

1997

6. Two High Cuban Officials Reportedly Defect From Castro Government: A reliable source reports that Justo Carrillo and Jose Joaquin Sanjenis, who held important economic posts in the Cuban revolutionary government, will remain in the United States and seek asylum. The Castro regime is trying to conceal their defection for the time being but, when it becomes known, will charge Sanjenis with the theft of \$500,000 from the Ministry of the Treasury.

These are apparently the first actual defections among several experienced and moderate economic officials who have resigned or been forced out of their posts since Che Guevara became president of the National Bank. Most seem to have been strong supporters of Castro's originally claimed reforms and did much to make them possible. However, as Castro's actions became increasingly drastic and dictatorial, they opposed him and have steadily lost influence. They have refrained from making an open break with Castro and some have accepted lesser government jobs, possibly in fear of denigration like that of Major Hubert Matos--accused of treason when he tried to resign and now in prison--or that reportedly planned against Sanjenis.

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