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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

712.00/6-2261

FROM : Amembassy, MEXICO, D.F.

1491
DESP. NO.

Mexican Affairs

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

June 22, 1961
DATE

REF : Department's ^{ara} CA-10878, June 15, 1961

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SUBJECT: Membership of Cardenas in PRI

In the referenced instruction the Department requested the Embassy to clarify the discrepancy between Embassy Weeka No. 21 and Monterrey over the alleged remarks made by General Alfonso CORONA del Rosal concerning former President GARDENAS' statement that he was not a member of any national or international party.

The ex-President's words were interpreted as implying that Cardenas no longer considered himself an active member of the official Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), but the PRI remained silent on the issue, having apparently been caught by surprise. The first reference by a PRI official to Cardenas' denial of membership in a "national party", which could only mean the PRI, was made by Corona del Rosal during a press conference in Monterrey. The Embassy Weeka and Monterrey Consulate General versions were based on different newspaper accounts of what Corona del Rosal had actually said, since no verbatim text of the interview was available. In an effort to establish the exact words used by Corona del Rosal, the Consulate General discussed the matter with Prof. Eliseo SANCHEZ, regional director of the PRI for the State of Nuevo Leon. Sanchez supplied the following quote, which, he claimed, were Corona's own words:

"At the present time, I have no notice of this (Cardenas' resignation in writing, but if he says he has resigned (from the PRI), then it must be true, and I have no reason to doubt such news."

In a sense, Corona confused the issue by introducing the concept of resignation in writing. Cardenas never said he had resigned, but limited himself to stating that he was not a member of a party. The implication that he had resigned could not be read into Cardenas' statement inasmuch as the statutes of the PRI contain no provision for the resignation of a member.

The PRI statutes provide that membership may be acquired by submitting an application through the corresponding organ of the Party.

JJMontllor/mlm
REPORTER

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ARA: GMA
OFFICE OF MEXICAN AFFAIRS

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| ACTION ASSIGNED TO: <i>ala Cuenca</i> | ACTION TAKEN: <i>None required</i> | DATE OF ACTION: <i>7/11/61</i> | DIRECTIONS TO RM/R: <i>Julian</i> |
| NAME OF OFFICER: <i>Montllor</i> | | | |

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The action office must return this permanent record copy to RM/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

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By: *ML* ARA Date: *4/20/01*

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of members are listed as:

1. Attendance at assemblies and civic acts organized by the PRI
2. Obedience to the decisions of the Party
3. Support and diffusion of the Party's principles and political platforms
4. Support for the Party's candidates in elections
5. Loyal execution of assignments given by the PRI
6. Punctual payment of regular and extraordinary dues levied by the Party
7. Report changes of domicile

Members who fail to meet their obligations are subject to various sanctions, which are listed in the statutes as 1) admonition, 2) temporary suspension of rights, 3) removal from post (for Party officers), 4) expulsion from the Party, and 5) expulsion with statement of treason.

The severity of the sanction is established by the following standards:

Admonition - for failure to attend Party assemblies and civic acts; and for deficiency in carrying out Party assignments.

Temporary Suspension - for refusal to carry out assignments; and for repeated failure to pay dues.

Removal from Post - for negligence in execution of political, social or administrative duties; for violation of the Statutes; for misuse of Party assets; and for profiting from Party position

Expulsion - for divisive activities among members; for advocating principles contrary to those of the Party or departing from the Party's political policies; for acting against the Party's candidates; for lack of probity in carrying out public duties; and for indiscipline towards the Party's decisions.

Expulsion with Statement of Treason - for connivance with other political parties.

As a founding member of the original political organization which is today the PRI, Cardenas' membership in the Party was never questioned before he announced his non-affiliation with any party. However, a review of Cardenas' political activity during the past eighteen months shows that if it had wished, the PRI would have found ample justification for expelling Cardenas by the strict application of the statutes. When he said in Apatzingan last year that Mexico was not immune from another revolution, he in effect said that the PRI was failing to achieve the purposes of the Mexican Revolution. His emotional espousal of Fidel CASTRO's


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cause runs contrary to the Government's more cautious expression of sympathy for the Cuban Revolution tempered by a policy of non-entanglement. Finally, Cárdenas' sponsorship of the Latin American Peace Conference showed beyond a doubt that he was more of the stripe of the Partido Popular Socialista (PPS) than of the PRI, which tried to smother the Conference under a blanket of silence. Any of these activities, and undoubtedly many others, could have been adduced as a reason to oust Cárdenas from the PRI had not other political considerations inhibited such drastic action. Foremost among these considerations is probably the desire for President Lopez Mateos to appear as the leader of all Mexicans united in the PRI. Expulsion of Cárdenas would have created a significant breach in the Party in view of the large following that he commands. It might also have encouraged Cárdenas to create a new party which would have posed a challenge to the PRI's supremacy. In short, it must have appeared preferable to the PRI to maintain a semblance of party unity by ignoring Cárdenas' deviations from national policy than to create an open break with one of its most outstanding members.

By his political actions, Cárdenas showed that he was becoming increasingly independent from the present PRI leadership. His isolation during the Peace Conference may have convinced him that the PRI no longer had room for him and he may have chosen to effect the break not by any formal act of resignation but rather by quietly disassociating himself from the Party -- or any party -- in a public statement.

For the Ambassador:


Joseph J. Montllor
First Secretary of Embassy

cc: AMGONGEN, MONTERREY

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By MT NARA Date 4/20/01