

28 September 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Report of Meeting with Sergio Rojas

REFERENCE: [LORD-1801 (IN 17910), 24 September 1960

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1. When it was learned here that Rojas was intending to go to Miami and there to stay with Ricardo Loris, it was thought it might be best to talk to him before he visits Miami so as to somewhat condition his thinking before he is exposed to the full blast of anti-FRD sentiment which he is certain to get from Loris and his associates. I telephoned Rojas in New York on 26 September, using the incredible recognition phrase given in Paragraph 5 of reference, and he agreed to stop off in Washington en route to Miami 27 September.

2. I met with Rojas for several hours in the Sheraton-Carlton Hotel on 27 September. Rojas began our conversation with a lengthy discourse intending to establish a picture of himself as a complete neutral among the opposing Cuban exile groups, he not being a member of any group and heavily endowed with objectivity. As a matter of fact in the course of our discussion he spoke with seeming objectivity, but on balance clearly favored the point of view of three young revolutionaries of the type who now make up the Alianza de Liberacion, who find themselves rejecting and rejected by the FRD. He is well acquainted with the history of the MRR's part in the formation of the FRD, the initial selection of AMRIDDY-1 to represent the MRR, and what occurred later to create the split of the MRR with the FRD. He presented the usual argument that the MRR had made a bad mistake in allowing AMRIDDY-1 to be their representative in the FRD, and AMRIDDY-1 was subsequently captured by the politicians and came finally to a point of representing only his own views and interests in the FRD, largely to the exclusion of the MRR interests. (This argument, which was as well presented by Rojas as I've ever heard it, is accurate. As is the thing which we have tended to sweep under the rug and perhaps have not taken sufficient notice of the fact that the MRR dissidents, so called, which were expelled from the FRD, was in fact the hard core of the original MRR.) Rojas spoke at length about the Alianza also and said that he had talked with a number of these people in New York the day before. He loudly lamented the fact that a number of valuable young men, particularly of the military type, are being wasted as a result of these differences which exist between the young revolutionaries and the FRD, as he put it. I told him that I agreed with him but that I thought that the solution for these military types was simple - i.e., if they would present themselves as individuals offering their services to the FRD that they would be accepted and their valuable services would be put to good use. Examples in this case were Gines, Diaz Lora, Gino Diaz, et al. (Presumably, Rojas was completely unaware of Gino Diaz's mission.) I suggested in this connection that people of this type were being victimized by such people as Luis Oreste Aguero who in support of their political aspirations are using these military types for window-dressing and political bargaining pawns.

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Rojas seemed somewhat impressed with this argument so I suggested that he might use whatever influence he had to influence people like Chiama, whom he described as being destitute in New York and depressed to the point of threatened suicide, to break away from the politics of Juan the 'RD.

3. Rojas then began to speak of the basic differences between again what he calls the young revolutionaries, meaning the original 26th-of-July Movement people, and the politicians, such as Triunfo, Sanchez Arango, et al, whom they refer to as "Los Viejos". The young revolutionaries feel that with "Los Viejos" in power that Cuba will slide backwards toward the old political regime and that these latter are only paying lip service to the proposition that the original aims of the revolution must go forward but without Castro and, of course, without any Communist influence. Rojas curiously referred to these politicians in the FPD as being too far to the right. I said that this view of them was completely contrary to the view held by most who consider them to be liberals considerably far to the left. I added that if these people were any more to the left, they would be a source of serious worry to the U. S. Government. Rojas changed the subject.

4. He wanted then to know if it would be possible for the U. S. Government to lend its support to more than one group. When I responded that the U. S. Government was not supporting any group, Rojas just shrugged. He went on to say that if support could be given to individuals such as the military types he had mentioned previously and perhaps to the Alianza, for example, as a whole organization (users of Cobby Aguerro pitch), that this would not only gain the service of very valuable people in the fight against Castro but might even insure some of political stability for the future. He pointed out that if the young revolutionaries who are now rejected by the FPD are stifled in their efforts as contributors to the anti-Castro struggle, they will represent a built-in anti-American Cuban element for the future, which could be very damaging to U. S./Cuban relations. I think there is a fair amount of substance to this argument and I told him so. In any case, Rojas was given the warning non-U. S. involvement in these exile affairs (which, of course, he was not to) and advice that he do whatever he can to bring about unity as between several groups. He was told that the FPD appeared to be the group which had the greatest organization and greatest apparent potential for success, and that all concerned would be well advised to attempt to get a peace with it. Rojas said that he had a strong feeling that unity on this basis was not possible at this time because the feeling among the young revolutionaries was running too high and too emotionally against the FPD. He said he thought these young revolutionaries feel that they have been turned out by self-seeking politicians, and their friends and contacts in the U. S. Government have turned their backs and abandoned them. Because of this they are suffering bitterness and disillusionment. Rojas then suggested that perhaps I would be willing to arrange a meeting for him with some representative of the FPD, specifically this was not to be one of the five principals, who would meet with me in an attempt to reduce their differences and reestablish relationships and cooperation with the FPD. I told him that his was an interesting suggestion but I thought it was not possible to reach at the U. S. Government, while

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it maintains a continuous interest in these affairs and has occasional contact with the several groups, is not and will not become involved. Rojas said he knows this to be untrue and is bewildered at the insistence that the U. S. Government is not sponsoring the FID. I made the counter-suggestion to him that he induce his friends, e.g. Luis Aguerre and Loris, to approach the FID again and attempt on their own to make some accommodation. In doing so, I suggested they might consider obtaining the services of an older, more sophisticated, mature individual whom they could trust to represent them in these overtures to the FID. I said I thought that the FID's difficulties, for example, stem from poor representation. I believe that Rojas immediately mentally cast himself in this role. Our discussions ended at this point.

5. Rojas said that he was planning to stay in Miami only a few days, after which he would return to London. He said further that if as a result of his visit here he became convinced that he could contribute substantially to this Cuban exile situation in the U. S., he would return; otherwise, he plans to remain in Europe and attempt to find employment there. In Miami he stated he will stay with Loris, whose new phone number is Canal 6-0480.

BERNARD S. REICHHARDT

BER:dlm (23 Sept 1960)

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