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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

737-00/6-2453
XR 911.63

FROM : AMEMBASSY, Habana

2019
DESP. NO.

June 24, 1953
DATE

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF : Despatch 1988, June 19, 1953

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SUBJECT: "Visión" Magazine and Batista Comments on Revolution Article

The issue dated June 26, 1953, of the Spanish-language magazine, "Visión", which as reported in the despatch under reference had been held in New Orleans, finally arrived in Habana and appeared on the news stands after only a brief delay. The Embassy understands that this issue was brought to Cuba by a periodical distributor other than Pérez y Hnos, Visión's regular distributor. The Embassy has obtained copies of the issue of Visión in question and the request in despatch No. 1988 that the Department supply copies may be ignored.

The publicity given to the Visión article prompted reporters to question President Batista about the "armed invasion" reported by Visión, in a press conference granted by the President last Sunday night at Camp Columbia. The President declared that for four months the Government had known of the counter-revolutionary plans of the political leaders who met recently in Montreal. He said that these plans were something like the Normandy invasion, requiring 70 million pesos, air and surface fleets, and 50,000 men. His opinion was that no Latin American country could successfully carry out an operation such as that planned. With reference to the Visión statement that \$25,000 a day was being spent on intelligence agents abroad, Batista declared that while something was being spent, it did not come to \$25,000 even monthly. He affirmed that "there will be peace and we will have elections" and added that the armed forces are "prepared against those who have threatened to use violence in attempting the impossible return to power".

The President assured the reporters that it was fixed policy "to give guarantees to the citizens in the exercise of their rights and to the legally registered parties fighting for Cuban political and constitutional normality". "However," he continued, "we remain vigilant and we repel

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REPORTER

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From _____

those who sacked Cuba and everyday talk of insurrections on certain dates." Batista closed the interview with the remark: "The people don't want them, the opposition repudiates them, and so do we."

There are enclosed clippings from the Havana Post and El Mundo reporting the President's press conference.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain
Acting Counselor of Embassy

Enclosures:
✓ Four newspaper clippings.

cc: Montreal

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JUN 23 1953

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FCF

Opposition Plan Known, Says Batista

Counter-revolutionary plans recently agreed upon at a conference of opposition leaders in Montreal, Canada, have been in the possession of the government for the past four months, President Batista assured reporters in a press conference at Camp Columbia Sunday night.

Questioned by newsmen on the scope and nature of these plans, he said they were fantastic and added that the Allied invasion of Normandy almost pales into insignificance beside them. He said they would require some \$70,000,000, huge fleets of planes and ships, big land bases and some 50,000 men, including mercenaries, as shock troops to effect a landing.

"To give you an example," he continued, "I might say that none of our countries, with all their natural resources, their freedom of action and their present budgets, however big, could tackle anything of the sort with any hope of success."

He denied that the government spends \$25,000 a day for intelligence work abroad, as published in a foreign magazine. He said some money was spent on it but not that much, even in a month.

He added that the grandiose plans of the exiled opposition leaders were only on paper and that nothing concrete had been achieved, and that, moreover, they would have no chance of success, because the armed forces are alert to destroy them.

He went on to say that the elections will be held as scheduled and that the opposition will enjoy full guarantees, but warned that constant announcements of catastrophes

to alarm the population would not be tolerated.

The First Lady, Martha Fernandez de Batista, also took part in the press conference, referring to flood relief. She told reporters the finishing touches were being put to the program of aid to flood victims. She added that the commission appointed for the purpose is studying the benefits which the flood victims will begin to receive this week.

Finally, she said she was well satisfied with the cooperation received from the trade and industrial associations in the campaign to aid the flooded zones.

MAY 6 - 1953

'Excelsior' Says 'Arrested' Cubans Betrayed Plot

MEXICO CITY, May 5. (AP). — The newspaper "Excelsior" said last night high government sources claim that five Cubans reportedly detained last week had not been arrested but were merely informing police of an alleged plot to invade their homeland.

Officially, the Ministry of Interior, the Police and all others steadily deny holding any Cubans last week.

On the other hand, reporters claim they saw the Cubans in police headquarters.

"Excelsior" said today that a source close to the Secretary of Interior said three of the Cubans were actually notifying police of the plot against the present Cuban Government.

The paper said the Cubans had accepted money—"easy money," "Excelsior" called it—to take part in the plot and then kept the cash and notified officials of the plan. Former President Prio Socarras of Cuba, meanwhile, was reported to be vacationing in the nearby resort of Cuernavaca. He returned to Mexico last week-end, but moved from his Mexico City hotel headquarters to Cuernavaca shortly afterwards. All efforts to contact him have failed.

Prio reportedly was financing the invasion.