In recent weeks there has been a wave of resignations from the Partido Acción Nacional. The enclosed article from the Sept. 18 issue of the pro-PAN Diario de Yucatán reports a conversation allegedly overheard in a midtown café to the effect that PRI Deputy Dr. Alfonso Barrera was paying 60,000 pesos to PAN regidores (city councilmen) to resign, along with promises to give city jobs to their indigent relatives. Various minor PAN notables throughout the state resigned noisily in large paid advertisements in Novedades de Yucatán (increasingly subsidized in this manner by the PRI as a counterweight to the PAN Diario de Yucatán). An important defector was Vicente Romero G., president of the PAN municipal committee in Tekax (See enclosure). The most important, however, was Q.F. Eduardo Trueba Barrera, a regidor of Mérida

Trueba had eagerly asked for a prolonged leave of absence in a letter dated September 4. According to another letter published in the Diario de Yucatán on September 20 and signed by the other six regidores, Trueba had written another letter canceling his request for a leave of absence, but meanwhile the other regidores had discovered his dealings with the opposition and tipped him. Trueba countered in a letter published in Novedades de Yucatán attributing his falling out with the mayor to the latter's failure to live up to election promises.

According to a consulate informant who is in the inner circle of the PAN, the resignations are part of
plan of Governor Luis Torres Mesías to save his
demolished political career by regaining Mérida for
the PRI, thus redeeming himself in the eyes of Mexico
City. If four out of seven regidores could be induced
to resign, the constitution would permit the governor
to name a commission PRI, of course, to rule the city.

Trueba was offered 75,000 pesos, according to
the informant. The ex-cordage worker Porfirio PALMA
was offered 25,000 pesos and 7500 pesos a month for the
remainder of his term. Hector BOLÍO Pinzón was offered
50,000 and various favors. Milton CANTO, being a millionaire,
was more or less unbribable, but is involved in a lawsuit
involving several million pesos. He was promised a decision
in his favor if he would resign.

Palma, Bolo, and Canto replied that would "think
it over", but reported the approaches to the other members
of the municipal council. The informant had high praise
for Palma, a poor man to whom the preferred sums were
immense. He, the informant doubted that the scheme had
the approval of the PRI in Mexico City, and he also
doubted that any disorders would have resulted had the
governor been able to carry out the plan. The people
would have been so depressed by the leniency of the
PAN that they would have been able to do no more than
shrug.

HARREN

CONFIDENTIAL

By

Date
POST         Merida

1. Your telegram / airgram A.78 / letter / report of ______
   2.23.68 concerning PRI-PAN intrigues ______

_________

was: ______ x very useful ______ useful ______ marginal.

2. Its receipt was: ______ timely ______ too late for best use.

3. The subject was covered: ______ adequately ______ too fully.

4. I would appreciate: ______ a follow-up report ______ continuing information on this subject.

COMMENT:

Very helpful for putting local press reports in perspective. We take it that PAN problems in Yucatan have minimal relationship to apparent internal PAN disorder at center. Do local Panistas have feelings one way or the other over departure of Christlieb Ibarrola or resignation of Dip. Gonzalez Luna. Any future indication that PRI maneuver in Merida was in fact influenced from center would be of interest.

Robert E. Service

for Wallace W. Stuart
Counselor of Embassy
for Political Affairs

(Classification)

DECLASSIFIED
Authority: 8/26/70
By: Date: 1/6/62