

60-1094

FRANK A. SIEVERMAN, JR.

OCEAN BEACH, N.C.

February 4 1960

Chairman,
U.S. Senate Internal Security Subcommittee,
Washington D.C.,

Gentlemen,

I respectfully protest against the publication now of the testimony of General Cabell on Communist influence in Cuba. That testimony adds to our confusion and to the decay of our Cuban relations, and hides the simple facts about the Cuban revolution in quotations of Communist jabberwocky.

The fundamental fact of that revolution is that landless peasants living in conditions recently described on NBC TV as "virtual slavery" have rebelled, demanding land reforms that would permit them the dignity and decency at long last of individual and family farmers.

Our reaction and our policy toward Cuba should have been one of friendly help and support and guidance in so welcome a social change, not only out of respect to our traditional beliefs in social and economic as well as in political justice, but also to build in Cuba so far as our influence and our statesmanship might permit, a strong bulwark against the propaganda of Communists among poor peasants there, as everywhere.

Instead of obeying our instincts of support for conditions of human decency, and our interests vis a vis Communism, we made the monumental mistake of betraying our beliefs and of talking to Cuba in terms of a conservative banker talking to an indigent banker, and unable to look beyond the figures on a balance sheet. The view that bankers know best on how to meet the intricate problems of today's world is the basis for this blunder in Cuba. We needed a statesmanlike view, and we did not get it.

That we are afflicted with many eccentricities flowing out of the revolution, is obvious. But the basic fact remains that we retreated from meeting the social needs of rebellious peasants asking only what we enjoyed as a birthright, easy access to land. And that Moscow would move into this vacuum that our State Department created was assured. They need not raise the hair on our scalps by establishing Communes in Cuba. All they need to do is to support the elements of social justice there, which we failed so conspicuously even to talk about.

We have suffered a disaster in Cuba of proportions that we still fail to recognize, for obviously the conditions in Cuba are duplicated in Latin America and around the world: poor peasants seeking land. Until we find a way to help, the Communists cannot lose. Don't blame Castro. Blame ourselves.

Respectfully,

Frank A. Sieverman Jr.
Frank A. Sieverman Jr.

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR *efc*

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Legislative Counsel

12 February 1960
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Replaces Form 30-4
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