

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA  
TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.  
REF : 000183 Labor Developments  
SUBJECT: Cuban Labor Determined to Celebrate

1627  
DESP. NO.

DATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
BUREAU OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
APR 4 1952  
May Day

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The 45-day suspension of constitutional guarantees by the government of General Fulgencio BATISTA will still be in effect on May 1, a traditional labor holiday in many countries of the world, including Cuba, but the Cuban Confederation of Labor, reportedly, is determined to hold its usual demonstration of "worker solidarity".

This was learned by the Embassy's labor reporting officer yesterday in conversation with Francisco AGUIRRE, secretary-general of the Interamerican Organization of Labor (ORIT) and prominent member of the CTC executive board. Aguirre said that Batista had not yet agreed to a full scale celebration but "regardless of what his decision might be the CTC would have a demonstration". He said this had been thoroughly discussed in a CTC executive board meeting.

"If we can't parade down the Prado or meet in front of the Palace", Aguirre declared, "we'll meet out here at the CTC or in some park, but we are not going to give up the May Day tradition."

COMMENT

It is difficult to believe that under the present circumstances a May 1 celebration of the size of previous years will be permitted. It is possible that Batista and the unions will work out some compromise type of commemoration which cannot be turned into a mass movement or demonstration against the government. The tone and manner of Aguirre's discussion of this issue indicated that Cuban labor leaders are still not very sure of just where they stand in the new regime and that much confusion still exists. In this connection, the Embassy's labor reporting officer felt it was significant that Aguirre and Angel BRAVO, ORIT office manager, were in doubt whether or not to include an account of labor's situation under Batista, written by Robert ALEXANDER for the AFL's Free Trade Union News, in the Spanish language bulletin which ORIT gets out.

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Alexander's story was very unfriendly to Batista and stresses the CTC's previous strong opposition to him.

For the Ambassador:

*Irvin S. Lippe*

Irvin S. Lippe  
Attaché

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*9/1/50*