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JAN 23 1953

737.00(W)/1-2353

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA 1147
DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, January 23, 1953
DATE

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SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 4 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA

Part I

Political

(UNCLASSIFIED) January 20 marked the end of the period during which petitions had to be filed under the 1952 Electoral Code for authorization to organize political parties. Such a petition in the case of a national party had to be supported by evidence of the backing of adherents numbering one-fifth of one percent of the total number of registered and photographed voters, which now is almost 2,500,000.

When the deadline had passed five national parties, in addition to GRAU's PRC (A) which filed earlier with almost 10,000 adherents (see Weeka No. 2), petitioned to organize. These were BATISTA's Partido Acción Progresista with almost 122,000 adherents; Rafael GUAS Inclan's Partido Liberal with 118,000 adherents; Eusebio MUJAL's Partido Laborista with a little more than 45,000 adherents; a Partido Demócrata with about 8,200 adherents but repudiated by the leadership of the Partido Demócrata dissolved after March 10, 1952; and a Partido Avance Nacional which with only a trifle more than 1,000 adherents failed to meet the legal requirement and probably will not be authorized to organize. The total number of adherents supporting the national parties that filed came to but little more than 10 percent of the total electorate qualified as of this time.

A forecast cannot be made of the success of these embryo parties in winning such a degree of support from the electorate as to ensure that the November elections will not be a farce because of refusal of a large number of voters to participate. The Ortodoxos and the PRIO-VARONA Auténticos took no action to organize and their presumably large number

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of followers are without an organization under current law, unless the situation changes. It is not impossible under the present Government that special interpretation of the law could be made to permit the formation of an Ortodoxo party, if that group or a substantial segment of it indicated a desire to organize. The PAP and the Liberal party have so far not showed impressive signs of strength. Mujal's socialistically-inclined party is brand new and an unknown quantity. The degree of success that Grau will have with his PRC (A) is difficult to estimate. The Democratic party is probably of negligible significance.

Both the Liberal and the Laborista parties are linked with Batista and may be expected to cooperate with him.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Elias Manuel GARCIA Busto, who is wanted in the United States in connection with the Mamaroneck seizure of arms and munitions, was arrested by the SIM. He will be interrogated by American authorities here and probably will be ordered out of the country by the Cuban Government.

(RESTRICTED) The Minister of the Interior announced that the Government is prepared to cope with any disorders that may occur during the celebrations in honor of the Cuban patriot, José MARTI, whose birthday falls on January 28. The Minister declared that certain elements are planning disruptive demonstrations during Martí week.

Yesterday the police seized a radio transmitter stored in the garage of a private residence in Habana. They were reported to believe that it was intended for installation in a clandestine station to be put into operation in the Province of Pinar del Rio in connection with a subversive campaign.

During the week the Minister of the Interior announced his intention of applying existing movie censorship legislation to news reels. This extension of censorship would apply not only to theater showings but to television news reels as well. The Minister's decision was said to be motivated by the showing of news reels of the student rioting on January 15 (see Weeka No. 3). It has aroused much protest.

The situation in the University following the riots continues calm, with all activities suspended until February 2. The condition of one of the wounded students is grave and he is not out of danger. University students at Las Villas and Oriente have protested against the Government.

(UNCLASSIFIED) President Batista accused ex-President Prio of complicity in the student riots of January 15 which he said were "Communist type" disorders "guided by Auténtico and Ortodoxo groups directed from abroad and supported economically by ex-President Prio and some of his wealthy collaborators who have sworn to bring about disturbance of the peace at any cost". He also charged that Prio was abusing the hospitality of the United States by conspiring against the Cuban Government from Miami. Prio replied in a statement denying that he aided the students financially, accusing Batista of secret cooperation with the Communists, and describing him as the "enemy and scourge" of the Cuban people who is evidently suffering from schizophrenia or megalomania.

(UNCLASSIFIED) The Minister of Justice, Miguel Angel CESPEDES, resigned with a vague explanation that he wished to be free to combat a "calumnious imputation" that had been made against him by an "imposter". He was succeeded by Gastón GODOY y Loret de Mola, formerly President of the Consultative Council. Justo GARCIA Rayneri was nominated President of the Council to replace Godoy.

Psychological

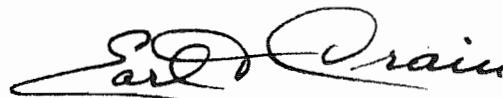
(UNCLASSIFIED) On January 21 the SIM broke up a meeting being held in the Communist party headquarters to commemorate Lenin's death, although it had reportedly been authorized by the Minister of the Interior. The organizers of the meeting, including Aníbal ESCALANTE, director of Hoy, were arrested and held overnight. Considerable equipment in the headquarters was said to have been damaged or destroyed by the SIM. The incident was greeted by the Communists with cries of fascist repression, vandalism and lack of government coordination.

(UNCLASSIFIED) The Communist-dominated FDMC made public a resolution it adopted to participate in the World Congress of Peoples for Peace to be held in June of this year.

Army, Navy, Air

Negative.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain
Acting Counselor of Embassy

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ISlippe, JCBonnet, Rakow (NA), Park (AA)

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