

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SECURITY : UNCLASSIFIED

PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

TO : Department of State

937.44/8-2550

FROM : HABANA 466 August 25, 1950

REF : -----

SUBJECT : RECENT TELEVISION DEVELOPMENTS IN CUBA

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Last week an air freight shipment arrived in Habana from Philadelphia containing Union Radio's television equipment. Two planes were used to make the move - one carrying 19,000 pounds, the other 18,000 pounds. The transmitter, an RCA five-kilowatt unit, will be installed at the corner of San Miguel and Mazon in the Vedado section of Habana. It is expected that construction will be completed in time to transmit the popular nightly series of baseball games which start in October. Initially a 50-foot antenna will be used; later on, however, a 200-foot steel tower will be erected for the broadcasts. The station will operate on channel 4 (66 - 72 megacycles). It is understood that the carrier frequency will be offset ten kilocycles in order not to cause interference on the same channel in Miami.

The president of Union Radio, Gaspar PUMAREJO, has announced the election of the following officers for "Union Radio Television":

- President: Jose Antonio NESTRE
- Vice President: Benjamin MENENDEZ
- Treasurer: Alvaro MENENDEZ

The Menendez brothers are the owners of the large and popular department store, Nueva Isla, in Habana and are the principal stockholders of Union Radio, a network with outlets in nine cities.

Progress continues to be made in the construction of the building which will house the CMC television equipment. It is expected that this station, which will operate on channel No. 6 (82 - 88 m.c.) with a 5-kilowatt RCA transmitter, will be on the air next December. The new building is located at 23rd and M streets in the Vedado section of Habana, alongside the CMC studios.

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ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

The Oriental Radio network has also applied for a television license but it has not submitted any plans and specifications for the approval of the Government, as required by existing regulations. This company has tentatively been assigned the use of channel 7 (174 - 180 m.c.).

Another company, (Television del Caribe, S.A.) that was recently organized to exploit television in Cuba has likewise made no move to submit plans and specifications for approval. The company is reportedly backed by two Cubans, M. D. AUTRAN and Luis MENESES, and an American 1/. It has tentatively been assigned the use of channel 3.

Manolo FERNANDEZ, President of Radio Progreso, has recently announced his intention of constructing a television station in Habana.

At a press interview last week, Amado TRINIDAD, President of the RHC network, announced his intention of starting a television service in Habana and declared that he has set aside one million dollars for this purpose. His press release indicated that the transmitter would be manufactured by General Electric.

The Government has not taken any action on the proposed plan to permit the duty-free importation of television receivers in Cuba. The industry is depending on the Government to take this move in order to lower prices and stimulate the sale of receivers in Habana.

Raymond L. Harrell
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Attaché

1/ George B. Storer of Fort Industries.