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JUL 11 1952  
*Lincolnton*

**FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH**

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

**62**  
DESP. NO.  
**July 11, 1952**  
DATE

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	REC'D <b>JUL 12</b>	F OTHER O ARMY NAVY AIR CIA Name of Officer: <i>Vincent</i>

SUBJECT: **Weeka No. 28 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments**  
**From SANA**

SECTION I

POLITICAL

Evidence of the Batista Government's continuing vigilance, possibly uneasiness, regarding its security was seen this week in the arrest of a Habana University Professor and four others on charges of plotting to assassinate Batista and overthrow his regime. The professor, Dr. Rafael GARCIA Bárcena, an Ortodoxo, was arrested by SIM and held incommunicado for 48 hours before his detention was announced and before formal charges were lodged against him. This manner of handling the arrest generated considerable direct and implied criticism and may have been responsible for a statement by Batista which attempted to justify SIM's procedure but which nevertheless had an apologetic tone. He explained it this way: ". . . perhaps it was due to the fact that the principal chiefs did not know the situation, to the fact that the chief of investigations was not in Habana or probably to the zeal with which the agents carried out their investigations. . .". The five accused have been released, pending trial. An interesting view of the Garcia Bárcena incident is provided by Luis ORTEGA, a Batista supporter, who stated that Bárcena and Alvaro BARBA, president of the FEU, were in Mexico recently to confer with Prío, who demanded the formation of a common PRC-PPC front against Batista. Bárcena vacillated, reportedly, then returned to Habana to come out against such a plan. This, Ortega said, infuriated the Prío forces so that they "informed" against him in the hope of halting his growth as a political leader. The Government's charges link Bárcena with former Minister of State Aureliano SANCHEZ ARANGO, who is still being accused of plotting an armed attack on Batistá. The "tip" also linked Arturo HERNANDEZ TELLAHECHE to Garcia Bárcena, Ortega said, to give the appearance of PPC-PRC cooperation "from below."

These continuing political arrests and releases may be an attempt by the Government to discredit and intimidate opposition

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so that it just can't prosper. If this was the Government's purpose, the tactic was not successful in this case because of criticism of the Government's arbitrary methods and the publicity surrounding the incident, which has probably increased García Bárcena's political stature.

Another political leader, former Auténtico Minister of the Treasury, José ALVAREZ Diaz, was arrested and then released on his return from a trip to Miami where he saw Prío. Before leaving he had informed Ambassador Beaulac that he intended to try to persuade Prío to resign as head of the Auténtico party in order to facilitate its reorganization. There has been no indication so far that his mission had any success.

The PRC took one step toward the formation of a "united front" of opposition parties during the week, when it asked Cosme de la TORRIENTE to "coordinate" an alignment of parties, without the necessity of a formal "front." At the same time PRC leaders publicly condemned the Ortodoxo "isolationist" stand. De la Torriente previously offered his services for this sort of enterprise, and proposed a three-point program (restoration of the 1940 Constitution, withdrawal of Batista, and a "neutral" Government to conduct elections), with which the announced formulas of the PRC, PPC and the FEU also coincided in substance. The Auténticos apparently hoped that the prestige and independent position of de la Torriente would provide an acceptable basis for overcoming the sensitivity of the Ortodoxos to associating with their former enemies.

During the week Ortodoxo intra-party debate raged regarding the "united front" question and party discipline, the latest spat being over the expulsion of Guillermo de ZENDEGUI who has severely criticized Roberto AGRAMONTE's leadership. The party's controversy was carried on in correspondence between party leaders made public in the newspapers. This continued squabbling among party leaders has apparently immobilized the directorate of the party, preventing it from taking any positive action in opposition to Batista.

The Cuban Confederation of Labor (CTC) had called a session of its National Council for July 12 and 13 but postponed it until July 19 to permit the return of union leaders who have been in Europe. The conference is to consider the Autobuses Modernos "situation," map plans for meeting an alleged "anti-union" campaign by the employers and to discuss the CTC's "financial crisis." The "financial crisis" is said to result from the Batista Government's failure to continue a subsidy of \$30,000 monthly paid by the Prío regime and which appears in a

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CTC financial statement published in Habana papers this week. An interesting item of this statement is a "debt" of \$118,000 due to MUJAL, advanced as a loan to the CTC. A footnote says that Mujal has cancelled the debt. Alerta comments that "in the history of labor we do not believe there exists a leader who has so clearly proven his generosity and sacrifice."

A labor source reported that discontent with Mujal's leadership and frustration because of the CTC's apparent inability to do anything about the Government's action at Autobuses Modernos has caused dissatisfaction to reach a critical point within the CTC hierarchy. Some unionists fear that Batista's next armed "blitz" on labor may come at United Railways of Havana where twice as many employees as are needed to run the road efficiently are imposed on the poverty-stricken property by the union. Hoy, the Communist daily, reports military intervention in Matanzas Omnibus Yumurí where a labor dispute was in progress. This has not been reported in other Havana papers. Rumors persist that Mujal will shortly resign both his CTC and Consultative Council posts but they have been publicly denied by the union chieftain.

ARMY

Negative

NAVY

Captain William M. Rakow, USN, arrives in Havana Saturday morning, July 12, as relief for Comdr. Paul B. Ryan, USN. Comdr. Ryan will depart from this post August 7.

Tentative arrangements are now being made to send the three Cuban Navy frigates to the U.S. Naval Base at Key West for a two-weeks dry docking period during August and September. Each ship would receive underwater cleaning and repairs to hull fittings. While this work is badly needed by the frigates, it must be recognized that a major overhaul (requiring three months) is essential to place each frigate in first-class operating condition. However, funds are available only for the two-weeks dry docking.

AIR

After an inspection trip that included San Julian and Batista airfields, former United States air bases during the last war, President Batista announced plans to make Batista field at San Antonio de los Baños into an international airport. A part of the property now included in the base would be turned into an experimental agricultural station.

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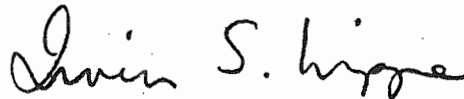
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COMMENT

This plan is in direct contradiction to the plan announced by Batista on June 5, 1952 to rehabilitate this airport as an active base for the Cuban Army Air Force (see Weeka No. 23, June 6, 1952).

For the Ambassador:



Irvin S. Lippe  
Attaché

Participants:

DSGreen, ISLippe, REGomez,  
WPHouk, Elmore (MA), Ryan (NA),  
Pitts (AA)

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Amembassies, Ciudad Trujillo, Port-au-Prince,

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