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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA  
TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.  
REF :

1740  
DESP. NO.

May 8, 1953  
DATE

Action Assigned to *[Signature]*

Action Taken *noted*

41	ACTION	DEPT.	ARA I IBS IFI S/MSA UNA RE IPS					
For Dept.	OLI	I N F O	OTHER					
Use Only:	REC'D		ARMY	NAVY	AIR	CIA	OSD	
el	MAY 11		Date of Action <i>5-12-53</i>					

SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 19 for State, Army, Navy and Air  
Departments from SANA

Action Office *142*

Part I

Name of Officer *[Signature]*

Direction to DC/R *[Signature]*

Political

(UNCLASSIFIED) The Cuban Federation of Labor's VIII National Labor Convention was held in Habana from May 3 to 6. It was the first such assemblage since the advent of the Batista regime. The 2,247 delegates were stated to represent 1,543 union locals and their 1,200,000 members. Prior to the Convention, the Federation (CTC) leadership declared 685 other union locals ineligible to send delegates, 634 because they were "inactive" or "dummy" unions, and 51 as "active, but un-affiliated" unions. As anticipated, Eusebio MUJAL Barniol was re-elected CTC Secretary-General by the delegates. The eight members of the governing Executive Committee, including Mujal, were re-elected to their posts, and José PEREZ González, chief of the "labor bloc" of President Batista's Partido Acción Progresista, was elected as an additional member. In addition to resolutions on domestic labor issues, the Convention voted in favor of continued affiliation with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and with its hemisphere affiliate, the ORIT, whose secretary-general came from Mexico City headquarters to attend the Convention. The delegates issued a resolution calling on the Batista Government to outlaw the local Communist Partido Socialista Popular.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Quite unexpectedly, a group of former members of Batista's Partido Acción Unitaria (PAU), which had been succeeded by the Partido Acción Progresista (PAP) filed a petition with the Superior Electoral Court for authorization to form a party under the old PAU name. Ostensibly the group was composed of those dissatisfied with PAP leadership, but the Embassy has received one report to the effect that the new PAU will be a front for the Communist party. The new PAU group has proclaimed its loyalty to Batista. On the other hand, leaders of the PAP have condemned the registration as a "lack of discipline" by "supposed members of the PAU" and "post-

FCFornes, Jr.:ep

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REPORTER

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March 10 PAU members."

(UNCLASSIFIED) The May First Labor Day observances, contrary to the apprehensions of many, were not attended by any violence or disturbances (see Weeka No. 18). The indoor meeting sponsored by the Cuban Federation of Labor was held as scheduled with an attendance of 5,000 or more. The rally planned by the University Student Federation (FEU) turned out to be a tame and much smaller affair, largely because of the last-minute decision of the Ochoa Ortodoxos and the Prfo Auténticos not to participate because of disapproval of the rally by the University Council and the majority of the University students. No labor leaders, not even Communist, spoke as had been originally planned and the gathering was addressed only by students. The police detail around the University was heavy but the meeting broke up and the participants dispersed without incident of any kind. The Communist press has bitterly attacked the Ortodoxo and Auténtico "traitors" for reneging at the last minute under Government pressure. It is apparent the Communists did not dare to go through with their own plans in the absence of a "united front."

The Embassy has learned that three out of the four FEU officers who put on the rally in spite of opposition requested leave of absence from their positions because of loss of prestige with the student body.

The University reopened last Monday and there has since been little or no student political activity.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Minister of the Interior HERMIDA on May 4 ordered all newsreel companies to submit their films for censorship prior to public screening. Immediately the press and the Federation of Broadcasters protested the order as a clear violation of freedom of information. Hermida later, in a "clarifying statement," said he meant the order to apply only to documentary-type films. Nonetheless, the two biggest newsreel companies in Cuba said they would cease operations rather than comply. The issue arose after two cameramen were held by the police for more than seven hours after they filmed part of the Garcia Bârcena trial in violation of orders to stay away.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Minister of Labor Carlos SALADRIGAS, who will shortly leave for London as an official representative of Cuba at the coronation ceremonies, has also been designated to represent Cuba at the XXXVI Meeting of the International Labor Conference at Geneva on June 4. Dr. Saladrigas is scheduled to leave Habana on May 10. During his absence Dr. Arsenio Gonzalez y Gonzalez will act as Minister of Labor.  
(Under Secretary of Labor)

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### Psychological

(UNCLASSIFIED) The arrival in Cuba of two United States military officers to check the receipt and utilization of equipment supplied under the Mutual Assistance Agreement provided the occasion for Communist denunciation. The Communist press, aided by a statement by the Communist-sponsored "National Peace Committee," headlined in today's Hoy, attacked the visit as an insulting violation of Cuban sovereignty ("an inspection of a simple detachment of the American army") and as a clear proof, since equipment to the extent supplied was not needed for the defense of Cuba, of the building up of a force to be sent to Korea or otherwise used for American war-like purposes. The arrival of the officers passed almost unnoticed except for the Communist blast.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Communist propaganda during the week was heavily concentrated on attacking the VIII Convention of the Cuban Federation of Labor, from which Communists had been to a great extent excluded, as subservient to Batista, for American imperialism, for war, against peace, and generally anti-labor and against all the good things the Communists demand of the Government and employers.

The Communists paid continuing attention to the "Big Five Peace Pact" proposal. Their efforts were mainly directed to obtaining backing for appeals to the Cuban Government to try to influence the Western powers in favor of the "Pact."

### Army

(RESTRICTED) The Cuban Army this week changed its decision to reduce the size of the U.S. Army Mission to Cuba by August 28, 1953. (See Weeka No. 16). The present plan is that each officer presently assigned to the Mission will complete his normal tour of duty, and a decision will be made in each individual case, prior to the officer's departure, as to whether the Cuban Army desires a replacement.

Comment: The original decision was made in an effort to reduce Army expenditures during F.Y. 1954. However, as was pointed out to the Cuban Army, no appreciable saving would be effected, since the Cuban Government is obligated to pay the transportation costs for the return of each officer, his family and household effects to the United States.

In addition, it is believed that the recent large sale of surplus sugar to Great Britain has done much to allay, temporarily at least, the financial worries of the Cuban Government for both F.Y. 1954 and 55.

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Navy

(UNCLASSIFIED) Capitan de Navio (Captain) Nicolás CARTAYA Gomez, Chief of the North Naval District (Havana) has been relieved of that duty assignment and has been issued orders to report to Mexico City as Naval Attaché. This will result in a Captain and a Lieutenant being stationed in Mexico City.

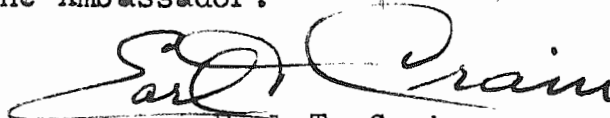
Capitan de Fragata (Cdr.) José M. RODRIGUEZ Hernández, who has been an aide to President Batista, has reported as Chief of North Naval District. He is a brother-in-law of Contralmirante José RODRIGUEZ Calderon, Chief of Staff of the Cuban Navy. He is being immediately promoted to Captain incident to this change of duty.

(RESTRICTED) The first large shipment of MDAP material for the Cuban Navy has arrived, in the amount of 53 tons, which is about 20% of the amount programmed for F.Y. 1953.

Air

Negative.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain  
Acting Counselor of Embassy

Participants:

ETCrain, JCanter, FCFornes, Jr., ETerroll,  
BRCrooks, Elmore (MA), Rakow (NA), Mason (AA)

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