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FROM : HABANA, 148, July 21, 1950

REF : HABANA'S 1139 OF MAY 18, 1950, ET AL.

SUBJECT : PAWLEY'S COMPANY REPLACES TROLLEYS WITH BUSES ON ONE ROUTE
JULY 21.

William C. PAWLEY's company, Autobuses Modernos, today (July 21) retired several of the half-century-old street cars and a score of U.S.-built buses began to operate over one of the principal routes of the Havana Electric Company.

Trolleys on other lines will be relegated permanently to round houses or sold for scrap and will be replaced by buses as they arrive from the United States and England, and as the former street car motor-men learn to become bus drivers.

Inauguration of the first line of buses, which will eventually take the place of all Habana street cars, was proceeded by about two weeks of public relations fanfare. Mr. Pawley staged two parties, one a cocktail affair for high Government officials and another outdoor festival for union leaders and Havana Electric-Autobuses Modernos employees that had an attendance of thousands.

The 75 or so buses that have so far arrived from the United States were driven past the Presidential Palace where they halted and one of them was inspected by President PRIO, Minister of Communications CLARK, and other notables. They were then driven a short distance to the Malecon and placed on public exhibition for a day.

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Habana, 148, July 21, 1950.

America, Cuba's leading weekly news reel, devoted about three-fourths of its release for the week of July 17 to the events described in the last two paragraphs above. 1/

F. D. Leatherman
F. D. Leatherman
Assistant Commercial Attaché.

- Sources:
1. Embassy files and personnel
 2. The press
 3. Autobuses Modernos
 4. A news reel
 5. Others

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1/ In the news reel Mr. Pawley showed he has a fine understanding of Cuban psychology that should be a valuable asset to his company. He let Cuban officials of the Government, company, and unions do all the oratory and was not even identified as being a foreigner. As was pointed out in Report 194 of September 14, 1949, Popularity of Mexican Movies in Cuba Outside Big Cities, Cuban newsreels (especially America) are primarily a propaganda medium and invariably collect a fee from the people appearing in them. Unquestionably, Autobuses Modernos paid a large fee for America's unusually favorable publicity. It is also understood that the National Transport Commission delayed granting a permit to inaugurate the first route until July 14 because it contended Autobuses is not a Spanish word, if not for other reasons. This is rather amusing in view of the widespread use of many English words by Habana industries and businesses.