statement.

JF Correll/mc

REPORTER

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JOSE B. LACRET Y FIGUEROA
Attorney at Law
Havana

PETITION

At the age of seventeen, while a student in Secondary Instruction for a Bachelor's Degree, through a student organization entitled "Ala Izquierda" (The Left Wing), an affiliate of the Communist Party, I entered it with the conviction. This was erroneous as I was to learn later. I thought that it was the most decided political organization in the struggle against Fascism, of which I have always been an enemy. Without realizing it, in combatting one totalitarianism, I was serving another.

During the time that I belonged to the Communist Party and until I was thrown out of the same, I acted only in the student sector. In the fight against the totalitarian countries, I encountered constant discrepancies with the direction and anti-democratic policy of the party. This culminated in a total disillusionment. In the belief that I was serving a totalitarianism that was worse than Fascism, I finally broke with the party when, together with other members of it, I demanded free and democratic discussion of the problems of national and international politics as should have been the case with an organization that was said to be democratic and progressive.

From the time of my expulsion from the "Partido Socialista Popular" (Communist) for being "an enemy of the party, its principles and its unity" (Section a) of the dispositive portion of the Resolution of the Executive Committee of the "Partido Socialista Popular", dated August 21, 1945, published in the newspaper "Hoy", organ of the party, on August 22nd of the same year, I have maintained and will in the future invariably maintain, without any room for doubt, in my private as well as public activities, a position ideological as well as material, theoretical or practical, in ideas as well as in facts, anti-Marxist and anti-Communist. I have combatted and will continue to do so, as a professional and from the position and positions I have held in the organized labor movement and in my country's Government, the policy, tactics and militants of the Communist Party". I sincerely adhere to the principles, having a common cause, running its risks and attaching myself to the destiny of the anti-Communists of my country and of the world, defenders of our Western civilization, culture, religion, country, our democratic institutions and to what in my opinion is fundamental and fully comprehensive, of our way of living of being born free men and with the right to happiness.

The best evidence of my ideological position and of my attitude against the "Communist Party" and its members as set forth in the preceding paragraph are the facts that are listed below:

- 1.- My being expelled from the "Communist Party" on August 21, 1945, made known publicly on August 22, 1945, through the newspaper "Hoy", official organ of the Communist Party.

- 2.- The reasons for my expulsion as "an enemy of the party" of its principles and its unity, facts that as everyone knows, is in the opinion of the Communist an unpardonable crime, punished even by death in Russia and the satellite countries. This makes it impossible throughout the world for a person expelled from the Communist ranks to return thereto or to have any understanding or collaboration with Communists.
- 3.- The fact that I continue to be a co-owner and collaborator, until personal discrepancies with its Editor caused us to cease so being, of the magazine "Tiempo en Cuba" qualified by the Communist Party as being anti-Communist, anti-party and a nest of traitors sold to the Yankee imperialism.
- 4.- Of being, since the year 1954, Attorney-Counsel of the Labor Committee of "Partido Revolucionario Cubano" (Auténtico) directed by Mr. Eusebio Mujal Barniol, the present General Secretary of the Cuban Confederation of Labor, the politico-unionistic instrument that organized the non-Communist and anti-Communist workers and succeeded in having the Communists expelled from the Cuban labor movement.
- 5.- Attorney accusers of the Communist Party and its members, murderers of the anti-Communist labor leader Felix V. Palu on April 5, 1947, in case No. 330 of 1947 of the Court of Instruction of the 2nd Section of the City of Havana, Second Criminal Chamber of the Havana Audiencia. I am attaching a copy of the brief containing my general conclusions in this case.
- 6.- Attorney-Counsel of the Cuban Confederation of Labor, immediately following the separation of the Communist labor leaders and of the recognition by the Ministry of Labor (Resolution No. 1248 of October 9, 1947, File 29-1939 (Annex 20-47) of the Bureau of Labor Organizations, of the new anti-Communist labor directorate. A certificate showing the services rendered is attached hereto.
- 7.- Attorney-Counsel of the National Federation of Sugar Workers, immediately following the separation of the Communist labor leaders and of the recognition by the Ministry of Labor (Resolution of December 26, 1947, File 29-1939, 3a and 4a Section of the Bureau of Labor Organizations) of the new anti-Communist directorate. A certificate showing the services rendered is attached hereto.

The positions mentioned under numbers 6 and 7 were conferred upon me due to my work in the legal direction of the fight waged by the Labor Commission against the Communists; for my leadership in the Cuban labor movement and so that I might continue in that fight until the total separation of the Communist from being leaders of the unions.

- 8.- Was appointed Legal Adviser of the Division of Conflicts and Crises of the Ministry of Labor on December 10, 1947 by the then Minister of Labor Francisco Aguirre, internationally known anti-Communist labor

leader who was appointed Minister of Labor when the policy of the Government with regard to the Communists changed.

- 9.- Appointed on August 2, 1948 Chief of the National Office of Sugar Affairs by said Francisco Aguirre, which post I have continued to hold under Ministers of Labor of well known anti-Communists militancy, such as Dr. Emilio Nufiez Portuondo, present Cuban Delegate before the United Nations and ex-member of its Security Council.
- 10.- Having acted for more than 9 years as Director of the National Office of Sugar Affairs in all the labor conflicts that have arisen in the sugar industry, always holding a position contrary to the interests and purposes of the Communist Party, in accord with the policy in that sense developed by the Cuban Governments during that period of time and penalizing the Communists for their tactics of disturbance as in the case, among hundreds of others, of the workers of Central Macareño operated by an American company.
- 11.- My discontinuance and breaking off of all relations since the year 1945 with members of the Communist Party.
- 12.- My marriage on October 17, 1945 in the Catholic Church, the faith of my parents, with a woman who has not been a Communist nor has ever maintained relations with members of the Communist Party.
- 13.- The education of my children entrusted to religious schools such as "Sgrado Corazon de Jesus" (Sacred Heart of Jesus).
- 14.- My present personal and social relations and my way of living, which is totally contrary to what is sought by the Communist party and its militants.

Very truly yours,

Jose B. Lacret Figueredo.