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Autor:

- [Castro Ruz, Fidel](#)

(Live broadcast of Fidel Castro press conference on counterrevolutionary plot)

(Editorial Report) In a press conference in which he explained the details of the counterrevolutionary plot, Premier Fidel Castro said that he had not made a report on the matter sooner because he would have been forced to explain only part of it. He said that the government was now dutybound not to delay the report a while longer, "you can be sure that we would not only have captured the weapons and the planes, but we would also have captured all the war criminals. We would have captured the legion; the army of Trujillo, and even Trujillo, right here." He continued that it was his feeling that the people had to be informed, and, "therefore, we had to be satisfied with what could be achieved during the week which began with the arrests of the plotters and ended yesterday when the arms-laden plane with

10 crew members fell into our hands at the Trinidad airport."

After declaring that the counterrevolutionary conspiracy began soon after the fall of the Batista regime, Premier Castro said that any successful revolution, like the Cuban revolution, was always opposed by certain interests. The elements that fled Cuba landed into Santo Domingo, he said. After pointing out that the Dominican Government had refused to return four Cuban planes, he stressed that Trujillo hated "not only the revolutionary government, but the country." Dr. Castro then declared that "from the first moment Trujillo began to maneuver and plot against us."

After noting that Trujillo either "buy" or "murders" his enemies, Premier Castro declared that Trujillo did not limit himself to contacting Batista elements, but invited Commander William Morgan of the second front of Escambray into the plot, as well as Commanders Menoyo and Carrera. These men, he said, reported the proposal to the high command, which ordered them to accept. Castro said that in those days there were several groups, including the Rosa Blanca group, which were beginning to mobilize against the revolution, and that Trujillo tried to organize them.

"Naturally," he said, "Trujillo was the most influential person in the counterrevolution, for he had more money than the others as well as a center of operations with all the needed facilities."

The revolutionary plan of infiltrating the counterrevolutionary elements, Castro said, began to achieve success when William Morgan accepted their proposal. Within three months, Castro declared, William Morgan, Menoyo Carrera, (Fleta.), and all the Escambray commanders were in the plot. The plotters became so confident that they even went to live in William Morgan's house, and "Trujillo appointed William Morgan the leader of the counterrevolutionary." Castro said that William Morgan "displaced Pedraza, Batista, Ventura, (Carrataraz?); in fact he displaced the entire Batista group."

Asked whom Trujillo used to make contact with William Morgan and the others Premier Castro said that his contact men included the consul in Miami, "who was one of his principal agents in the conspiracy," and a Spanish priest, Velazco, who lives in Santo Domingo, and in whom "Trujillo has great confidence." This priest, Castro said, went to Havana three times. He "brought 10 bazookas and a large quantity of weapons on one of his trips."

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Castro declared? "We possess the details of all the incidents because we had 12 of our comrades spend three months living with the counterrevolutionary elements. Their ability was so great that in three months they committed no indiscretion whatsoever. In short, all men in key positions were our comrades."

Castro continued that as the organization of the counterrevolution progressed, "Trujillo sacrificed Nunez Portuondo." He added that "the principal candidate of the 'Rosa Blanca' was Nunez Portuondo." Castro said that the organizers of the plot tried to find a leader for the counterrevolutionary who was in the country and who had had little connection with Batista.

Primer Castro declared that "All this is part of a great plot. This is not only the work of Trujillo. Trujillo is just one phase of the giant conspiracy against the revolution." The conspiracy against the Cuban revolution includes vested interests, "of which, unfortunately, many are foreign interests. This makes our struggle more difficult because it is not only the national elements which oppose our aims, but also foreign interests, powerful interests which have an influence in certain political circles in other countries, which influence the press in other for the countries, influence information agencies; interests that have the ability to do great harm, to discredit, picture us in the worse way, slander, confuse, and give the impression that this is a debacle, and that the most terrible things are done here.

"In short, large groups of vested interests are engaged in this maneuver. They have taken an oath to oppose our revolution to the death, to try to isolate us from all other countries, to try and create within and without our country, political and economic, national and international, that is, all kinds of problems for us. This foreign ministers conference is only a part of the conspiracy against our country. In short, these (word indistinct) of events which strangely coincide with the foreign ministers conference again show that all this is only a conspiracy, that all this is only an evil attempt against our country and our revolution."

Castro said: "When I asked a Spaniard of the Trujillo legion who had become our prisoner why he came, the first thing he said was that he had been told that we were communists and that he was an enemy of communists." Castro then said that this was the work of those who went abroad to speak against us, such as Diaz Lanz.

Declaring that the revolution and the people would never admit defeat, Castro said that in the first place the conspirators should have realized this before making absurd plans against the majority in the Cuban nation. He added that he was surprised that the enemies of the revolution thought that the revolution would abandon the struggle and permit itself to be overthrown. "They must overthrow us if it is possible to overthrow a united people. They may overthrow us if an entire nation can be liquidated," he said. He then said he wondered how it would be possible to govern the people without an army if they did not have any public support, when Batista had to maintain power by force of arms. He said that thousands of men would go off to the mountains with their weapons to fight against the reestablishment of the Batista regime.

Speaking of the corruption during the Batista regime, Castro said that the revolutionary government inherited nothing but debts and that the country had only 70 million pesos in reserve. He declared that in these circumstances the most the government could do is to speed up the agrarian reform, tourist plans, and other plans to give employment to everyone as soon as possible, and to develop an economy that will maintain the Cuban people.

A reporter asked Castro what Trujillo's "legion," which Castro had mentioned, was. Castro replied: We have a Spanish member of the legion here. He can tell you about it; where he contracted for it, who did it, how much he was offered, and what he was told. His contract ended when he was taken prisoner. "He no longer has any agreement with Trujillo, because he is a prisoner."

If the reporters want to, we invite you to ask him anything here on television. Castro suggested that the questions be asked later.

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Castro then stated that the prisoners had been treated according to international law; that they might be tried in court, but never tortured or otherwise mistreated by the revolutionary government.

Castro suggested the reporters question William Morgan and Guterrez Manoyo, and a reporter asked if there was any effort being made to mobilize the pro-Cuban feeling that he was certain existed among non-Cubans, as shown by the activities of William Morgan. Castro replied: "Morgan is a Cuban. He married a Cuban; he is not a North American." Castro then said that there was no organized effort to mobilize this pro-Cuban feeling abroad, but that it had to be done. He noted that movements in support of the Cuban revolution did exist, as could be seen in Latin America while the foreign ministers conference was in progress. "This has not been the product of a methodical effort," he claimed.

Castro then volunteered a statement on the alleged invasion of Haiti by a group of Cuban revolutionaries. He said that several days ago an (Algerian?) man, "an adventurer who was a rebel in Las Villas," enlisted a group of 25 or 30 rebels and left in a boat from the northern part of Oriente Province. "This was something planned by those elements which are conspiring against Cuba," he said. He continued that it seemed that they landed in Haiti. He said that capturing 30 Cubans on an invasion of Haiti, a country whose language and terrain is foreign, must have been a plan to embarrass us at the foreign ministers conference. He went on to say that this has "forced us to make the regrettable decision to apply very severe measures against these actions, which are intolerable."

Speaking of the conference of foreign ministers, Castro said that "the logical thing" for it to discuss was "the economic problems of Latin America, not interventions or expeditions." He said that "apart from the efforts of our delegation and of the Venezuelan delegation the conference is a farce." He said that Cuba did not want to be defended by an international organization, and that "we cannot and will not hope for foreign aid in defense of our revolution." Dictators usually hope for and get international aid. He said that Cuba did not need OAS aid, and that the conference had coincided with four invasions of Cuba, "one from the United States and three from Santo Domingo." He said that "two planes had arrived simultaneously at the Trinidad airport, but one did not dare to land."

One of the planes came from Santo Domingo and one from Florida, he said, and wondered if, with all the coast guarding resources at the command of the United States, those planes could leave without the "complicity of officials." "I asked myself if it was logical for us to be accused of those things from abroad while during the foreign ministers conference arms shipments were arriving here from the United States and from Santo Domingo? We would really be in a fix if we had to depend on those international organizations for our defense," he said, "because the peoples have never received even minimum aid from those organizations. The foreign ministers never met in a foreign ministers conference for the benefit of peoples, but they meet now as an instrument to maneuver against a country that has liberated itself from tyranny."

"What could the goal of that conference be when Trujillo was represented at the conference? The same Trujillo, who (is trying?) to plot a counterrevolution."

"What more proof is necessary than the recordings of broadcasts of La Voz Dominicana at the conference to know whether we can consider as a serious event that conference of foreign ministers which was convoked by Trujillo himself?"

"While this conference is going on--a conference called through the intrigue of Trujillo--a counterrevolution is attempted in our country, to disturb the peace, to send plane loads of arms and machineguns, to start a revolution here. All of this simply means that, up to now, unfortunately, they are playing that dictatorship's game, because Trujillo would not worry us one bit--if we knew that we had only to worry about him as a means of provocation. This would also be true if we had to have a fight between the people of Cuba and the Santo Domingo dictatorship."

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"This," continued Castro, "would not be a problem for us, because we know that the Cubans have enough qualities and have enough energy to liquidate the Trujillo regime in two weeks, if necessary. Trujillo, however, is sheltered by this international organism. He is sheltered in all his international provocative actions and we remain here with our arms crossed, tolerating the Trujillo planes that (fly?) over our coasts, tolerating the Trujillo planes that threaten to bomb us, and tolerating that Trujillo theft of the planes in which the war criminals fled. We have to allow him to organize attempts against our embassies and be constantly exposed to his provocations."

Castro continued: "We have to go on tolerating Trujillo and we have to be exposed to the stupidity and madness of this man, the son of intervention and the protege of international agencies, of the consortium of international interests which keep him in power."

"We have our delegation in Chile to explain all these truths. Yet to create more problems for us and to obstruct us, to prevent Cuba from explaining her position at the Santiago conference, counterrevolutions are hatched--counterrevolutions that practically coincide with the foreign ministers conference."

Castro blamed Trujillo for inciting some 30 Cubans to provoke, hurt, and demoralize Cuba. "These are the things," he said, "that should open the people's eyes and prove to them that a revolution is not an easy thing, that it is not a little stroll. The people should know that we have to defend ourselves very tenaciously, very intelligently, and very firmly, since we can count on no one else but ourselves, our own resources, and the sympathy of the people. Nothing more than this, because generally the oligarchies and the vested interests in other countries do nothing else but play the game and abet the enemies of this revolution."

Castro then reminded his listeners of life under Batista, when children were tortured and all sorts of crimes were committed. But, he said, news of this kind was never published by the UPI and other international news agencies. Therefore the Cubans are alone in defending themselves.

At this point, Castro was asked to explain about a report in a newspaper saying that the counterrevolutionaries had three bases in Florida from which to fight against Cuba. Would it not be possible, a reporter asked, for the government to take steps against this and have the friendly government of the United States help them?

"Well," Castro replied, "why waste time? They have taken in the war criminals up there; the bodies of five compatriots were received there; both political and military elements are hiding behind a mask of respectability up there; planes with arms and pamphlets by criminals have left there. Therefore, it is possible that if the U.S. officials did not want a single plane to take off from there to drop pamphlets here and gather war criminals they could stop them."

Castro then said that Maj. William Morgan was offered 40 50-caliber machineguns by Dominican agents. "You can imagine what 40 50-caliber machineguns mean. During the hardest fighting of the Sierra Maestra campaign when we were fighting against all the battalions of the dictatorship last summer we had only two 50-caliber machineguns." In other words, he said, this Dominican gentlemen had had no trouble in acquiring guns and the officials of the state of Florida pretended they knew nothing about it. Yet, when the Cubans were fighting for a just cause, they had to overcome many obstacles--obstacles that the war criminals do not have to contend with.

A reporters asked whether Castro would personally attend the Santiago conference in order to denounce the entire Trujillo plot. Castro replied: "The foreign Ministers conference ends Sunday morning and there is no time for me to attend the end of the conference. Because of the things happening here, we thought it our duty to remain here. Moreover, we have a good representative at the conference in the person of Dr. Raul Roa." The cabinet, he continued, thought that I should remain here as much as possible and try to attend the conference during its later stage. Things took longer than we expected and today is Friday. I could not leave without giving the nation an explanation of the

events that have occurred.

As I have said, Castro continued, the foreign ministers conference was called through the intrigue of Trujillo. We have proof of it. What shall we propose? Shall we propose that the conference scold Trujillo? Trujillo does not care about any of this. He is supporting the foreign legion; he does not care about public opinion in Santo Domingo; he does not care about public opinion on the continent. We know that the great international interests are not interested in getting Trujillo out of the Dominican Republic but in getting rid of the revolutionary government in Cuba.

"You understand," Castro went on "that what the conference is interested in is to destroy the national government. We are not going there to concoct a plan that will work against us. All we can do there, at this international conference, is to ask that Cuba's sovereignty be respected and that the Cuban nation be respected. What else can we hope for?" For example, he continued, we know of the plan of campaign against Cuba. We know that these powerful agencies with their monopoly on information intervene in the problems of our country place obstacles in the path of tourism, and create many problems for us. They let the conspirators loose against us.

At this point a reporter asked Castro about the plot that has just been smashed in Cuba. Castro replied that it had vast ramifications. He said that the plotters abroad counted on the help of military elements in the country and on help from within. "Our plan to foil the invasion," he said, "included four points; namely, to seize the plotters, to seize the money that the landholders and Trujillo had given to the counterrevolution, to seize the arms (received from the United States?), and to destroy the elements that landed here. The plans were realized. All the conspirators were seized. Not a single one of them escaped. The money given by the landholders was also seized. The money was seized for the land reform. Of course, we did not take as much as we had wanted to but we seized some 78,000 dollars."

"It was understood," said Castro, "that at the moment of the uprising in Cuba Trujillo would send his legion. All the sectional leaders of the revolt were given their briefing on Saturday morning; one group was to act in Pinar del Rio and another on Isla de Pinas. The aim of the latter action was to free all the prisoners on the Isla de Pinas. Another group was to take over the Sierra de Escambray and there receive the legion."

The chief of the Pinar del Rio and Isla de Pinas, Castro continued, failed to get a seat on the plane and thus failed to mobilize the Isla de Pinas group. He was arrested by Major Menoyo in Morgan's house. All the leaders of the movement were to meet in Morgan's house and receive instructions. Major Menoyo and a group of comrades were living there. When all plans had been made, they were arrested.

It so happened, he continued, that one of the plotters in Morgan's house telephoned a Major Carrera in another house, where a group of Cainas Milanes' landholder conspirators was located. Others were to meet with Hernandez Tellaheche and his group. For some reason or other, Hernandez Tellaheche had lost his confidence and had not held this meeting. However, the group that was to meet with Cainas Milanes did meet and they were arrested at the moment he arrived.

On the next day all the members of the former armed forces still in service were put under preventive arrest. Almost all of them have now been freed. "Naturally," Castro added, "we tried to maintain the greatest secrecy about the plot, to make sure that we could smash it. It was impossible, though, to keep the secret forever and the cables began to go out and, with them, all sorts of rumors. I, for example, am a very hardy soul with the UPI. They kill me when I am waging a revolution against someone else and they also kill me when someone else is waging a revolution against me. They always kill me."

The foreign news agencies said that Elcuterio Pedraza and Portuondo directed the invading forces. They had the counterrevolutionaries in control of Santiago de Cuba, Castro continued. They also said that Castro has not appeared in public and has not appeared on television for four days. "He is not seen any

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place, and it is supposed that he has been murdered." The cables made things look black for me. Everything I said was propaganda and I was wrong.

"Morgan was in contact with Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, meantime, and he convinced Trujillo that everything was in order. On Wednesday night a plane landed in Trinidad with a certain priest, Velazquez, abroad.

Fifteen cases containing bazooka ammunition were landed, as were nine bazookas, five portable radios, another case with four bazooka shells, 28 cases of 50-caliber shells, 45 cases of 30-caliber shells, and 11 more cases with 50-caliber shells."

The landing of the plane was a real picture: Almost all the comrades at the airport were dressed in civilian clothes; those that disembarked from the plane were shouting "Long live Trujillo!" There were embraces. After landing the supplies and the men, the plane flew back to Santo Domingo, which could not contain its joy because the revolution was going well. We were supposed to be completely demoralized because there was no reaction against the Trujillo planes on our part. In the meantime, Trujillo's intelligence chief continued giving instructions by radio.

On Thursday we sent Trujillo a false message in the name of Morgan telling him that fighting was taking place at six different points of Cuba. Another false message was sent him saying we need many officers and technicians, as well as soldiers and machineguns. The message added that we needed between 200 and 300 experts experienced in the ways of disorganizing the enemy, which was withdrawing. The message said that reinforcement were needed at once, however, and that we could not do everything by ourselves.

Trujillo replied through his chief of intelligence that everything would be done. Sure enough, another plane arrived with 10 men abroad. They were impressed. The town of Trinidad had been blacked out and a simulated battle was being staged nearby to impress the visitors. The latter explained that the two bombers would come the next day and they asked where we wanted them to bomb. We decided to seize the group. There was resistance, of course, and two men on our side were killed and several wounded. The wounded on both sides were taken to the hospital and given every medical attention.

(At this point Castro quotes some of the news reported by La Voz Dominicana on his alleged defeat--Ed.) La Voz Dominicana announced that Fidel Castro had been killed and that Santiago de Cuba and many other Cuban towns were in the hands of the counterrevolutionaries. The station then appealed to "Henry" to continue fighting, for the fate of Cuba was in his hands. He, alone, was responsible for wiping communism from Marti's island. Of course "Henry" was the alleged Dominican agent whom we know as William Morgan, our man. Maj. Gutierrez Menoyo was also supposed to be a Dominican agent, another lie.

A reporter suggested that Dr. Castro had enough information available against Trujillo to produce a "white book" that would convince Trujillo's adherents. Castro replied that on the first day, forty 50-caliber machineguns, twelve 30-caliber machineguns, and many shells were seized from a boat. The second shipment consisted of 100 light 50-caliber machineguns that were parachuted to Cuba. The third shipment consisted of 100 bazookas and parts for bazookas, radios, and so forth. The last shipment consisted of 90 Thompson machineguns, 76 Springfields, seventy-four 50-caliber machineguns and many cases of shells, and other arms. "I tell you," said Castro, "that if we had received all this in the Sierra Maestra I am sure that we would have won the war in a few months."

Trujillo is against us, against Venezuela, and against anyone who sees in him a dictator. He respects the citizens of no country. He has not respected the University of Columbia, from which he kidnaped a professor and later murdered him. He has friends; he has the international situation in his favor. If it were up to us to take care of him, he would not last two weeks. He can thank the international situation prevailing in our continent.

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Castro then accused Trujillo of dozens of other crimes, saying that he once killed 10,000 Haitians and that the Haitian Government is under his wing. "The best thing that could be done would be to settle accounts with Trujillo. But as things are, we must remain here on the defensive. We must keep waiting for his legion to come, for his planes and arms to come. The international situation keeps our hands tied and we can only wait for Trujillo's provocations."

A reporter asked: "Dr. Castro, to call a spade a spade, do you think that the United States is mainly responsible for Trujillo's permanence and the present situation existing in the Caribbean? Do you think that, since the United States is a country where public opinion prevails, and with the proof that the Cuban Government has, that U.S. opinion will be mobilized and bring about a change in the stupid policy pursued by the State Department in Trujillo's case?"

U.S. public opinion must bring about a change in policy with respect to Trujillo, Castro answered. Public opinion in the United States is against Trujillo. The U.S. State Department has to resolve the problem. Part of the difficulty stems from the fact that the OAS had been ineffective in its efforts to preserve human rights. "The worst of the OAS is that it can be converted into an instrument against a revolutionary government such as ours."

Our republics are a group of poor nations. They should all extend a hand to one another to resolve the very grave economic crises.

We should cooperate and not be victims of competition. Only in this way can the nations of Latin America develop. Cuba is being blamed for existing problems, but the one who should have been blamed for the past 30 years is Trujillo, gentlemen. "We see the possibility that the OAS can be converted into an instrument against the Cuban revolution and we cannot promote or accept in any way a policy which aims at resolving through intervention the problem of Cuba and that of Santo Domingo." Santo Domingo could be used to involve Cuba also in a conflagration. Cuba is not to be blamed; Cuba is a victim. Trujillo is a gangster and the OAS can do nothing. The OAS is paying the consequences of its neglect of peoples, of its forgetfulness of human rights. All of America is paying for the consequences of its errors. We have no other ally but that of public opinion on the continent. The natural ally of our revolution is public opinion. We have no other alternative but to let everyone know that we are ready to defend the revolution and to defend the nation with all the necessary means."

(There was a pause as prisoners were brought in for questioning.) The prisoners were asked how they came to join the counterrevolution and if they realized Trujillo was an international criminal. One prisoner was asked if he could see any signs of communism since he came to Cuba or did he now believe he had been deceived. He replied that he saw no indication of communism in Cuba. Questioned on the composition of the Trujillo foreign legion to which he was affiliated, a prisoner replied that it consisted mostly of Spaniards but that other Europeans were also included.

The next prisoner questioned, a Cuban, said his name was Pedro Rivero Moreno. He was asked if he was willing to reply to questions and replies in the affirmative. He said that some Cubans and Spaniards were involved in the plot. He was a former army officer. He was in the foreign legion in the Dominican Republic and never thought of coming to Cuba. There are perhaps two or three Cubans in the Dominican army, he said. It was not his decision to come to Cuba, but he was told to take some weapons to Commander William Morgan and that he was to go as a technician; he made several trips of this nature.

Information concerning the foreign legion followed. Rivero Moreno said that it was a separate unit having its own uniform and was not commanded by Dominican army officers. He said that he was chief of the security service but that no one knows Trujillo's plans. They are secret.

Another Cuban prisoner questioned said that he was willingly giving information. He said that he had had some political experience, and that he felt that he could have a political future in Cuba again since

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he had never done anything bad.

He said there were 25,000 men in the foreign legion. Asked about how much has been spent in propaganda and in weapons to be used against the present Cuban Government, he said that very few had contributed to it. He said that Masferrer was plotting against Cuba.

Castro then summed up that the rebel army had done well. Imagine, it has been working on this for three months and did not make a single mistake. Its action was quite intelligent, and it maintained the same moral principles of the war. The prisoners were treated well. When it was necessary to act, every one of the conspirators was captured. There was no violence, and this shows that to defend the revolution it is possible to use what one may call rebel proceedings. These are absolutely clean and legal and lead to the discovery of everything. Most of the prisoners have been seized. It would be impossible to try them all. Only the leaders will be tried. The others will be deferred as soon as possible to the ordinary courts.

Castro concluded that the revolution is so strong that the country can remain calm in the face of any threat or plot. We shall use the means at our disposal to repel any attack. Cruelty, violence, and humiliations are not necessary. Only correct investigating methods are needed and these have given the best results.

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