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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA ⁶ 1668
DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON. April 24, 1953
DATE

REF mi : APR 28 1953

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SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 17 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA

Part I

Political

(UNCLASSIFIED) At a meeting at President BATISTA's country estate, leaders of his Partido Acción Progresista (PAP) and the Liberal party agreed in principle upon a coalition between the two political groups. Later the PAP Mayor of Habana indicated that the coalition might be extended to include the Labor party of Eusebio MUJAL and the Democrat party. Aside from the fact that this coalition, virtually certain in the case of the Liberals, will strengthen Batista's political position, a logical result would be the eventual entry of Liberals into the cabinet.

Batista's gain may prove to be more technical than real since there is little evidence that the opposition political leaders involved enjoy the support of any sizable group of voters.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Leadership of the Cuban Confederation of Labor (CTC) announced that the traditional parades to commemorate the May First Labor Day will not be held and that, like last year, CTC organizations will limit celebration of the occasion to indoor meetings in Habana and throughout the island. The CTC leadership stated that this decision was not the result of a government ban, but had been taken to avoid the possibility that "political factors under present circumstances might cause serious disturbances, aggravating the economic recession which so preoccupies all workers at present". Such meetings will be open only to those units affiliated with the CTC.

Meanwhile, the Federation of University Students (FEU) invited workers to a rally to be held within the University

FCFornes, Jr.:rc
REPORTER

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grounds. Some of the factions into which the Ortodoxo and Auténtico parties are split announced that they would not participate in the "captive meeting" of the CTC. The Ortodoxo splinter, however, endorsed the FEU rally. The proposed rally has caused the University Council to extend the suspension of academic activities until May 4 and it is obvious that trouble can result from such a rally if it is used to inflame those attending against the Government.

The Communist daily Hoy has intensified its month-long agitation for a "united front demonstration and parade" of all labor groups on May First.

Psychological

(UNCLASSIFIED) Habana newspapers hailed President Eisenhower's foreign policy speech before the American Society of Newspaper Editors as forceful and timely and as placing Moscow in the position of proving by deeds the sincerity of its "peace offensive" or taking the full responsibility for the cold war. Newspapers were impressed by the President's offer of the collaboration of the United States toward achieving world economic and social progress in the event that reduction in armaments were possible. The Communist reaction is indicated by the heading of one editorial: "Words of Peace; Deeds of War". The speech was called "simple propaganda to present the United States as preoccupied with safeguarding peace while it rectifies not one of its warlike measures".

(SECRET) It appears that the Communist Party has become convinced that there is small chance of its proposal for a united opposition front, to which it had devoted reams of propaganda, being accepted by any more than a very small part of the opposition. The party has therefore evidently modified its tactics to strengthen and extend the activities of its "United Front Committees". The plan seems to be to create, on the basis of the committees, municipal councils which will attempt to enlist the support of individual political figures and other prominent non-Communists who have participated in Communist-sponsored activities such as the "peace" movement.

(UNCLASSIFIED) There appeared in the Communist daily Hoy an article on Argentina blasting Perón in a manner not observed in months and definitely indicating that the Cuban Communists also have moved to the attack on him, presumably because of his reported desire for improved relationships with the United States.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Rumors in Guatemala that Cuba was taking a hand in its internal affairs prompted the Cuban Ministry of State to issue a statement that the government followed a strict policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of others nations. According to the press the Cuban Embassy was instructed to deliver assurances along this line to the Guatemalan Government. The Communists immediately branded this as a lie, using the argument that the mere fact that it was necessary to issue such a statement proved that the rumors were true.

The Commies have been vociferous in their defense of Guatemala and condemnation of American "machinations" against her. They have been seconded, although more mildly, by one or two others who are known apologists for the Arbenz and Perón regimes. Otherwise, comment on Guatemalan developments has been very limited. An anti-Communist columnist in El Mundo attacked the Guatemalan Government, not as Communist but as a "fellow-traveler" bound for the same destination as a Communist regime.

(SECRET) It appears that Cuban participation in the recent CTAL congress in Santiago de Chile was limited to Lazaro PEÑA, secretary general of the Communist trade union confederation, Agapito FIGUEROA, secretary general of the metalworkers union of that confederation, Francisco LOPEZ, secretary general of the graphic arts union of that confederation, and José MORERA Perez, organizing vice-secretary of the CTAL. Horacio FUENTES may also have attended because of his position on the executive committee of the CTAL.

(RESTRICTED) Hoy has charged that the Secret Service of the Cuban Navy is planning to assault its premises and destroy its property and equipment. It laid the groundwork for a later charge of "American inspiration" of such an attack by alleging that the Chief of the United States Naval Mission is "very interested" in the project. This completely unfounded charge may also be used by the Communists in future attacks against the U. S. military missions in Cuba.

(SECRET) The Communist Party is reported to have ordered Communist-led unions to apply for membership in the CTC, in order that delegates of such unions may participate in the VIII National Congress of the CTC, scheduled for early May. This infiltration tactic is explained as a "necessity in order to achieve worker unity in all unions".

(UNCLASSIFIED) Communist propoganda against the proposed anti-Communism law continues at a high pitch. To the

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extent possible the Communists are trying to have prominent, non-Communist leaders denounce the proposed law in the Communist press as a weapon really designed to suppress all opposition.

(CONFIDENTIAL) The Embassy has been informed by a participant in the recent conference of the Inter-American Association of Broadcasters at San Juan, Puerto Rico that the conference adopted a resolution embodying the following recommendations. Member radio stations should refuse to broadcast programs of governments which themselves have no freedom of the press or radio; member radio stations should refuse to broadcast programs favoring ideologies contrary to the principles of democracy; and member radio stations should accept programs originated by institutions controlled by foreign governments when such programs are of a general cultural nature but should refuse programs of the institutions when they propagandize the principle of state-controlled radio.

(UNCLASSIFIED) The local press carried news reports of the opening of the meeting of the NATO Council of Ministers in Paris. However, there has as yet been no comment on the meeting.

Army, Navy

Negative.

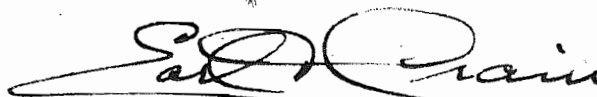
Air

(RESTRICTED) Lt. Colonel Felipe A. de la Catazus y Pazos, Operations Officer, Cuban Army Air Force, arrived at Moody Air Force Base April 22, 1953 to begin an eight-week Instrument Flying - Instructor Course.

COMMENT

Lt. Colonel Catazus, a graduate of Georgia Institute of Technology, is one of the best qualified Air Force officers to undergo this type of training. This training will do much to increase the efficiency of the operations of the Cuban Air Force.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain
Acting Counselor of Embassy

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