

ORIGIN/ACTION

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AGR	COM	FRB
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	6	
TR	XMB	AIR
		4
ARMY	CIA	NAVY
5	10	5
OSD	USIA	NSA
12	8	3
BI		NSC
1		2

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AIRGRAM

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TO : Department of State

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HANDLING INDICATOR
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
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INFO: ALL CONSULATES IN MEXICO

RM/AN
ANALYSIS & DISTRIBUTION
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FROM : AmEmbassy MEXICO, D.F.

DATE: January 29, 1963

SUBJECT: New Peasant and Farmer Organization (CCI) Culminates National Liberation Movement's Efforts at Political Action

REF :

The formal appearance of the Central Campesina Independiente (CCI-Independent Peasants and Farmers Central) during the January 6-8, 1963 constituent meetings in Mexico City was the fruition of efforts by the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional (MLN-Movement of National Liberation) to have a political action instrument of national scope. The sequence of congresses, and movements, which culminated in the formation of the CCI establishes beyond any doubt their Communist inspiration.

In December 1960 former President Lazaro Cardenas met with other Latin American representatives of the World Peace Council (WPC), a Communist front organization, to plan the first regional conference of the WPC in the Western Hemisphere. The principal object was to rally support for Fidel Castro. The Latin American Conference for National Sovereignty, Economic Emancipation and Peace was held in Mexico in early March 1961. Among its resolutions was one calling for the establishment of national liberation movements in each Latin American republic to carry out the recommendations of the Conference, essentially anti-"U.S. Imperialism" and pro-Castroist. Just as the name of Cardenas, who has long lent himself to Communist causes, had been used to lend prestige and respectability to the Latin American Peace Conference, so was it used to organize the National Liberation Movement in Mexico in August 1961. In both instances, however, well-known Mexican Communists played leading roles in giving direction to these organizations.

The provisional Committee for National Sovereignty and Economic Emancipation, forerunner of the MLN, worked intensively during the months of May and June 1961 in preparation for the National Assembly which met on August 4 with 40 delegates from the Federal District and 180 from 24 different areas of the Republic, representing various

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agricultural workers', students', women's civic and cultural organizations, all leftist in orientation. The MLN National Committee appointed by the Assembly was composed of leading Mexican Marxists, among them several members of the Mexican Communist Party Central Committee.

The MLN, since its formation, has insisted that it is not a political party, and that its ranks are open to persons with affiliation in any of the existing parties. Thus, the MLN held that membership in a recognized party, such as the Government party - the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) - or Vicente Lombardo Toledano's Marxist party - the Partido Popular Socialista (PPS), was no impediment to militancy in the MLN, allegedly a simple "civic group." Lombardo Toledano held that the MLN was a political organization, and forbade PPS members from joining the MLN, under penalty of losing their PPS standing. Notwithstanding its public claims, the MLN in fact began drawing up plans in late 1961 to form a national party, but was effectively dissuaded from carrying them out by means of strong pressure informally brought to bear on MLN leaders by the President's office.

Frustrated in its first attempt to enter directly into the political arena, the MLN directorate then pursued the establishment of regional MLN committees throughout the country. Invariably, local Communists played a leading role in the regional committees. These committees identified themselves with local causes or movements, thus putting the weight of the MLN behind what would otherwise have remained a local issue in many cases. The most notorious instances of MLN involvement in local situations occurred in Guerrero and Baja California. In the latter state, the MLN gave financial support to Alfonso GARZON in his campaign for the mayoralty of Mexicali as an independent candidate in opposition to the PRI nominee. Garzon, noted for his troublemaking among cotton growers in the Mexicali Valley, ran unsuccessfully under the banner of an unregistered local party called the Alianza de Electores Libres. In Guerrero, a local organization of leftist leanings called the Asociacion Civica Guerrerense (ACG) played a leading role in the ouster of Governor Raul CABALLERO Aburto in January 1961, before the MLN was created. This "civic group", which managed to have some of its members appointed to local municipal positions in the housecleaning that followed Caballero's downfall, subsequently ran its own candidates in the regular elections for municipal and state offices on December 2, 1962. The ACG candidate for governor was a member of the MLN central committee, and with other ACG candidates for municipal office, received support from the MLN during the campaign. All ACG candidates were defeated but they claimed fraud, and on December 31 a group of disgruntled ACG members attacked the Iguala City Hall leaving two dead in their wake.

Although the MLN's efforts, through local political groups, to defeat the PRI has failed to date, its establishment of regional MLN committees has met with considerable success. Directly participating in this work has been

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Guauhtemoc CARDENAS, the former President's son, who has made extensive trips throughout Mexico for the MLN. Special attention has been paid to the northern and northwestern part of the country, where leftist agitators were already at work among discontented and landless peasants. Among these Communist or pro-Communist agrarian leaders, most of them members of the MLN, are to be found the organizers and directors of the new CCI. The MLN's decision in mid-1962 to branch out into a formal agrarian organization (CCI) which would directly challenge the Government's official agrarian efforts was apparently made by the Communist Party of Mexico (PCM) through its members who now direct the MLN, and with the support of Lazaro Cardenas, whose use as a figurehead is highly important both to the MLN and the CCI because of his reputation in the agrarian reform field and his appeal among the peasants.

The CCI gathered together, using the name of Cardenas as a rallying point, a large number of agrarian agitators, known Communists, prominent pro-Communists, and some old leaders long known for their conspiracies against the government for the highly publicized organizational meetings of January 1963. While not personally attacking President Lopez Mateos, the CCI leaders made it clear that they openly opposed the PRI, particularly the official party's agrarian sector, the Confederacion Nacional de Campesinos (CNC). They were critical of the present government's agrarian and labor union policies, which led to the feeling in official circles that the President himself was being attacked, and the CCI also strongly defended the Castro regime and attacked "American imperialism". The first reaction in government quarters to the CCI was that it constituted a serious threat to the PRI and the Lopez Mateos administration, and that the CCI might become strong enough in coming months to influence the selection later in 1963 of the next president of Mexico. The government therefore moved quickly to encourage widespread public criticism of the CCI and its directors, including Cardenas himself despite the political risk this involved. Avoiding direct or police action against the CCI leaders, which might have precipitated disorders, the Lopez Mateos administration pursued a tactic of letting the CCI "burn itself out", along with effective measures of buying off or coercing CCI supporters to abandon the new organization, and general statements made by the President, the head of the PRI, and other government spokesmen calling for national unity and attacking demagogues who hope for personal profit from their opposition to the established party. Moreover, Lopez Mateos, who already planned large-scale land redistribution during his last two years in office, dramatized his program by moving rapidly to announce forthcoming land distribution to ejidatarios on an unprecedented scale.

The general feeling now among the public is that, by "pulling the teeth" of the CCI in the field of land distribution, as well as by other more subtle means of reducing the CCI to impotence, the Lopez Mateos may be bringing under control a situation which might otherwise seriously threaten the PRI and its

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forthcoming selection of a presidential candidate. It is, therefore, generally believed that the CCI has little chance of establishing itself as a national political party in opposition to the PRI, which was one of the announced aims of its MLN organizers, and that, in any event, the Lopez Mateos government is determined to prevent it from becoming a political party. Should the government continue to press its quiet attack on the CCI, and resolve, at last, that it must also reduce Cardenas to political insignificance, it is likely that the CCI threat to the PRI can successfully be removed.

Even if the CCI is stopped from becoming a political party or an organization otherwise influential in national politics, it may still be capable of operating as an "action group" in many depressed areas, particularly in northern Mexico, and thereby keep the Lopez Mateos government under pressure. The MLN and the PCM, however, can be expected to try to keep alive the CCI, or alternatively to reconstitute their forces along some other anti-government, violently anti-U.S. and pro-Castro line. The basic problem of growing discontent among hungry peasants, compounded by Mexico's population explosion, will remain in spite of short-term political maneuvers of the Lopez Mateos administration, and will offer further opportunities for the PCM and its MLN to exploit in the future.

For the Ambassador:

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