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September 10, 1961

Dr Miro Cardona returned to my life this week. On Thursday Dick Goodwin asked me to come to his office to hear Miro's account of the Berle-Schlesinger mission to New York before the invasion of Cuba. US News and World Report had reprinted a story claiming that the Cuban had been accused of US military support. In a letter to US News, Stewart Alsop had denied this, saying that Schlesinger and Berle had informed Miro of this and had accused that he in turn had informed the Cuban Revolutionary Council. That travel agent told there would be no the Council, Miro now claimed to Goodwin and me that Berle in a dinner at his Georgetown house had promised that 15,000 US troops would be available to help the Cubans, and that he had made clear at the Century Club luncheon that nothing we were saying superseded that promise. Miro accordingly went away from that luncheon, he now says, convinced that, despite what the President had said at his press conference and despite what we had said to him then, the invasion would still get direct US military support.

This all seems fantasy to me, since I cannot imagine Berle making any such assurances (unless he supposed that, once the invasion started, the Marines would be dragged in, regardless of all intentions to the contrary). However, one memory suggests that there may have been a genuine misunderstanding. I can recall that Tracy Barnes called me the next day and asked whether Berle had said anything about 15,000 troops -- that Miro had come away from the lunch with some impression that US troops might enter the picture. He I told Barnes at the time, my only recollection of such a figure was in connection with supplies -- that, once the beachhead were established, Berle had said that arms for 15,000 men would be available. In any case, as I remember, Barnes himself went to New York that day to clear up any remaining misunderstanding. I doubt that Miro is engaged in intentional deception, but the experience shows the power of the retroactive imagination.

On Saturday, I went to another meeting with Miro in which he was presented with the terms on which the US proposed to continue its relationship with the CRC. The terms are described in the attached memorandum. When they were read to him, Miro made a strong pitch for an explicit US commitment to a new invasion. "I cannot ask my people," he said, "to engage in underground work and in sabotage unless I know definitely that these actions are leading to clearly defined and agreed-on climax. I cannot go out as chairman of the Council unless there is a clear commitment that the US will participate in an eventual invasion of Cuba. I have been deluged with pleas from widows and families of those who took part in the April tragedy. My own son is in Castro's prisons. The program you are presenting to me is a prologue and nothing more. There is no point in a prologue unless one is sure what the conclusion will be."

Goodwin: "We understand and sympathize with Dr Miro's position. We share his desire for an overthrow of the Castro regime. We have prepared a program of action to that end, but we cannot commit the US government to something so far-reaching as an invasion of Cuba in the indefinite future. Military action in the future may or may not be necessary or possible. But, if we continue to work together -- and I hope we can -- it must be on the basis of the same goals and the same hopes. We must do all we can in the interests of the cause for which we fight. A commitment for the indefinite future under conditions which no one can be wise enough to foresee cannot be made at this time."

Miro: "I understand your view -- you must understand mine. If there can be no commitment, I have no alternative but to prepare a letter to President Kennedy saying that I cannot continue as head of the Council. The program is inadequate both because of the lack of ultimate definitions of what is to take place and also because of lack of control over progress of propaganda and clandestine activity. The participation of groups not controlled by the CRC would be a handicap to the coordination necessary for success. Indications of such participation are already evident."

Goodwin: "As for the second range of problems, our hope is to coordinate as much as possible through the CRC. Hence the provisions for keeping you fully informed of all activities are not creating a directed propaganda program."

only ideas for discussion with the CRO. If there is anything unsatisfactory in the memorandum, we can discuss it. This memorandum represents an attempt in good faith to meet the points you have previously made to us."

Miro: "I still feel that the arrangement for propaganda is unsatisfactory -- that even if I could influence its broad orientation, it would still not be well prepared. Also I would have no control over a portion of the clandestine activities. Once other groups learn they can bypass the Council and get direct assistance from the US Government, the result will be a proliferation of groups which will be damaging both to present operations and to the political future of Cuba. Those things, on top of a lack of faith in the ultimate end, lead me to feel negative about proceeding on this basis." I have expressed my views. Now I will go to Baltimore to meditate my final decision. My letter will be courteous and respectful, but my present conviction is that my response must be a resignation."

Goodwin: "There is no question that the fight will go on. The only question is whether we can conduct it with Dr. Miro's indispensable cooperation."

Miro: "If I resign from the CRO, I do not withdraw from the fight."

Goodwin: "It ~~is~~ ~~is~~ ~~is~~ will all be very different without Dr. Miro as the head of the group. Your leadership is necessary for both the clarification of purpose and the facilitation of the struggle. No one else can step into your place."

The meeting broke up on this note, with Miro to let us know on Monday. Dick and I both feel that he will probably stay.

... I have tried to broaden the base of the Revolutionary Council but have found great difficulty in doing so. One problem was the increased importance of the magistrates' group. One section of this group split off and backed Fria's candidate for exiles government. This faction has stimulated a costly press campaign against the CRC. In the trade union group, a division occurred two days ago with lawyers associated with the past (presumably with Mujal) replacing decent leaders. As for the student group, it waited until October 10 to agree to join the CRC, and then did so with stipulations.

A reasonable observation could be that it is a suspicious coincidence that these groups which are supposed to enter the CRC have resisted doing so, and in some cases have organized campaigns against the CRC. Nevertheless all the main groups, except MRF and CO, have now joined up. These two groups continue to receive direct CIA subsidy.

As for the new CIA liaison officer, I have had two long talks with him and have submitted operational plans to him. In a third talk, held twelve days later, this man showed himself evasive and did not explain satisfactorily what had happened to the plans. [According to CIA, the plans breakdown because they reverted to invasion thinking and Colonel Johnson accepted them only in order to establish rapport with Mirp.] I was kept in complete ignorance about what is to happen inside Cuba. But I know that recruiting is going on among student and labor groups for training and infiltration - we know this from our own contacts and not from CIA. In addition, CIA sent a group to Brazil without checking with the CRC or seeking the Council's advice or instructions. Also a CIA agent accompanied the Crocco group in its

trip to Cuba, but there was no word to the CRC. Nor have we been informed at all about the planes which have been dropping pamphlets in Cuba.

Meanwhile, the CRC have neither arms nor money nor propaganda nor anything with which to conduct the fight for the liberation of our country. We are really no more than a front for the CIA, and we will once again be the sacrificial victims for their errors. Radio Swan continues as a CIA operation. Sanjonia is recruiting people, freely offering arms and money. Naturally people go where they are offered arms.

In sum, the pact of September 8, which I was reluctant to agree to at the time, has not been fulfilled. Still, I came to Washington on Sunday for a dinner at which I was assured the CIA representative in Miami would be present. He was not there. CIA continues to do what it wants without regard for the CRC. I don't think that CIA has anything personal against me. It is just that they wish to run things as they have done before. They are destroying the CRC by this attitude. Hence my decision -- now irrevocable -- to resign.

I can fight against Castro -- against the corruptions of the past -- against Eric -- against Batista -- but, if I have to fight the CIA on top of all this, I declare myself vanquished. Even if the present situation is straightened out, it will all begin again tomorrow. The CIA WILL simply try to create a situation to justify its past attitudes.

Goodwin: I understand that you will not announce your resignation until the CIA meeting (discussing Perus' resignation on Cuba) on Thursday.

Miro: Yes.

Goodwin: Your resignation would be a tragedy. But, after so many disappointing experiences, I will not offer you any more promises. But give us 24 hours to see whether definite and positive arrangements cannot be made to improve this situation. If necessary, I mean to go to the Secretary or to the President.

Miro: I have called a meeting for Thursday at 3 in Miami. I will either have to give the CRC my resignation -- or else have something concrete to offer them. I will be glad to wait till then.

The 24 hour period was subsequently lengthened to a week, and Alexis Johnson was assigned the job of bringing the CIA into line. We shall see what we shall see.

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