

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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COUNTRY Venezuela

SUBJECT Fight for Control of STP in Caripito

PLACE
ACQUIRED

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DATE OF
INFO.

May - June 1950

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SOURCE

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1. Since May 1950 a struggle for control of the independent Sindicato de Trabajadores Petroleros (STP) de Caripito, strongest union in the State of Monagas, Venezuela, has been going on between factions of the Partido Revolucionario del Proletariado-Comunista (PRP - black Communist party) and the brown Union Republicana Democratica (URD). The apparent leaders of the two factions are Atilio Gonzalez, black Communist leader and Claims Secretary of the STP, and Salvador Gomez, URD member and President of the syndicate. The supporters of Gomez include Luis Hernandez Solis, Correspondence Secretary; Jesus Guzman R., Secretary of Finance; and Felix Aguilera, alternate director.
2. The goal of the black Communists is to gain control of the syndicate at the election of new officers which is scheduled to take place in September or October 1950. Gomez has indicated that he will remain in office until after the elections in an attempt to prevent the black Communists from assuming control before September. He also indicated that he does not seek re-election.
3. During the May 1950 general strike the black Communists in the Maturin district encouraged the strike, although their party officially opposed it. Gonzalez was arrested by the Seguridad Nacional after the beginning of the strike but prior to the large-scale walkouts at Caripito. He was held in jail approximately 24 days and then released and allowed to resume his labor activities.
4. Gomez was given the choice by the Seguridad Nacional of going to jail or of aiding the government in getting the workers to return to their jobs. He chose the latter course and toured the different areas around Caripito in company with government officials, talking to the workers and telling them the strike was illegal. A violent reaction against Gomez occurred among the workers. His life was threatened, and he asked company officials to allow him to resign and leave the area since his family was in danger. The black Communists opened a campaign against Gomez using handbills, articles in PRP, the party organ, and agitation among the workers. In retaliation, Gomez called a meeting of the syndicate and had Gonzalez ousted by vote and replaced by a URD adherent, Felix Aguilera. However, when Gonzalez was released from prison, he obtained

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his reinstatement as Claims Secretary.

5. Since the striko, the Caripito area has been deluged by pamphlets from both the PRP and the URD hurling accusations and counter-accusations against each other.
6. On 13 June 1950 Martin Marval, Claims Secretary of the black STP de Puerto la Cruz and Secretary General of the black Federacion de Trabajadores del Estado Anzoategui, arrived in Caripito for conferences with Gonzalez. Marval is the leading PRP official in eastern Venezuela. He spent three days in Caripito during which he met with Gonzalez and Ismael Ruiz at the home of Angel Nicolas Contreras Marciano in the El Porvenir camp. Ruiz, a member of the STP de Caripito, had been arrested on 10 May 1950 on the charge of agitating in favor of re-commencing the strike. Contreras is a chauffeur who does not belong to a union.

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