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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

636

DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

March 5, 1956

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	REC'D	OTHER
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SUBJECT: CTC International Activities.

The Plantations Office

The Habana ICFTU Plantations Office has begun its operations in what appears a workmanlike and determined mood. (The term "sugar offices" has now dropped out of the CTC vocabulary.) Rafael GONZALEZ Villegas, its head, is being helped by Felix PEREZ Gil, hired as his assistant. Perez Gil is the outstanding technician in sugar matters in the Cuban labor movement (Despatch 534 of January 30, 1956) and should prove a real asset to the office. He is, incidentally, at present ineligible for a United States visa on alleged grounds of communism, the evidence for which is not very strong and the most important part of it demonstrably mistaken. (This is being treated separately with the Department by the Embassy.)

Honorio HERRERO could not accept the position of head of the New York branch of the Habana Plantations Office (Despatch 466 of December 30, 1955) and Ismael RODRIGUEZ has been named in his place. Rodriguez though Cuban born, and reportedly a relative of CTC Financial Secretary Jesus ARTIGAS, is a resident of the United States, and it is of course possible that he may even be an American citizen. He is here in Habana receiving instructions, and although the reporting officer met him it was not under circumstances in which he could inquire on the point.

The "activists" or organizers to work in the rest of the hemisphere out of the Habana office have been appointed and are supposed to leave for their posts during the present month. Rafael OTERO Borlaff is to go to Central America as planned, but he will also continue his ORIT work in Guatemala.

Alfredo AMIGO, who has been active in the FNTA, of which his brother José Luis is an officer, will go to South America. The Caribbean is to be covered by a man known as Diosdado PINO Leon, although his passport, according to the Plantations Office, shows his name to be Eladio LEON Pino.

Gonzalez Villegas explained that these organizers will have no fixed headquarters but will wander around their territories, organizing and strengthening unions of all plantations, not just sugar, workers.

JdeZengotita:lnr

REPORTER

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Aguirre and the ICFTU.

Francisco Aguirre is supposed, and last week intended, to go to the meeting of the Emergency Committee of the ICFTU being held this week in Brussels. But as CTC International Secretary Ignacio GONZALEZ Tellechea put it: "he's so informal that whether he actually does is another matter."

Aguirre regaled the reporting officer recently with his views on how Serafino ROMUALDI is just the person for the ICFTU's Organizing Secretary post. His abilities are manifest and demonstrated, Aguirre said, and as a socialist or former socialist Romualdi would have the support of the European movements. His Latin American experience well qualifies him for organizing work in Asia, where the problems are not dissimilar. However, it is not probable that Aguirre, if he goes to Brussels, will propose Romualdi for the job. He feels George MEANY has other plans and that Meany cannot be reasoned with; or at least Aguirre has found it unpleasant enough attempting it that he does not propose to attempt it again.

Tellechea to Argentina?

Gonzalez Tellechea is supposed to go to Brazil at mid-month to tie in with a round-the-continent trip of Paul REED, of the United Mine Workers of America, both then to go to Argentina, along with a British trade unionist, for the ICFTU. Tellechea does not feel much like taking the trip, not least because he finds Reed maundering in speech and hard to understand. Oddly enough, many people find Tellechea himself rather rambling in his discourse.

Incidentally, what has been said of the views of Aguirre on Meany and Tellechea on Reed should not be taken as expressive of anything more than personal attitudes towards individuals. For United States labor organizations the CTC retains the highest regard.

For the Ambassador:

Juan de Zengotita
Juan de Zengotita
First Secretary

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