

Dorticos Challenges U.S. Press

Cuba Parades 2 'CIA Agents'

By John Goshko

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HAVANA, Aug. 9—The Cuban government today staged a new parade of captured "U.S. subversion agents" and provoked an unexpected side attraction—an exchange between President Osvaldo Dortico and American reporters over their coverage of the Cuban charges against the CIA.

"How can any honest man have the slightest doubt that this is a CIA infiltration of our country?" Dorticos challenged the handful of U.S. newsmen here. "You should ask President Johnson about the evidence and what he has to say about it."

Capture Sunday Claimed

The exchange came as the government was displaying to reporters and delegates to the Latin American Solidarity Organization conference two prisoners that it said were captured Sunday in Pinar del Rio, Province.

The two, identified as Anibal Garcia Diaz and Daniel R.

Garcia Casanas, confessed before TV cameras in the Havana Libre Hotel that they were Cuban exiles in the employ of the CIA. They had entered Cuba, the pair said, to cache radio transmitters for use by other CIA operatives.

A government spokesman said they were part of a four-man group whose other two members escaped to sea. Garcia Diaz appeared with his arm in a sling. He was described as having been wounded in the capture, and he was excused from questioning because of his weak condition.

At first, today's performance seemed to follow step-by-step the script Sunday when six other captives appeared before the LASO delegates to confess their roles as agents of the CIA Cuban-exile "counter-revolutionary" groups.

But as Garcia Casanas was answering questions, Dorticos suddenly burst into the conference hall to announce that he felt compelled to intervene because he had been "disturbed by

the doubts implied in the questions of the U.S. journalists."

Pointing to the expensive, sophisticated radio equipment that the captives were alleged to have in their possession, Dorticos asked: "What more proof do you want? Do you think this is equipment that Cuban exiles can buy in a store? This equipment . . . is specially made by the CIA for its special purposes."

Then, he turned to the audience and said, "I would ask each of the American journalists here to stand up and give your opinion as to whether what you have heard and seen is true."

Press Survey

According to Cuban officials, 26 U.S. newsmen have been allowed in to report on the LASO meeting. Most represent small, specialized publications of an avowedly leftist nature.

Several journalists, in this category—representing such organizations as the National Guardian, the Worker, the Mil-

itant and the Monthly Review—rose to say that they believe the evidence of CIA infiltration was authentic and convincing.

This apparently did not satisfy Dorticos who broke in to demand: "I want to hear from the others. What about the Associated Press? What about Life and Look magazines?"

The correspondents of these organizations then spoke. None, however, replied directly to his original question, saying instead that they were present as reporters, not judges, that they did not have sufficient technical expertise to give an opinion about the origin of the radio equipment and that they did not want to prejudice the position of the prisoners.

This appeared to mollify Dorticos. His face creased by a broad grin, the Cuban President said, "I understand perfectly your sensibilities and your unwillingness to make judgments on the spot. That's why I think you should ask President Johnson what he knows about this."