

FPost
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WASHINGTON — The fragmented Cuban organizations in the United States, joining together for the first time in over a decade, have quietly served notice on the State Dept. that they will wage underground warfare, if necessary, to thwart a detente with Fidel Castro.

In their meetings in Washington, they have openly compared themselves to the Palestinian Liberation Organization, which has been carrying on terrorist warfare in the Middle East.

Both moderate and militant groups have advised that they will seek a peaceful solution first but, if that fails, they will engage in "urban guerrilla action" within Cuba.

The exile groups fear the Castro regime will be legitimized by the Organization of American States and U.S. diplomatic recognition. Thus, the leaders of the largest anti-Castro organizations met in Washington on November 1 and formed an umbrella groups called the "Cubania Beligerante," or Belligerent Cubans.

Their numbers include a past president of Cuba, Dr. Carlos Prío, plus an ex-president of the Cuban Congress, businessmen, educators and former Cuban military officers.

Following their Washington meetings, the Cuban leaders solemnly signed a declaration of common purpose. They then delivered a copy of the document to Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Harry Shlaudeman.

Their covenant states that they "cannot coexist with dictatorship... There can be neither peace nor freedom under the Marxist-Leninist definition of peaceful co-existence."

Then, the document concludes enigmatically that "under certain internal and international conditions a new strategy may be adopted to reach the liberation of Cuba regardless of the consequences." The Cubania Beligerante explained that this means if all else fails, they will become a U.S. - based PLO dedicated to terrorizing Fidel Castro.

They will "campaign against Castro" in league "with elements within Cuba and without CIA help," they advised Washington.

The fact that the anti-Castro organizations have agreed on anything is an extraordinary event in itself. There are an estimated one million Cubans scattered across the United States, and they have formed several dozen exile groups.

Only half a dozen or so, however, are considered by U.S. authorities to be effective. The usual pattern, one government official has told us, "is for the members of the group to fight, fragment and form new splinter groups."

FOOTNOTE: Several weeks ago, we

reported that CIA-trained anti-Castro commandos in Miami have vowed to launch a campaign of terror within the United States if diplomatic recognition is extended to Cuba. Some of these same militants, we have learned, have thrown their support behind Cubania Beligerante. In their Washington meetings, however, the key exile leaders

assured officials that they would not turn against the nation "which opened its heart and hands to us."

DEATH TRAPS: Here is the second in the two part report, based on secret Navy documents, on the shocking deterioration of the helicopter carrier fleet.

The Navy's seven helicopter carriers are supposed to deliver Marine assault troops in case they should be needed in an emergency, say, in the Middle East. Although they cost millions and are still comparatively modern, they have been permitted to fall into such disrepair that they no longer are safe.

Secret surveys by the Navy's top inspector, Rear Adm. John Bulkeley, warn that the carriers could become death traps for the Navy crewmen and Marine fighting men who sail in them.

Fire is the terror of the sea, both in war and peace. Yet on board the USS Okinawa, Bulkeley found that "the fire doors between the hangar deck and the vehicle storage area will not close fully."

The pipes carrying highly inflammable fuel are "routed through the ship's incinerator room" and "immediately adjacent to the welder's table." Failure of some conduits "would cause fuel oil to flood the fire room bilges," warns Bulkeley's secret report.

Boiler pipes are "soft patched" or "in an advance state of deterioration."

The most hideous danger in the ship is broken doors and missing rungs in an enclosed escape passageway. Supposedly the enclosure would permit the crew to flee a fire. Actually the broken doors and missing rungs not only would impede their escape but would permit the fire to enflame them and bake them alive as if they were in a long metal oven.

In case of combat, every man aboard would be in danger from the wretched maintenance. "The storage of whole blood for the treatment of casualties," states the report, "is severely limited due to vibrations."

The racks for jettisoning bombs are so poorly designed that there is nothing "to prevent personnel from accidentally sliding overboard."

The communications antennae are "unsatisfactory." The navigation warning lights are so poorly arranged that a 60 degree "blind spot" exists on the ship's port side for ships approaching the Okinawa at night.

Finally, if the carrier should start sinking, the sailors and Marines would have no means to save themselves. "All the ship's lifelines, liferails and liferings," the report charges, "are considered safety hazards."

What is true of the Okinawa, according to high Navy sources, is also largely true of the other six helicopter carriers.

FOOTNOTE: Adm. I.C. Kidd, the bluff head of Navy Materiel, told us the Okinawa is not the only ship in need of fixing. He pointed to his brutally blunt statements to Congress about the need for swift action throughout the Navy. "When they break," he said, "I fix 'em. But the entire fleet needs maintenance." As to the Okinawa, Kidd said it is undergoing rapid and comprehensive repairs.