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Manuel Antonio RAY y Rivero

Manuel RAY was born in Habana, Cuba, on 13 June 1924. He was educated in Cuba and became a very able construction engineer. In April, 1958, having become rebellious under the Batista regime, he joined the Civic Resistance Movement (Movimiento de Resistencia Civica -- MRC) and was named secretary-general of the organization. At the same time, he became a member of the national directorate of the 26th-of-July Movement and was responsible for coordination between the two groups.

RAY worked closely with Fidel Castro for the rest of 1958, travelling frequently to the Sierra Maestra for conferences with him. After Batista's fall, RAY was appointed Minister of Public Works in the provisional government of Manuel Urrutia. RAY took office on 7 January 1959, and on the same day he was also put in charge of the National Bread Board.

Although RAY remained a liberal and continued to be pro-revolutionary, he became increasingly resentful of the communist domination of the Castro regime. His dissatisfaction became known to Castro, and in November of 1959 he was replaced as Minister of Public Works by Captain Osmany Cienfuegos, a communist. Presumably he was also dismissed from the National Bread Board.

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RAY was unable to keep a decent job after his dismissal by Castro, and he was under constant surveillance that practically amounted to house arrest. In spite of Castro's precautions, however, RAY maintained contact with the MRR and, through members of that group, with anti-Castro movements in and out of Cuba. By 3 June 1960, after he had become nearly destitute because of the impossibility of employment, RAY's followers and associates began to plan his exfiltration from Cuba so that he could become a more effective rallying point for anti-Castro movements in exile.

RAY, however, decided to remain in Cuba and participate directly in clandestine activities against Castro. He joined a group called Accion Democratica Revolucionaria (ADR) and soon became one of its leaders. The ADR appears to be the first organization of its kind which can be considered a serious threat to Castro's regime, and has been the target of several overtures from the FRD to join forces. One of the primary reasons for the ADR's attractiveness is RAY's connection with it.

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WH/4/PA

7 September 1960

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