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737.00(W)/7-2051

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : HABANA

117

July 20, 1951

DESP. NO.

DATE

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

Air Priority

REF :

SUBJECT: WEEKA NO. 3 FOR STATE, ARMY, NAVY AND AIR DEPARTMENTS
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SECTION I

POLITICAL

Although the Korea cease-fire negotiations were the subject of daily headlines during the week, the Cuban Government continued its do-nothing policy both as regards troops for Korea and its response to the UNGA on the Uniting for Peace Resolution. It did, however, issue a decree (No. 220) dated July 18 prohibiting exports or re-exports of all materials to the USSR or countries under its control and influence, including red China. The total prohibition will be effective until a definite control list is drawn up. The decree will go into effect upon publication in the Official Gazette.

The recruiting in Habana of Cuban volunteers for Korea closed today after more than 1200 had signed up. The Directors of the two recruiting organizations (Weeka 1 July 6) will visit provincial capitals to sign up additional volunteers. The extent of their future activities will depend on their ability to raise additional funds.

Current negotiations between the U.S. and Spain were headlined this morning under leads such as: "Truman Declares Treaty with Spain Imminent"; "Truman Determined obtain Naval and Air Bases in Spain"; "Truman Announces New Spain Policy. Restoration of King Seen". The communist Ultima Hora featured a Paris report (credited to UP) that the Spanish Republican Government had issued a strong protest against pact with Franco. In an editorial it stated that Franco a submissive lackey of the U.S. which was trying to acquire Spanish cannon fodder by supporting Franco.

Following the action of the Urgency Court in twice ordering the return of Hoy newspaper to the communists, Minister of Interior DIAZ has turned to other methods of harassing the communists. His latest move has been to request the Minister of State to revoke the fraudulent

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naturalization obtained on the basis of forged documents by communist leader Fabio GROBART, now out of the country. Carrying on the anti-communist campaign Prensa Libre has charged that the Soviet Embassy is importing Chinese, ostensibly as servants, who, in a few months after their arrival, spread out as servants in the homes of local political leaders, as lottery ticket vendors, etc.

It was reported July 12 that a delegation of Cuban students from the University of Habana Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, under the leadership of Dr. Elias ENTRALGO, departed for Mexico, reportedly in a plane furnished by Minister of Education SANCHEZ Arango. It is possible that the trip may be in connection with the communist peace campaign.

Candelaria RODRIGUEZ Hernandez of the Women's International Democratic Federation was arrested July 9 on her return from North Korea. A considerable amount of red propaganda was seized.

Local politicians are engaged in pondering the implications of two surveys which reportedly have been completed, but not yet released in their entirety. One of these, on the popularity of the various Cabinet Ministers, allegedly showed Minister of Public Works CASERO in the lead with 18.01 points, Sanchez Arango second with 12.67 points, LANCIS third with 5.24 points and Minister of State SUAREZ Fernandez down the line with 3.32 points. HEVIA, currently considered as the President's choice, did not appear in the list.

The second survey reportedly indicates increased support for both BATISTA and the government at the expense of CHIBAS. According to reports, Chibas has now lost first place to Batista, whose popularity appears on the up-grade. The Embassy has felt for some time that, as elections approach, many Cubans who applauded Chibas for his vituperation against the Government rather than for any qualities he may have as a statesman, will throw their support to other candidates.

President PRIO's statement to a labor demonstration July 18 that while his Government was a proponent of high salaries it would not act under coercion, has been taken as a warning to labor that the Executive is getting tired of strong-arm labor tactics. Nevertheless, his statement was strongly applauded by the demonstrators.

Despite a statement allegedly made by Senator Inocente ALVAREZ in New York that ex-Minister of State DIHIGO would not be the next President of Cuba's UN delegation, it is generally thought here that Dihigo will probably be named to that position.

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Page 3 of
Desp. No. 117
From HABANA

CONFIDENTIAL

(Classification)

Page _____ of
Encl. No. _____
Desp. No. _____
From _____

ARMY

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NAVY

The Cuban Army Air Force this week transferred six BT-13's (Vultee basic trainers) and five PT's (Stearman primary trainers) to the Naval Air Corps. The Navy has arranged for a transfer of funds of \$29,000 to the Army as payment. The planes are now being rehabilitated at the Naval Air Station at Mariel. These planes represent the first flyable aircraft available to the Navy in three years.

AIR

Although the Aviation Workers strike scheduled for July 16 did not materialize, the Cuban Army Air Force is still very anxious to have at least two military crews qualified to fly the DC-4 aircraft of Compania Cubana de Aviacion. This airline operates two DC-4 aircraft between Habana and Madrid, Spain. In the event there is another strike, the Cuban Army Air Force wishes to be capable of operating all domestic and foreign routes of this airline.

Four Cuban Army Air Force pilots, accompanied by the Chief of the United States Air Force Mission to Cuba, arrived at Kelly Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas July 17 for a ten day "check out" in C-54 (DC-4) aircraft.


C. Burke Elbrick
Chargé d'Affaires ad interim

Participants:

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