

(On Dr. Ernest E. Mandel - last paragraph - see this file 26 Mar 70, 19 Mar 71, 11 Jan 72

U.S. BARS CUBANS FROM FILM EVENT

Refusal of Visas on Political Basis Stirs Protests

NYTimes

By HENRY RAYMONT

The State Department has refused visas to four Cuban film directors, arousing new protests from critics of the Government's policy of denying entry to aliens because of their political views.

The four, including Alfredo Guevara, director of the Cuban Film Institute, had been invited by the sponsors of the First New York Festival of Cuban Films, due to open this evening at the Olympia Theater, Broadway and 107th Street.

A State Department public-affairs officer, Gale D. Wallace, said in Washington yesterday that the applications had been turned down under "our established policy concerning the admission to this country of persons representing Cuba in a private capacity."

Mr. Wallace made the statement in response to criticism from several senators, Mayor Lindsay and a group of prominent writers, critics and movie personalities, among them Arthur Miller, Norman Mailer, Vincent Canby, Stanley Kauffmann, Burgess Meredith, Geraldine Page, Otto Preminger and Jonas Mekas.

Letter From Lindsay

Mayor Lindsay, in a letter to Secretary of State William P. Rogers, expressed his conviction that "the visas should have been issued." The letter, dated March 17 and released yesterday by Michael Myerson, coordinator of the festival, said in part:

"I do not believe that the interests of the United States are well served by preventing citizens of other countries from coming here. Few areas of human endeavor so completely transcend political differences as cultural life; we should seek wherever possible to lower barriers between cultures and artistic activities."

Senator J. W. Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, denouncing the refusal of the visas as "a particularly shortsighted policy," noted that it contrasted with the Nixon Administration's thaw in relations with Peking.

Responding to questions about the apparent divergence, State Department officials referred to recent statements by Mr. Nixon and Mr. Rogers attributing to the Chinese leadership a wish to improve relations while the Cubans were implacable in their anti-United States policy and their determination to export their revolution to the rest of Latin America.

Exceptions Are Made

Mr. Wallace emphasized that exceptions were made on visas in cases involving Cuban officials attending conferences sponsored by the United Nations or the Pan American Health Organization.

Mr. Myerson, a documentary-film director who has visited Cuba four times, said that the State Department action would be challenged in a suit to be filed today by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee. The action, in the United States Court for the Southern District here, will argue that it is unconstitutional to deny visas to Mr. Guevara, Santiago Alvarez, Saul Yelen and Jorge Fraga under the section of the McCarran-Walter Act of 1952 that permits the Government to bar foreign Marxists.

A similar suit was brought in June, 1970, by a group of scholars in an attempt to overturn the Government's denial of a visitor's visa to Dr. Ernest E. Mandel, a Belgian economist and a Marxist. Last January the United States Supreme Court agreed to hear the case, which will probably be argued in Ap-

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no continuation