

X Exile Act

Handwritten initials/signature

(Drafting Office and Officer)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

(21)

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DATE: December 22, 1969.

SUBJECT: Cuban Exile Action-Groups - Plans to Invade Cuba

PARTICIPANTS: Srita. Juanita CASTRO
Matthew D. Smith, Jr.
Date: Friday, December 19, 1969 10:15 - 10:35 hours

COPIES TO:

POL 30-2 Cuba

1. Miss Castro called without prior appointment, saying she must see me on "urgent" matter. She began the conversation with something of a diatribe against USG policy which, in her version, had once encouraged, aided and assisted Cuban Exile Groups to take violent action against the Castro regime but now threatens those same groups with arrest if they should try to mount armed expeditions into Cuba. We discussed this subject a few minutes, until Miss Castro apparently became convinced that US policy is, in fact, to enforce law.
2. Miss Castro then did a rather abrupt switch in her line of argument. She first recalled the public "promises" made by such groups as RECE and ALPHA 66 to "land fighting men in Cuba before the end of 1969." She said that a small group of activists were fully determined to keep this promise despite the fact that Castro had recently executed the remnants of a previous infiltration group, and asked what advice I had in the circumstances. I strongly reiterated, as my personal view, that every effort should be made to dissuade the individuals from going, and the organizations from supporting such activities. Miss Castro said this had been tried ad nauseam, to no effect because the individuals concerned were totally determined to go "as a matter of honor", and could not be dissuaded. She then came to what appears to have been the point of her visit: to suggest that USG enforcement agencies should arrest the individuals before they could go! (She did not come out directly with this request, but this was certainly the import of her argument).

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3. I pointed out that, for a person to be arrested, there must first of all be a violation of the law, evidence, etc. I asked whether she would be willing to supply the names and evidences necessary to make the arrests. Miss Castro in effect said that she would think it over, try to convince those involved that this was the only "honorable" way out of their dilemma, and that she (or they -- at this point she was not very clear) would get in touch with us very soon. She repeated that she was most anxious to insure that the "brave men" who were so determined to arrive in Cuba before January 1, 1970, did not "throw away their lives in a useless, romantic gesture". I expressed agreement with those sentiments, and concluded the interview.

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