

Mr Pouch
PRIORITY

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937.61/5-1353
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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM: AMEMBASSY, HABANA MAY 13 1769
DESP. NO.

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

May 13, 1953

REF: Embassy D-1719, May 6, 1953

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SUBJECT: COMMUNIST DAILY NEWSPAPER INCREASES ITS SIZE

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The Communist daily newspaper, Hoy, announced on May 10, 1953, that effective on its 15th anniversary on May 16, 1953, it would increase its weekday edition from six to eight pages and, while maintaining the size of its Sunday edition at eight pages, would add thereto a tabloid-size, eight-page magazine supplement. Hoy Infantil, a children's supplement that has been a Sunday feature for some time, will continue to form a part of the Sunday edition of the enlarged Hoy. The price remains unchanged at five centavos on weekdays and 10 centavos on Sundays.

This announcement of an expanded daily followed closely upon the announcement that the Communist La Ultima Hora would no longer be published as a weekly magazine but would henceforth appear as a monthly. Since this action was admittedly taken because of "difficult circumstances," and since the Embassy had believed that the financial situation of Hoy was likewise a matter of concern to the Communists, the enlargement of the latter comes somewhat as a surprise. The Embassy has no indication of the precise reasons for the decision to enlarge. It is therefore possible only to conjecture that (1) the financial position of Hoy may have improved, although this appears very questionable; (2) that Hoy is attempting to secure an increase in its newsprint quota as insurance against any possible future cut as an anti-Communist measure; (3) that the change of La Ultima Hora from a weekly to a monthly has made staff available that the Communists do not wish to dismiss and will use for the expanded Hoy; (4) that this same change has given Hoy more leeway to make itself more attractive to advertisers; and (5) that the enlargement of Hoy is a determined effort to increase circulation through added features. It is significant that the announcement of the increase in the size of Hoy was accompanied by an appeal for more readers and subscribers.

The circulation figures of Hoy are subject to varying estimates. The working press of Habana generally estimates its

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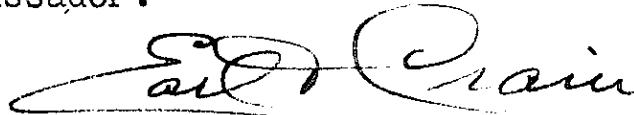
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circulation at something between 5,000 and 7,000. However, an official of the Ministry of Information, who based his estimate on a claimed observance of an actual press run, has just informed the Embassy that the present circulation of Hoy is about 3,000.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain
Acting Counselor of Embassy