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Smith-Roberts-1

28 September 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Report of Meeting with Sergio Rojas

REFERENCE: ³⁰¹ [] 3801 (IN 17910), 28 September 1960

1. When it was learned here that Rojas was intending to go to Miami and there to stay with Eleonora Loria, it was thought it might be best to talk to him before he visits Miami so as to ascertain conditions his thinking before he is exposed to the full blast of left-FRD activities which he is expected to see. . . .

New York on 26 September, using the incredible reception parade 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 at the Sheraton-Copley 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 those young revolutionaries of the type now known as the Alliance for Liberation, who find themselves rejected and rejected by the FRD. He is well acquainted with the history of the FRD's part in the formation of the FIU, its initial rejection of AMINDO-1 to represent the FRD, and was surprised later to observe the split of the FRD with the FRD. He presented the usual argument that the FRD had made a bad mistake in allowing AMINDO-1 to be their representative in the FRD, and AMINDO-1 was subsequently captured by the political and economic rivalry to a point of representing only his own views and interests in the FRD, largely to the exclusion of the FRD interests. (This argument, which was as well presented by Rojas as I've ever heard it, is accurate. It is the thing which we have tended to stress under the FRD and perhaps have not taken sufficient notice of the fact that the FRD incidents, so called, which were excluded from the FRD, was in fact a very core of the original FRD.) Rojas spoke at length about the Alliance 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 reliable FRD men, particularly of the military type, are being worn 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 Cannon, Diaz, etc. Also Diaz, et al. Interestingly, Rojas was completely unaware of this Diaz and I suggested to him a portion that people of this type were being victimized by such people as Luis Conte Aguiar who in support of their political aspirations are using these military types for Cuba-oriented 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 Chinea, whom he described as being desperate in New York and depressed to the point of threatened suicide, to break away from the politicians and join the FID.

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 Vorone, 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 influences. Rojas curiously referred to these politicians as the FID as being too far to the right. I said that this view of them was completely antithetical 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 as perhaps to the Alianza, for example, as a whole organization (shades of Castro Aguerre pitch!), that this would not only gain the services of very valuable people in the fight against Castro but might see the seeds of political stability for the future. He pointed out that if the young revolutionaries who are now rejected by the FID are stifled in their efforts to contribute to the anti-Castro struggle, they will represent a multi-national 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 routine non-U. S. involvement in these exile affairs (which, of course, he does not buy) and advice that he do whatever he can to bring about unity between several groups. He was told that the FID 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 take pains 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 FID. He said he thought these young revolutionaries feel that they have been let down by renegeing 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 representatives of the FID, specifically this was not to be one of the five principals, who could meet with me in an attempt to reduce their differences and reestablish relationships and cooperation with the FID. I told him that this was an interesting suggestion but I thought it was not possible inasmuch as 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 implications that the U. S. Government is not sponsoring the FID. I gave the committee suggestion to him that he advise his friends, e.g. Carlos Aguero and Torres, to approach the YND again and attempt on their own to make some accommodations. 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 YND. I said I thought that the YND'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 Moscow 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 brief he stated he will stay with Torres, whose bar phone number is Canal 6-0589.

RODOLFO E. RAJAS

MEMO (28 Sept 1960)

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