

ANTI-CASTRO GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS
DIRECTORIO REVOLUCIONARIO ESTUDIANTIL (DRE)
HSCA VOL. 10
Christopher Barger
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SUMMARY

*The HSCA labels the DRE as the most militant of the anti-Castro organizations, and points out its resentment of the US even prior to the Bay of Pigs. The DRE was allegedly disappointed with the limited help it got from the CIA; one member of the DRE threatened to kill CIA personnel if any DRE members were harmed due to Agency bumbling. The Agency itself considered the DRE the *enfant terrible* of the anti-Castro groups.*

The activity of the DRE is summarized, with attention paid to the Blanquita Theater attack. It is also noted that in February 1963, the DRE sent a letter to the US government refusing to "...operate under the constrictions of US policy.... the Cubans cannot continue waiting for the international policies... because it is our blood that runs in Cuba." Of all the anti-Castro exile groups, perhaps none felt as betrayed or bitter toward JFK as the DRE.

Also noted are some of the sources of the DRE's money and resources.

William Pawley provided cash and equipment, and there is evidence that Claire Booth Luce was a supporter as well. The HSCA probes in detail a story by Ms. Luce that she had sponsored, through Pawley's intervention, a raid on Cuba by some members of the DRE. She alleges that some of the Cubans she said were on "her" boat

telephoned her after the assassination and said that they had information establishing Oswald's propensity for violence and his pro-Castro/Communist sympathies, including a tape of Oswald bragging that he could shoot anybody. She says she told the Cuban to turn the information over to the FBI. She didn't think of it again until the Garrison investigation in 1967, at which time she says she called the Cuban and asked him what had happened. He said that the FBI had taken it but told him to "keep his mouth shut." He also said that one member of his crew had been suddenly deported, and another murdered, and he no longer wished to even discuss the assassination. After Luce told this story to Senator Schweiker, both Schweiker's subcommittee and the HSCA investigated the story; the HSCA concludes that the story cannot be substantiated without other corroboration. [Note: Fonzi, who handled this area for the HSCA, later wrote that he believed the story to be deliberate misinformation from Luce, (whom he suspected of CIA ties) designed to distract and stall the HSCA.]

BACKGROUND

The DRE had its beginnings before Castro came to power; it was a student organization that had originally opposed Batista. It offered its services in 1960 to the newly formed FRD, but was allowed only to be an "affiliate," not a full-fledged member.

The DRE was one of the largest groups in the anti-Castro community; it was also one of the most militant. It maintained a guerilla army

of 400 within Cuba, and conducted insurrections and infiltrations with regularity during the early 1960's. It was so radical that it deeply opposed US government and even CIA policies; one leader voiced the opinion that the Bay of Pigs invasion had been designed to fail all along, and was undertaken only in order to relieve the pressure building up within the exile community to do something. The DRE began misleading the CIA about its intentions; it would receive money from the CIA to conduct propaganda missions and instead use it for military activity.

Some of the DRE's activity inside Cuba garnered it international attention. In September 1962, it staged an attack on the Blanquita Theater in Havana. Fidel Castro happened to be there, and narrowly escaped with his life. He charged that it was a CIA attempt to kill him. The DRE, however, in private conversations with Bobby Kennedy and Richard Helms, said that it had not even known Castro would be at the theater; it had been just coincidental. Nevertheless, the publicity surrounding the attack garnered the DRE approximately \$200,000 in donations. Some of these donors and supporters were wealthy right-wing Americans, including William Pawley and, allegedly, Claire Booth Luce.

Carlos Bringuier, who had both the public scuffle and the radio debate with Oswald in New Orleans, was the New Orleans delegate to the DRE. Although there is evidence that other New Orleans members of the DRE, including Carlos Quiroga, had contact of some form with Oswald, he cannot be connected to the DRE as a whole.

81-82 *Establishment and early activities of DRE; DRE opposition to and resentment of US/CIA; DRE raid on the Blanquita Theater in Havana.*

83 *HSCA interest in DRE as possibly most bitter toward Kennedy.*

84-87 *Claire Booth Luce story and subsequent HSCA investigation.*

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