

Mr. Leonhardy
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MID - Mr. Hoyt
RMR
file
~~ARA - Mr. Holland~~

Memorandum of Conversation

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 4/20/77

PER C. Bray OFFICE ARA

FADRC FOI CASE NO. 630368 *Fitzgibbon*

DATE: February 16, 1956
4:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Cuban Ambassador's Call on Mr. Holland re recent charges by Dominican General against Cuban Chief of Staff

PARTICIPANTS: Señor Dr. Don Miguel Angel Campa, Ambassador of Cuba
Assistant Secretary Henry F. Holland, ARA
Mr. Terrance G. Leonhardy, Cuban Desk Officer, MID

COPIES TO: ARA - Mr. Holland
MID - Mr. Newbegin
Mr. Neal
MID - Mr. Whitaker
DRA

Ambassies: Ciudad Trujillo
Habana
Port-au-Prince

Ambassador Campa began by stating that he had received a call from the Acting Cuban Minister of State about the charges which were made this week by General Hermida, Chief of Staff of the Dominican Republic's Army, to the effect that General Tabernilla had been supplying large quantities of arms from Cuban Army arsenals to three persons who were to use them for subversive activities in the Dominican Republic. The Ambassador said he informed Dr. Guell that to his knowledge Hermida's charges had received publicity within the United States in only the two Spanish language dailies (in Miami and New York).

The Ambassador said he was instructed to inform our Government that the charges had absolutely no foundation. He described General Tabernilla as a gentleman who would never think of engaging in such activities. Furthermore, he explained that since President Batista assumed his office in 1952 he has maintained a policy of maintaining friendly relations with other countries and non-intervention in their internal affairs. The Ambassador said he was intimately aware of this policy as he helped form it as Minister of State. While he was in that position Cuba resumed relations with a number of countries, he added.

The Dominican charges, the Ambassador stated, were of considerable concern to his Government as it had done everything possible to avoid complications with the Dominicans. He felt that these changes might result in a retaliation in the Cuban press over which the Cuban Government, under its policy of maintaining freedom of the press, could exercise little control. He cited as an example the publicity

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given to the murder of a Dominican who was working on the construction of the new Hilton Hotel last summer and local press charges that it was a political murder instigated by the Dominican Republic. He said a thorough investigation was still being conducted by his Government to determine the facts in this case.

The Ambassador said that in respect to the present charges, which seem to stem from rumors that arms had disappeared from a Cuban Army arsenal, the Cuban Government was prepared to supply the Dominican Government with any type of proof it desired that they have no foundation. He added that he simply wanted us to be informed of the Cubans' feelings in the matter.

Mr. Holland answered that he was well aware of the Cuban position, but appreciated the frank expression of Cuba's stand as presented by the Ambassador.

After departing from Mr. Holland's office, the Ambassador told Mr. Leonhardy that he had dealt with Trujillo a number of times while he was Minister of State and had a deep admiration for him. He said he was thinking seriously of talking to Ambassador Salazar, with whom he is on friendly terms, about General Hermida's charges in an effort to alleviate the situation.