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*L'ambassadeur aux États-Unis
au secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*
*Ambassador in United States
to Secretary of State for External Affairs*

TELEGRAM 1316

Washington, April 24, 1961

CONFIDENTIAL. PRIORITY.

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CUBA-USA POLICY

The abortive "invasion" of Castro's Cuba by Cuban exiles in the past ten days has posed, with great clarity, the problem faced by USA in dealing with a Communist beachhead in the Western hemisphere.

2. In this telegram we shall attempt to review the recent episode, and to examine the implications for USA policy. To begin with, a chronology of the recent developments will be helpful.

3. In retrospect, despite the official secrecy with which the operation was planned, there were a number of public foreshadowings of the ill-fated anti-Castro operation which began on April 17 and, according to present information, seems to have ended in failure in a little over two days. For a year or more it has been common knowledge that numbers of Cuban exiles were present in USA, professing the intent to organize themselves into a force which would ultimately recapture Cuba from Castro. There were suggestions from time to time that the Central Intelligence Agency was interested in these exile groups and was, in fact, assisting them, although this was never conclusively established. It was also apparent that a good deal of controversy existed within high Administration circles as to how to deal with the Cuban problem, many quarters being strongly opposed to any action which could be construed as USA intervention in Cuba.

4. For the past it has also been clear that anti-Castro elements in USA were disunited and fragmented, and included undesirable remnants of the Batista régime. With such a multiplicity of rival groups it seemed unlikely that sufficient unity could be achieved to make possible any serious attempt to bring down the Castro régime by force of arms. In these circumstances, an event of significance in connection with the genesis of the recent undertaking was the formation, on March 21, of the "Cuban Revolutionary Council" under Dr. José Miro Cardona. This was perhaps the most important step in the unification of the non Batista anti-Castro movement, joining the "Democratic Revolutionary Front," headed by Dr. Manuel Antonia Varona (itself a union of some five earlier separate groups), with the "People's Revolutionary Movement" of Dr. Manuel Ray. The Council issued a "mobilization order" within a few days of its formation and reports of increased preparations by Cuban exile groups in Miami, New Orleans, and elsewhere began to appear in USA press.