

Talks May Ease Cuba Tension

By Drew Pearson

The most important result which could come out of the Johnson-Lopez Mateos talks is a new tack in our relations with Fidel Castro. The subject is almost certain to be discussed.

The President of Mexico is in the unique position where he is a good friend of the United States and has reasonably friendly relations with Cuba. He personally has no love for the grandstanding Cuban leader, but his country is sympathetic to the Cuban uprising because Mexico went through somewhat the same social revolution itself in 1910 when it seized American property, just as Castro has done, and had even bloodier relations with the United States.

During the period following the Mexican revolution, Pancho Villa raided across the border, robbing, pillaging, killing 16 Americans at Columbus, N.M. The great cattle ranches of Americans were seized. The armies of Madero, Obregon, Carranza, and Huerta fought back and forth, with American citizens, property, and goodwill caught in between.

For some twenty years, relations between the United States and Mexico could hardly have been worse. Lopez Mateos knows this, therefore



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understands the bitterness between Cuba and the United States better than any other Pan-American leader. There have been discreet queries by Mexico in the past suggesting the possibility of using its good offices to straighten out relations between its two neighbors. But the State Department has been cool.

However, certain new factors have developed inside Cuba which eventually will change the picture. Here are some of them:

- Castro has stated publicly that he wants to improve relations with the United States. He stated this even in a speech in Moscow last May.

- President Dorticos of Cuba, who doesn't always like Castro, has confided to foreign diplomats that Cuba must resume relations with the United States. The U.S.A. is too close, and its trade is too important, he said. He made the further statement that Cuba would be willing to pay for American property seized.

- The Russians are getting weary of paying the foreign aid bill to Cuba—just as the American taxpayers are weary of foreign aid. There have been broad hints to the United States by Russian leaders that they hope Cuba and the United States can patch up their differences.

Upcoming U.S. elections make it difficult for any American President, no matter what his politics, to accept any compromise settlement

with Cuba. Nevertheless, with our close allies the British and the French coming to Fidel Castro's economic rescue, it looks as if he is going to be around for some time, and the good offices of a friendly President of Mexico might be helpful.

LBJ's Latest Economy

House Parliamentarian Lew Deschler, a longtime friend of President Johnson, points out a new Johnson economy.

For years, Johnson always signed his name with a large scrawl, but he has reduced the size of his signature by about half since entering the White House.

"Obviously," says Deschler, "he is trying to save ink."

Con Mucho Gusto

As President Johnson meets Mexico's President Lopez Mateos, border trouble between the two countries has been all but wiped out.

Immigration Commissioner Ray Farrell, who heads the Border Patrol, has reported to the President that our southern border is now as peaceful as our northern border.

"Courtesy and cooperation" along both borders, he reported, have been high.

As an example, the Immigration Service helped arrange for a group of Mexican orphans and musicians to

visit California's Disneyland last year.

Mr. and Mrs. Gerald C. Grimm, who accompanied the children, wrote a warm thank-you letter to the Immigration Service, reporting that the Mexican children were "thrilled."

"Above all," wrote the Grimms, "they will cherish the memory of how Americans opened up their hearts and homes to those of another nation. It was evident at the time of departure, by the embraces and tears, that both countries benefited by this visit.

"Four of the group will have their musical education guaranteed. One blind fellow is to be taken to our best eye specialist, since there is a possibility that his sight can be restored in one eye."

At Brownsville, Tex., Immigration officials recently permitted busloads of Mexican musicians to cross the border and shop in Brownsville without red tape and individual inspection.

The grateful orchestra leader, Marques Salvador, also wrote a letter expressing his "sincere appreciation for the facilities and attention that we received during our brief stay.

"All the members of the orchestra," he wrote, "remember you gratefully, and are sending you their most cordial greetings."