

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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ANALYSIS BRANCH
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TO : Department of State
Info: American Embassy

FROM : American Consulate MERIDA

DATE: September 23, 1968

SUBJECT: PRI Tries to Buy Out the PAN Municipal Government

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS
DEC 1 1 1968

REF :

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 Vasquez 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 C., 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 cagily 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 fished 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

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In Out

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Clearances:

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Authority *12896900*

By *W.N.* Date *3/26/02*

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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 PAEMA was offered 25,000 pesos and 7500 pesos a month for the remainder of his term, Hector BOLIÓ 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, Bolio, 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 proffered 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 venality of the PAN that they would have been able to do no more than shrug.

HARBEN


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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
American Embassy
Mexico, D. F.
DEC 11 1968
Oct 24 1968
(Date)

POST Merida

1. Your telegram _____ /airgram A.78 /letter/report of _____
9.23.68 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.

[Signature]
Robert E. Service
for Wallace W. Stuart
Counselor of Embassy
for Political Affairs

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