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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM **AMEMBASSY, HABANA**

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DESP. NO.

TO **THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.**

December 24, 1952
DATE

REF

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	REC'D DEC 27	OTHER	ARMY	NAVY	AIR	CIA	OSD	Other Officer	1-5-53

SUBJECT: **Joint Weeka No. 52 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA**

Part I

Political

(CONFIDENTIAL) Ten former Cuban naval officers, retired after the March 10 coup, some of high rank, were taken into custody and are now under house arrest pending investigation of charges of subversive activities among naval personnel on active duty and inciting to revolt. As retired officers, the arrested men are subject to court martial. The arrests brought no change in the apparently calm situation.

Reports of the discovery of the arms cache in Mamaroneck, New York, aroused intense interest in Cuba. The press quoted the Minister of Defense as saying he did not believe ex-President PRIO was involved in a plot to use in Cuba the destructive material discovered. He later claimed he was misquoted by the press and the Minister of Information clarified that the Minister of Defense meant that the magnitude of the plan to visit destruction upon the country, as indicated by the character of the materials, made such an atrocity appear incredible. The Minister of Information praised the work of the American police in this case as an indication of the policy of neutrality of the United States Government. At least one commentator has said that the arms discovery was a good reason why ex-President Prio refused an invitation to come to Cuba to attend a Mass on December 21 for peace and harmony in the country. Prio had said that he would have attended the Mass if the Government had given him guarantees.

(RESTRICTED) Francisco AGUIRRE's return from the ORIT convention in Rio de Janeiro, which removed him as Secretary-General and transferred the headquarters to Mexico City, was followed by a hurried meeting of the CTC executive board. While the CTC has issued no official statement as yet, rumors

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of the CTC leaders' chagrin over developments were published in Habana newspapers. One paper suggested that the CTC may join with some other Latin American countries to form a new organization or may affiliate with ATLAS. All stories indicated resentment of American and Canadian "domination" of the ORIT conference.

(RESTRICTED) The Autentico manifesto of last week (see Weeka No. 51) set off a bitter exchange between Roberto AGRAMONTE of the Ortodoxos and Tony VARONA of the Autenticos. Agramonte resented the criticism of Ortodoxos in the Autentico manifesto and announced that he was astounded that the millionaire clique that had enriched itself while in power by all kinds of graft had the audacity to set itself up in judgment of the Ortodoxos. Varona replied by denying that Agramonte had the authority to criticize the Autenticos and by charging him with "manifest complicity with the usurpers to whose stability he contributes through calumny, offense and insult", with not "wanting Batista but rejecting revolution", and with lacking those qualities of leadership which would make him capable of "interpreting the thoughts and desires of the Cuban people". Agramonte blasted back by going into details of Autentico corruption in government and by proclaiming that the Ortodoxos, "free of all complicity in the corruption of yesterday and today", maintain their independent position, rejecting violence and advocating the "true revolutionary process" of legitimate action by the people to regain their liberties.

The exchange provoked comment on the sorry spectacle of leaders of the two most important parties trading insults instead of working toward harmonious solution of the country's problems. It also must have been encouraging to the Government party as further evidence of the apparent inability of Ortodoxos and Autenticos to join in any united opposition against the regime.

(UNCLASSIFIED) The Autentico party has just released a Christmas message to the people of Cuba that recites the economic troubles that make for a "gloomy panorama of national misery" brought about by the Batista regime. It urges all to reflect on the "tragedy that hovers over the country" and reminds that in the past patriots had to refrain from Christmas festivities. This manifesto does nothing to combat the Government charge that the opposition, regardless of consequences, is engaged in a campaign to promote apprehension and unrest, particularly in the economic life of the country.

Psychological

Negative.

Army

Negative.

Navy

(RESTRICTED) Alvarez de Fragata (Ensign) Roberto Leonardo ROQUE Nuñez, the Cuban naval officer who took refuge at the Guantánamo Naval Base in March 1952 and who has since been living in Miami, has returned to Habana. After reporting to Cuban Naval Headquarters, he was interned in Cabaña fortress where he awaits disciplinary action. (See Weeka No. 51).

Capitan de Fragata (Cdr.) Ernesto J. USATORRES Ubieta, Chief of Naval Aviation, has departed for Atlanta, Georgia, to obtain the Navy's second recently purchased PBY5A. It is expected that the plane will be flown to the Naval Air Station, Mariel, on or about December 29. (See Weeka No. 40).

Air

Negative.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain
Acting Counselor of Embassy

Participants:

HMRandall, ETCrain, FCFornes, Jr.,
ISLippe, ETerrell, Elmore (MA),
Rakow (NA), Beckett (AA)

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MA (4) for USARCARIB and USARFANT
AA (1)
NA (3) for Guantánamo

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