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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF
AMERICAN REPUBLIC AFFAIRS
INCOMING TELEGRAM
CONFIDENTIAL

SEP 6 1948

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Control 1468

Rec'd September 4, 1948
5:41 p.m.

FROM: San Jose

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 92, September 3 (Army Message)

TO CINCARIB FOR INFO PASS TO CSGID AND STATE DEPT SIGNED
HUGHES.

Juan Bosch, Dominican, private secretary Prio Socarras, arrived yesterday from Venezuela as advance agent of latter who expected here on official visit within few days. Possibility exists Nicaraguan conservatives-Dominicans forcibly holding Figueres to commitment. They have even hinted assassination Arguello Hijo.

XR
7/7-18
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MG:GB

837.001 PRIO SOCARRAS, CARLOS/9-248

SEP 10 1948

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THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF
AMERICAN REPUBLIC AFFAIRS

SEP 21 1948

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

~~SECRET~~

837.001 Prio Socarras, Carlos/9-748
RESTRICTED

No. 423 San José, September 7, 1948.

SUBJECT: Visit of President-elect of Cuba to San José.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF
AMERICAN REPUBLIC AFFAIRS

SEP 15 1948

Felipe W. W. +

THE HONORABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
WASHINGTON.

SIR:

With reference to the telegram of September 3 from the Embassy at Caracas reporting the departure of Dr. Carlos PRIO Socarras, President-elect of Cuba, en route to Costa Rica, I have the honor to report that Dr. Prio arrived in San José at about midday on September 4. He traveled in a Venezuelan government airplane. He was met at the airport by members of the Costa Rican Junta of Government, the Cuban Legation staff, and a fairly numerous public, and was given the usual military honors by a small detachment of Costa Rican troops. Either his departure from Caracas was advanced or the Cuban Legation was not kept informed since the fact that Prio would make a visit to Costa Rica was not known to the Legation until the afternoon of September 3, resulting in considerable rushing about and some confusion.

On the evening of September 4, the Junta gave a small reception for the diplomatic corps to meet Dr. Prio during which the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lic. Gonzalo Facio, made a short speech, a translation of which forms enclosure no. 1 to this despatch. It will be observed that the speech is not remarkable for its penetration or literary composition but the reference to Dr. Prio as a "companion of revolutionary ideals" was rather acidly commented upon by various members of the diplomatic corps who were present. The fact also was remarked upon that Dr. Prio made no response although he did give a press interview, a translation of which is also enclosed. As will be observed, his remarks with regard to American dictatorships were somewhat more restrained than those made during the visit to Guatemala although certainly the various revolutionary forces foregathered in Central America can take courage from his statement: "The hour is drawing near, the hour which I call 'of the exiles'".

It also

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837.001 PRIO SOCARRAS, CARLOS/9-748

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San José, Costa Rica.

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It also may be of interest to observe from the third enclosure to this despatch, a translation from La Nacion of September 5 of certain remarks made by Dr. Prío, that he stated: "My government would without hesitation enter into an alliance with the United States and the other countries of the American continent in the defense of democracy and liberty." It may be significant that in reply to a question with regard to the application of the Marshall Plan to the Americas, Dr. Prío stated that it should be effected "in such manner that it does not eliminate unrestricted production in the different countries and convert the United States into the sole market..."

To complete the press coverage of Dr. Prío's statements, there is enclosed a translation of a statement which appeared in La Hora on September 6 with particular reference to communism.

On the night of September 5 the Junta offered an elaborate reception for Dr. Prío in the Union Club. Heretofore both because of the personal feeling of Mr. Figueres and because of the financial problem presented, such receptions as have been given by the government have been very modest. The Union Club reception, on the other hand, was an evident attempt to impress upon Dr. Prío Costa Rica's hospitality since apparently no effort was spared to make it as elaborate as possible under the circumstances and was marked by the presence of Otilio Ulate whose differences with the Junta have become increasingly pronounced. Attendance was limited almost entirely to members of the diplomatic corps, a few persons socially prominent, and to a fairly conglomerate group of Central American and Caribbean revolutionary figures whose presence in uniform was outstanding. The number and variety of Costa Rican army uniforms was remarked upon with some considerable emphasis by a number of the persons present.

On the whole, the visit was the subject of very considerable speculation not only by members of the diplomatic corps but also by numerous Costa Ricans who saw in it evidence of a Guatemalan-Venezuelan-Costa Rican triangle indicating agreement on common policies to be followed in regard to the overthrow of dictatorships in the Caribbean area. Under the circumstances, it is perhaps natural that the observations of these persons should be highly critical.

Respectfully yours,

Andrew E. Donovan II
Andrew E. Donovan II
Chargé d'Affaires a. i.

Enclosures:

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San José, Costa Rica.

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Enclosures: (4) *itt*

1. Minister Facio's speech
2. Prio's Statement to Press, Diario de Costa Rica,
September 5.
3. Prio's Statement to Press, La Nacion, Sept. 5.
4. Prio's Statement to Press, La Hora, Sept. 6.

All the enclosures are translations.

Copies to: AmEmbassy, Havana
" Guatemala
" Caracas
" Mexico

File no. 800

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PRIO'S STATEMENT TO PRESS

His Future Government's Policy

Policies of our party in the government may be called "National Revolutionary." It tends to redeem and make native economy independent, improve the standard of living of the masses with humane and just wages insofar as possible. Our government will be one of absolute liberty for all: liberty of the press, of thought, of assembly; that is to say, we will maintain the democratic system which we consider the best, rejecting all extremist influences whether rightist or leftist in our internal affairs. In the economic field we will boost industry, will favor diversion of crops, and will endeavor to secure the best possible markets for sugar and tobacco, our principal products.

Concerning Communism and Problems of the Laboring Classes

I am neither interested nor disturbed by communism as a doctrine. As a political organization it will not prosper in Cuba or anywhere else if governments grant liberty and interest themselves in and adequately and justly look after the problems of the laboring class. As a political and labor organization affiliated with the COMINFORM, it will always meet our repulsion in theory and our action in practice since it constitutes, under foreign leadership, a danger to the prosperity and the security of nations. Its fifth column activities will always be controlled and annulled. I can assure that communism is losing strength in Cuba; it is on the retreat and it will be still more so when we put our government program into operation.

On the So-called American Dictatorships

It is one of my constant aspirations, as it is of all men with a free conscience, that regimes of liberty and of democracy shall exist in all of the Caribbean countries. Democracy being the best system of government, it is natural and logical that I want it for my country, for the world, and naturally for the neighboring countries. It is the duty of the people, each within its own country, to crown with victory the noble campaigns of liberation and of democratic living together.

In response to a query asking him to be more specific as to countries and names, Dr. Prió stated:

Neither threatening nor preparing. I believe that is sufficient. I believe that the liberty of the countries now living under oppression will come as the result of the struggle and the sacrifice of each nation proposing to do so. The case of Costa Rica speaks for itself. The hour

is drawing

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is drawing near, the hour which I call "of the exiles." Because I also was an exile...and look at me now. Faith and determination of the people accomplishes everything, even miracles.

Economic Plans

Our economy is based on the price of sugar and other products. I have faith that income will be sufficient to develop our program. There is much to be done, public works, agrarian reforms, national banking, stimulus to cooperatives, administrative organization, etc.

Concerning Nationalization

The problem is not the same everywhere. There are many foreign companies in Cuba which are in a bad condition and they could be nationalized easily, almost by their own free will. But it is my belief that obstacles should not be looked for where they do not exist. It will come when necessary and there is no need for creating unnecessary problems.

Diario de Costa Rica, September 5.

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PRIO'S STATEMENT TO PRESS

Concerning a Socialist Government for Cuba

Socialism has many variants. I will practice Christian-Socialism which tends to make our native economy independent.

Labor organization is the greatest advance in our country. More than 1,200,000 are already well organized. Their unions do not have a defined ideology; at times their leaders belong to different parties.

Communism

As a doctrine, communism does not interest me. I respect it in its public expression, but fight the political organization directed by the COMINFORM because I consider it a danger to my country.

Nationalization

Foreign bus and transportation companies do not constitute a problem in my country. There is room for the organization of new companies with native capital. A government should not create difficulties for itself without necessity therefor. Nationalization of public services is not included in my government program.

Cuba's Policy in Case of International Conflict

We Cubans would ally ourselves with the countries which defend democracy and liberty. In case of a conflict between the East and the West, my government would, without hesitation, enter into an alliance with the United States and the other countries of the American continent.

I believe it is an obligation of all the American people to fight with all available means for the establishment of effective democracy in the world and especially in our America. On account of that we must fight with the nation which today represents liberty and democracy. That is the United States. Not like blind followers in a servile attitude, but as its allies, as its equals, as its continental brothers in creed and in ideals. Any other manner would be betraying ourselves, it would be favoring systems of government which would undoubtedly be imposed by force, contrary to our interests and our principles. Regarding material preparation, this should be carried on without wasting any effort.

Application of Marshall Plan to America

The financial aid which the United States can lend to Latin America would undoubtedly be very beneficial, not

only to

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only to America itself, but to the world in general. Increase in production would occasion greater well being to humanity. But the application of a plan similar to the Marshall Plan in Latin America should be effected under specified conditions in such manner that it would not eliminate unrestricted production in the different countries or convert the United States into the sole market for the products which application of the financial plan would give. The people of Latin America would have to save their economies, looking towards the production of those things which are easiest to produce and which offer a better market in the entire world, so as to avoid a condition whereby planned production by zones would find itself ruined the moment the buyer wants to close his markets. Latin America will have to conserve its economic autonomy without becoming converted into a satellite of the United States through totally subordinating itself economically to the latter.

La Nacion, September 5.

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PRIO'S STATEMENT TO PRESS

Even though this appears strange, at times capitalism has turned out to be the best ally of communism. This because we are dealing with reactionary and exploiting capitalism which ends up with benefiting and strengthening the red preachings based upon unjust and absorbing attitudes thereof or because it lets itself be overwhelmed by the fear which the clever terrorizing tactics of the reds inspire, in which they are real artists and masters.

It may happen that the tendentious propaganda of the communists may provoke this fear and paralyzation of the opposing forces of which at times they even secure domination. Such has been seen in the case of recognized capitalists who, on account of fear or of threat, join the red ranks in a docile manner - openly or secretly - and thus become faithful and obedient servants of their interests as long as their wealth, their privileges, or their manipulations are respected.

When I took over the Ministry of Labor of the government of my friend, Dr. Grau San Martin, I decided to effect a clean up. I showed that it was possible to dominate the fear, and also to dominate communism, bringing into the open and counteracting its insidious tactics, and to bring democracy to the labor unions, which were rescued from the red hegemony which subject them.

been

The red bluff thus having brought into the open and frustrated and its apparent force having been disproven when they threatened with a general strike which they could not carry out, communism in my country has been reduced to what it really is: a negative and demagogic force, plainly in bankruptcy, which can definitely be defeated, and will be, through a good government of a social-democratic type, which concerns itself and confronts with decision the social problems which affect the masses.

It cannot properly be said that there are communist unions in Cuba. What used to exist - but no longer exists today - is COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP of the unions. As I said the reds had unduly appropriated for themselves control of labor unions, which today are liberated from their dictatorships and are under democratic leadership.

This threatening and arrogant communism of other times now does not constitute any danger in Cuba. A good government which guarantees full liberty under a democratic system, which raises the standard of living of the laboring classes and concerns itself with solving their problems, is the best remedy for liquidating communism, rather than

persecuting

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persecuting it or throwing oneself into the arms of
reactionary capitalism under the pretext of anti-communism.
In this latter case the remedy would be worse than the
disease itself - and in the long run, communism would once
more enjoy the atmosphere or the arguments which it needs
for its preachings and its campaigns.

The foregoing refers to communism in general. With
reference to subversive or fifth-column activities directed
by the CONINFORM, that is another thing, because then
these in charge of subversion and the saboteurs will
encounter prompt and energetic action in defense of demo-
cracy and national sovereignty.

La Hora, September 6.

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