

MIAMI HERALD

MAR 15 1964

Fidel Foe To 'Fight' In Brazil

Aponte to Speak To Union Men

By DON BORNING
Of Our Latin America Staff

Onetime Castro labor leader Pedro Aponte expects to return to Brazil soon.

He'll tell workers in Brazil's northeast, where peasant leader Francisco Juliao follows the



Pedro Aponte
... has a purpose

Castro doctrine, what Castro's takeover has done to the labor movement and working conditions in Cuba.

The 42-year-old Aponte fled Cuba in November of 1960 when he saw that "Castro was a Communist."

Since then as a member of the Cuban Democratic Labor Front (FORDC) Aponte has traveled throughout Latin America to speak with workers and union leaders.

His purpose, like traveling representatives of other exile groups, is to counteract the Castro propaganda being disseminated.

When the Communist directed "First Congress of United Latin American Labor" was called earlier this year in Brazil, Aponte joined other democratic labor forces on the scene in opposing the gathering.

When he left for Brazil he carried photographs and information on the Cuban delegation and its leader, Lazaro Pena, head of the Cuban Confederation of Workers and instrumental in organizing the congress.

Aponte also carried photographs of himself taken with Castro to refute any criticism that he was pro-Batista and to assist in his claim that Castro had betrayed the revolution.

When he arrived, Aponte immediately contacted communications media to publicize his purpose and denounce the congress.

He protested that it was financed by Cuba, Red China and Brazil, and noted the preponderance of representatives from Communist bloc countries in eastern Europe.

From the Latin countries, said Aponte, there were "no democratic labor representatives, only professional agitators."

Aponte spoke to labor groups and labor leaders and told them what happens to unions and working conditions in a Communist controlled country.

The Brazilian press publicized Aponte's activities along with other opposition leaders.

Local pressures forced the congress to move from Belo Horizonte to the inland capital of Brasilia.

Aponte went, too.

He appeared for 30 minutes on a Brasilia television station, showing photographs of firing squad executions in Cuba and other effects of the Castro regime.

He challenged Pena and the Cuban delegation to a public discussion of the labor situation in Cuba.

When the challenge was refused, Aponte claimed it was "because the cause of Red Cuba is indefensible."

Aponte and FORDC consider his mission successful and cite the coverage the Brazilian press gave him.

They feel it was the activity of Aponte and other groups and individuals that prompted the postponement in organizing a single Communist controlled labor group for all of Latin America.

As a result of the campaign against it by opposition forces, a FORDC representative said, "all the people of Latin America know the congress failed."

"Many organizations and many people worked for its defeat . . . all democratic organizations fought together and Mr. Aponte was a part of the fight."