

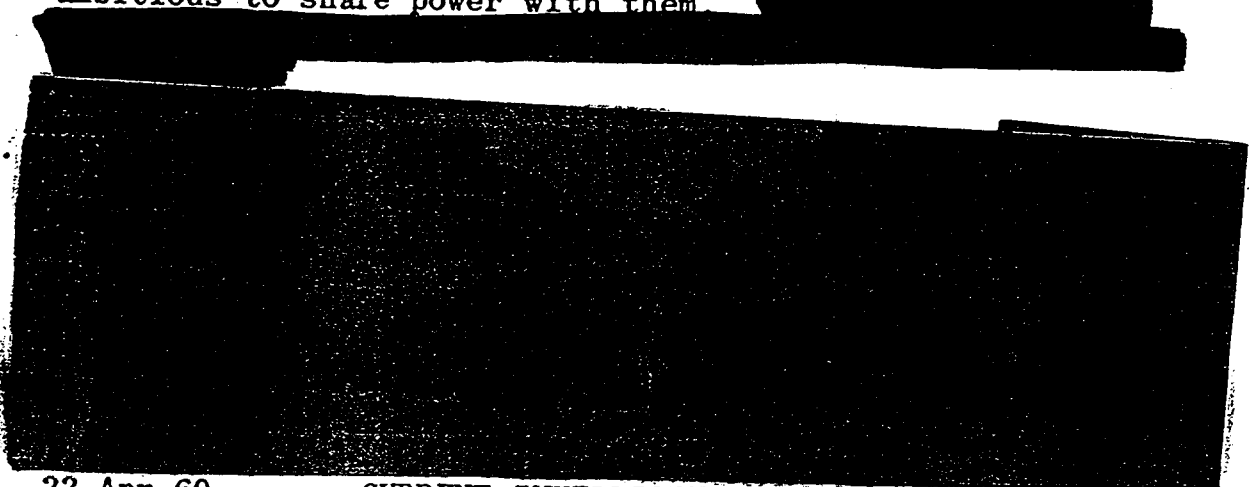
LATIN AMERICA

11. Cuban Labor Troubles Annoy Castro Regime: The Cuban Labor Confederation (CTC) is rent by bitter dissension over Communist efforts to control it. On 18 April a usually reliable source confirmed rumors that CTC Secretary General David Salvador is in hiding in Havana and is planning to resign just before May Day in order to bring the issue to public attention. Salvador was chosen by Fidel Castro to run Cuba's strong labor movement as an important component of the revolution. He and some other labor leaders have resisted the Communists, with whom they have had previous experience. Castro in recent months has endorsed the support given the Communists by his brother Raul and Raul's protegé, pro-Communist Labor Minister Martinez Sanchez.

Castro and his advisers are anxious to postpone a show-down in the CTC until after the May Day rally they are staging to demonstrate domestic and international support for the revolutionary regime. They are infuriated by Salvador's action, which they see as a threat to the rally's success. Martinez considers it imperative that Salvador make a speech at the celebration.

Martinez evidently has already asked Conrado Becquer, head of CTC's powerful sugar workers' federation who has avoided involvement in the power struggle, to replace Salvador. Becquer, opportunistic and politically astute, is reported to be reluctant to accept and to have said that in the event he took the post, he would demand government support for a non-Communist CTC directorate. The Castro government is unlikely to accept or hold to such terms; if Becquer does replace Salvador, however, it would indicate that he believes he can control the Communist labor leaders, as he is too ambitious to share power with them.

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