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FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

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DISP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

June 4, 1953

REF :
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE DATE
OFFICE OF
INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

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SUBJECT: ARMY ATTACHE REPORT ON PROBABILITIES OF SUCCESS OF AN ATTEMPTED INVASION OF CUBA.

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The Army Attaché at this Embassy, Col. Vincent M. Elmore, has submitted a report (R-77-53) entitled "Probable Success of an Attempted Invasion of Cuba." The Army Attaché states he submitted the report not because he considers it likely an invasion may be attempted, but on instructions to submit his views as to the probability of success of an invasion were it attempted. It is assumed a copy of this report will be transmitted to the Department by the Department of the Army.

The sense of the Army Attaché's report is that if Batista is alive at the end of an attempted invasion of Cuba he will still be in control of Cuba and the invasion forces defeated. The Army Attaché believes, however, that if President Batista were removed from the scene chaos would be likely and the chances of the invaders to seize control would then be enhanced. He considers it very possible that with Batista gone the Armed Forces might split into opposing groups with a possibility of fighting between them. He discusses the possibility that Generals CANTILLO or URIA might be able to control the Armed Forces until civil government were re-established.

The Embassy agrees that Batista would probably be able to maintain himself in power in any invasion attempt, provided he escaped assassination. It also agrees that a very difficult situation, possibly leading to chaos, would result in the event of Batista's assassination.

In view of the extreme difficulty in organizing and assembling men and materiel for an amphibious operation of military significance, the Embassy doubts that an operation of this type and scope is under serious consideration or could be pushed to a successful conclusion if attempted. The publicity being given the alleged invasion plot--publicity presumably put out by the opposition--would indicate a war of nerves rather than a serious military operation. The Embassy recognizes it is not ~~impossible~~ ^{improbable}

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that some men and equipment could be landed in the hope of enlisting the cooperation and collaboration of the populace and at least part of the Armed Forces. The Army Attaché is of the opinion an operation of the latter type would be doomed to failure. Unless morale of the Armed Forces has deteriorated to a degree hitherto unsuspected, the Embassy assumes the Batista regime would be capable of suppressing insurrectional activities of the type envisaged.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain
Acting Counselor of Embassy

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