

Air Priority
PRIORITY

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SECURITY INFORMATION
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737.00(W)/6-1352

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

2132

DESP. NO.

JUN 14 1952

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

June 13, 1952

DATE

REF :

Action Assigned to [Signature]

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	REC'D JUN 16	OTHER	ARMY NAVY AIR CIA

SUBJECT: **Weeka No. 24 for State, Army, Navy, Dept. of Air Departments, from SANA**

Action Office Symbol [Signature]

SECTION I Name of Officer [Signature]

Direction to DC/R [Signature]

POLITICAL

The most publicized political event of the week was a series of three radio speeches by President BATISTA to the nation, constituting a report on the first three months of his Government and some indication of the Government's plans and policies. In the addresses Batista reiterated the motives for the coup of March 10 and said that the energies of the Government in the first three months had gone into restoring order from the chaos that existed when it came into power. Much of what he said had to do with economic and social problems (see Sec. II) which he said were mostly inheritances from previous Governments. He stated he would follow the middle of the road politically, and his Government "would not be influenced by any totalitarian attitude." He said he would "fight the Soviet ideology with the same energy as that with which he previously fought the Nazi-Fascists." In the matter of agrarian reform and capital-labor relations, his plan, he said, was to carry out a rehabilitation program for farmers and protect the "conquests" of labor while respecting property rights. He repeated his promise for elections in 1953, but said party activity should be suspended "for the time being" until parties can be legally reconstituted and a more normal situation achieved.

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These speeches were probably designed to quell some of the feeling of impatience among the people--which was admitted to be justified in the first speech--that has been accumulating. Editorial reaction was limited, and devoted mainly to discussion of specific questions such as the limitation of the 1953 sugar crop, but a number of commentators conceded that the problems facing the new Government were indeed numerous and complex and that it was early to expect solutions to all of them.

Opposition parties continued to discuss collaboration despite the fact that the Ortodoxos reiterated their unwillingness to

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RMC

in any formal arrangement with other parties. In a public statement the Auténtico National Committee accused the PPC of hindering the opposition by this refusal, but there were further indications of some private agreement or at least "coincidence" of points of view between the two parties regarding their attitude toward the Government. The magazine Gente reported a rumor that the President of the PPC, Emilio OCHOA, visited PRIO in Miami last week and later in Mexico (Weeka 23, June 6), at the same time the "coincident" declarations of the two parties appeared. In the meantime Tony VARONA, leader of the PRC stated that his party rejects any agreement with the PSP (Communists), referring to the proposal of Nicolas CASTELLANOS for a "united front" of all parties (Weeka 22, May 29), Eduardo SUAREZ Rivas, of the Liberal Party, hedged a similar question put to him, as reported by the Communist Hoy.

There was some internecine warfare within the PRC, as indicated by the fact that some important leaders stayed away from National Committee meetings during the week. One of these meetings ended in a brawl among the attendants, a fact seized upon by commentators of other parties to predict "the beginning of the end" for the Auténticos. There is no question that the party still has a large following despite dissension among the leaders.

Several persons charged with participation in the murder of Alejo COSSIO del Pino on February 12, 1952 (Weeka 7, February 15) were arrested during the week. One of them stated that Antonio PRIO (brother of the President) had paid one of the group \$5,000 for the murder. The police stated that those arrested were members of the Unión Insurreccional Revolucionaria (UIR), a notorious gangster group. The statement is significant because it is an attempt to link the Prío Government directly with the brutal murder of Cossio, which, following as it did the numerous other outbreaks of violence under the Prío regime, was probably the event that most shocked public opinion and contributed to public acquiescence in the Batista coup scarcely a month later.

FEU opposition activities continued to attract attention. The latest demonstration planned is a tour of student leaders from the eastern end of the Island to the west, to conduct public ceremonies of the "oath of allegiance" to the 1940 Constitution, similar to those held during the week of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations at the University of Habana. Regarding this project, Luis ORTEGA, newspaperman and member of the Consultative Council, accused FEU leaders of having accepted \$40,000 from Carlos Prío, a charge immediately denied by the President of the FEU, Alvaro BARBA.

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The vociferous Ortodoxo Jose PARDO Llada was again in the news over the closure of his "radio-newspaper", La Palabra. The broadcast had been authorized for one radio network, but was made over another, which the Ministry of Communications said violated the law. This gave Pardo Llada another opportunity to pose as a martyr whose freedom of speech had been suppressed (Weeka 15, April 10).

Much was made of the arrest of the Auténtico Habana Alderman Cándido de la TORRE, upon his return from Miami June 11, in connection with a trial for alleged conspiracy of 11 persons arrested two weeks ago while reportedly in possession of a machine gun and "plans" for an insurrectional organization. De la Torre praised the Batista Government publicly and apparently satisfied the Government that he was not implicated, since he was released after a brief hearing in the Urgency Court.

The attacks in the UN on Cuba as a "colony of Yankee Imperialism" by the Polish and Czechoslovakian delegates, and the defense of Cuba as a free nation by Ambassador Emilio NÚÑEZ Portuondo, have been headlined in the local press this week. The Communist campaign is along the same lines as that started when the USSR broke relations (Weeka 15, April 10), but amplified now with "data" published in Hoy purporting to prove that Cuba's economy is controlled from abroad. This may be part of the campaign for sales of Cuban products to Communist countries that has been underway since the Moscow Economic Conference.

ARMY

Negative.

NAVY

The three Cuban naval aviators and five crew members who have been receiving a month's training in PBY's at the U.S. Naval Air Station at Guantánamo have returned to Havana. The three Cuban pilots made a total of 274 landings and take-offs on both land and water. Training was also given in anti-submarine bombing and in general flight indoctrination. These members will now serve as instructors for others in the Cuban Naval Air Arm.

Three Cuban naval officers will depart for the States on June 14 as a purchasing mission for naval aviation materiel. They have been authorized to buy two Catalinas (PBYs) and four Widgeons as well as aviation spare parts, fire-fighting equipment and communications gear for the control tower at Mariel.

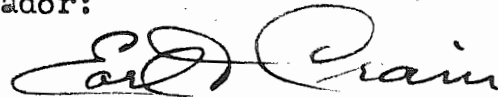
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In line with the general awareness of the Batista regime for maintaining security, the Cuban Navy is in the process of establishing a Naval Intelligence organization. Since it will deal with problems of subversion and counter-espionage, a more proper name would be Naval Security organization. While this new group will make background investigations on personnel suspected of Communist sympathies, it is believed that its main preoccupation will be to keep the former officers of the Prío administration under surveillance. The Cuban naval high command feels insecure and probably counts on the new Naval Intelligence group to insure their own personal safety and continuance in power. Rear Admiral CALDERON recently confided to the Naval Attaché that he was discharging twenty-five individuals (both officer and enlisted) from the Navy because of suspected Communism. However, it should be borne in mind that Calderon may not be above using the charge of Communism to get rid of certain personnel suspected of plotting against the Batista Government.

AIR

Negative.

For the Ambassador:



Earl T. Crain
Acting Counselor of Embassy

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