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Chief, Contact Division Attn: Support Branch

30 January 1961

Chief, Washington Office

MRP Concern Over Holding of Menoyo Befugee Group

l. a sporadic source who is close to M. R. P.
leadership, notified this office on 20 January 1961 that eighteen
ranking Cuben defectors were being held by U. S. Inxigration
suthorities. They had escaped by boot after having remained in
the Castro Government for many mouths as part of the underground.

- 2. Their leader is Outlerres Menoyo, a fighter in the Spanish Civil War and well known Leftist. For this reason, he and his colleagues are probably suspect. Manolo Rey negotiated with Menoyo three times in Havana in October and Hovember 1960, while he was setting up the H. R. P. underground, and was never betrayed. The M. R. P. believes that Gutierres and his group are sincerely sati-Castro and assisted in its escape from Cuba.
- 3. stated that the defection of these important people is a blow to Castro because they can become important leaders in the Escambray. They intend to go back to Cuba to fight actively.
- 4. If they are actually Communists, the M. R. P. believes that this can be discovered in time, but it fears that their being held by U. S. authorities may well discourage other similar defections and, more seriously, could play into Castro's hands as a propaganda device to point out what happens to people who escape to the U. S. The M. R. P. told \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that the U. S. should handle the matter discreetly to make some announcement that the eighteen are being held "for their own safety" or some such, which would prevent Castro from obtaining a psychological advantage.
- 5. The above information was passed to Mr. Reems, the CO/C Duty Officer, on 28 January 1961.

P. J. Sheridan

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