Subject: Raoul Alfonso Gonsé, New Editor of Newspaper, Alerta.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

May 29, 1947

Sir:

I have the honor to report on the appointment of Dr. Raoul Alfonso Gonsé, widely read, ace political writer for El Mundo, as editor of Alerta, the afternoon paper owned by the Diario de la Marina interests. Dr. Gonsé's appointment became effective on May 4. Alerta has one edition which comes out at 11 a.m. The average daily circulation is 10,483 copies.

In the course of a visit on May 2 to the offices of Alerta, señor Eliseo Guzmán, administrator and acting director of the afternoon paper, explained the circumstances of Dr. Gonsé's appointment.

Señor Guzmán explained that Alerta has been a sort of step-child of Diario for some time, but in recent months the directors came to the conclusion that its popularity made it necessary to launch the afternooner on a more extensive basis. Additional supplies of newsprint have been obtained from Canadian sources, an Oregon mill, and from Sweden.

In casting about for a director, Dr. Gonsé was chosen because of his journalistic standing, his honesty, and, as señor Guzmán explained, "because he has the same ideas that we have." This undoubtedly refers to Dr. Gonsé's implacable anti-Communist stand.

Señor Guzmán said Dr. Pedro Cué, director-owner of El Mundo, was considerably upset because of Alerta's offer to Dr. Gonsé, who has been Dr. Cué's right-hand man in the campaign against the policies of President Grau San Martín and against Communism.

However, señor Guzmán explained, the offer was correctly made, and Gonsé accepted because it represented a promotion in the field of journalism. In an off-hand manner, señor Guzmán said Dr. Cué offered to sell El Mundo to the Diario interests during their conversation about the hiring of Dr. Gonsé.

Alerta has maintained a certain reserve about American policy changes in favor of Diario, but the visit of the Public Affairs Officer
Affairs Officer was marked by an atmosphere of cordiality which seemed significant. Senor Guzmán declared that Alerta was very friendly to the United States and would cooperate in every way with the Embassy in Habana. These newspapers have been much friendlier since the United States adopted a stiffening attitude toward Russia.

Dr. González, in a conversation with the Public Affairs Officer, has appeared to be friendly to the United States, and Dr. Cué has corroborated this attitude. In his new position as director of Alerta, criticism by that newspaper of the United States' policies, if any, should be greatly tempered.

Dr. Cué says he tried to influence Dr. González to remain with El Mundo but appreciated the fact that the post of director was an advancement for his former employee. Dr. Cué believes Dr. González's political opinions, aside from the anti-Communist stand, will clash with those of Alerta's owners before very long. In other words, either Dr. González or Alerta's owners will undergo an editorial change of policy, or the arrangement will not last.

El Mundo's owner did not say he had offered his newspaper for sale, but he appeared discouraged about its chances of continuing publication.

Respectfully yours,
For the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim:

C. Allen Stewart
C. Allen Stewart
Public Affairs Officer

File No. 891
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To the Department in quintuplicate (Ozalid)
Embassy Habana reports that Raoul Alfonso GONSE, widely read political writer for EL MUNDO, has been appointed editor of ALERTA. Although Dr. Cué was upset over this appointment and endeavored to persuade GONSE to remain with EL MUNDO, where he had been Cué's right-hand man in his campaign against the Grau administration and Communism, he recognized that the new position was an advancement.

Señor GUZMÁN, Director of ALERTA, in a recent conversation with the Public Affairs Officer of the Embassy, stated that Cué had offered to sell EL MUNDO to the DIARIO DE LA MARINA interests. There is no indication from other sources, however, that such an offer was made.

Dr. Cué has expressed the opinion that GONSE's political opinions, aside from his anti-Communist position, would clash with those of DIARIO - ALERTA owners.

Re: Confidential despatch no. 3183, May 12, 1947 from Habana.