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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

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June 19, 1953
DATE

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SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 25 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA

Part I

Political

(RESTRICTED) Aftermath of Montreal Meeting. The Autentice-Ortodexe meeting at Montreal and the published agreement resulting therefrom (see Weekas Nos. 23 and 24) continue to monopolize attention. Statements have been issued by practically all political leaders of consequence and an over-all picture of initial reaction has emerged. In general, those groups that have registered as political parties under the Electoral Code have condemned or opposed the Montreal agreement. Roberto AGRAMONTE of the "independent" Ortodexos vigorously denounced it. While Ramon GRAU San Martin is against the agreement, it is reported that he has been or will be approached to adhere to it and it may be that he will do so if there should be prospects of success for the unified opposition contemplated by the agreement. Grau recently announced that his pact is "with the people." (See despatch No. 1977, June 18, 1953.)

Despite protestations by participants in the Montreal meeting that its purpose was entirely peaceful, rumors and speculation that it actually was a counter-revolutionary conference have intensified. The participants' own statements regarding where responsibility would lie for developments should the Government refuse to accept a "solution" have fed speculation. The newspaper Alerta published a sensational account of negotiations by the Montreal group to purchase airplanes and arms (see despatch No. 1983, June 19, 1953). The latest issue of the Spanish-language Vision published in New York was reported to carry an article declaring that a revolutionary attempt in Cuba was imminent. The copies of the magazine intended for Cuba were apparently not shipped from the United States on orders of the Habana distributor.

The Embassy cannot judge from available information whether a serious plan to revolt lies behind these rumors and reports.

FCFornes, Jr.:ep
REPORTER

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CONFIDENTIAL FILE

Psychological

(UNCLASSIFIED) Rosenberg Case. The Communists continued to clamor for clemency in the Rosenberg case. In "press despatches" from Washington, Paris and London, the Communist Hoy told of manifestations, appeals to American Embassies, and telegrams to the White House from prominent figures. It referred to telegrams and letters sent to the Embassy in Habana but its claims of "floods" and "inundations" were rather exaggerated, the June score to date being 27 telegrams received by the Embassy and six letters with 66 signatures. Hoy headlined Justice Douglas' stay of execution as a "partial victory of the world peace movement". The director of Hoy editorialized on June 18 that the Rosenbergs were condemned to death in order to "frighten those who dared to raise the banner of peace and liberty in the United States."

The non-Communist press ran news reports on developments in the case but did not comment on it. (See despatch No. 1979, June 18, 1953.)

(UNCLASSIFIED) Military Coup in Colombia. The Cuban Ministry of State informed the Embassy that on June 18 it recognized the regime of Gen. ROJAS Pinilla in Colombia and that it had so informed the Colombian Embassy in Habana and the Cuban Ambassador in Bogotá. In a letter of June 13, 1953, the Colombian Ambassador here, Raimundo EMILIANI Roman, informed the Embassy that he was returning to Colombia. He departed June 18.

The Cuban Ministry of State indicated to the Embassy that it regarded the military coup of Gen. ROJAS Pinilla optimistically, a view that was shared by some others. Other commentators, however, felt that there was little hope for fundamental improvement in the Colombian situation. The latter expressed satisfaction at the removal of Gómez and saw in the coup possible pacification of the country, but thought that a permanent solution to Colombia's political problems would not come until profound political and social reforms had been instituted.

(UNCLASSIFIED) East Berlin Riots. The few Cuban commentators who analyzed the riots in East Berlin considered not only that the Iron Curtain had been breached, giving the whole world an opportunity to see the reality of Communist rule, but also that the recent maneuvers to give the appearance of the existence of democratic forms in the Soviet Zone of Germany had been largely nullified.

The Communist Hoy carried a "report" which pictured the riots as disturbances caused by invaders from West Berlin who had speedily been repulsed by the Peoples Police "with the aid

of masses of workers". The greatest part of this "report" consisted of an attempt to demonstrate that the riots were instigated by "Yankee imperialists and war-mongers." (See despatch No. 1982, June 19, 1953.)

ARMY

(CONFIDENTIAL) Camp Columbia Guard Precautions. On June 13, 1953 an officer of the Cuban Army was asked about the recent report that a General Officer was on duty each night at Camp Columbia with sole authority to authorize persons to enter or leave the post (see Weeka No. 24). He stated that as far as he knew this was not true, but that the report may have been a distortion of the fact that for many months a General Officer has been on duty at the Headquarters every night. The General on duty is required to sleep in the Headquarters Building in order that a senior officer will be immediately available in case of an emergency. In addition, there is a Field Officer of the Day within the Division stationed at Camp Columbia. After 11 p.m. ingress and egress is allowed only through one gate, but permission from the General or the Field Officer of the Day is not required unless the question is specifically referred to them through the normal chain of command of the Guard.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. Source is a junior officer who frequently pulls guard duty. Any such extraordinary precaution such as previously reported would have to be widely publicized by changes in the standing orders of the guard in order to be effective. In addition, above information was confirmed on June 17, 1953 by another Cuban officer on the General Staff.

The implication in the original report that Batista trusts only his Generals does not appear to be warranted.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Venezuelan Military Attaché. Lt. Col. Ramón ARMAS Pérez has been assigned to the Venezuelan Embassy as Military Attaché to Cuba, replacing Lt. Col. José TEOFILO VELASCO (see Weeka No. 15). Colonel ARMAS paid his official courtesy call on the Cuban Army Chief of Staff on June 13, 1953.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Cuban Military Attaché in Guatemala. Capitan Pedro M. DELGADO y Bazquez, Cuban Military Attache to Guatemala, is now also accredited to Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama as Military Attaché. He will continue his residence in Guatemala.

(RESTRICTED) Comment. This additional accreditation will naturally facilitate the travel of Captain DELGADO throughout Central America, thus providing the Cuban Government with an additional source of information concerning any anti-Batista revolutionary activities in that area.

NAVY

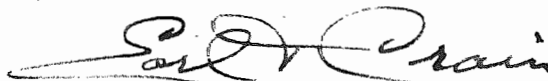
Negative.

AIR

(CONFIDENTIAL) Cuban Air Attachés to Central America. Recent Presidential decrees designated Capt. (Pilot) Leopoldo INFANTE y Fernández, and 1st Lt. (Pilot) Roberto CARRILLO y Castillo, respectively, as Air Attaché and Asst. Air Attaché to Mexico and the Central American countries of Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. A Cuban Air Force aircraft (Lockheed Lodestar) and a CAF mechanic, Sgt. 2nd Class Santiago CASTILLO y Oquendo, have also been assigned to the Air Attachés for assistance in performance of their mission. Funds (amount unknown) are paid by the Quartermaster General of the Cuban Army, and the residence of the Air Attachés is to be in Guatemala City.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. With rumors prevalent of anti-Batista movements emanating from this area (particularly Guatemala City and Mexico), it appears to be a very logical assignment to have Air Attachés with an assigned aircraft available to further collection of intelligence information from these geographic locations.

For the Ambassador:



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AA (1)
NA (3) for Guantánamo

