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77.113-1954

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

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DESP. NO.

March 19, 1954  
DATE

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF :

For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.	MAR 19 1954
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SUBJECT: President Batista's March 10 Speech

As part of the celebration of the second anniversary of the coup of March 10, 1952, President Batista delivered a speech at a luncheon at the Military and Naval Club at Camp Columbia, which was broadcast to the nation. A press clipping giving the text of the speech is enclosed.

In the first part of the speech Batista, as he has done before, attacked the conduct of the Prfo administration in justification of his March 10 coup. However, he introduced something new when he condemned "those who while in the Government financed revolutions in sister countries and encouraged the entry into Cuba of the Caribbean Legion and undesirable aliens" such as one of the Puerto Rican nationalists who recently shot up the House of Representatives. He also charged that "from the Russian Embassy in Habana, with the complicity of Prfo and his followers, the countries of America were being filled with agents, pamphlets and instructions contrary to democracy". He accused the Prfo regime of "unnecessarily and criminally leading (Cuba) to an inter-American war" by wanting "to convert itself into a ridiculous liberator of other nations". He took credit for having "eliminated all possible danger of war and achieved an effective peace in the Caribbean". He affirmed that with his measures to improve relations with other countries and restrict communist activity, "there has disappeared the nightmare in this respect that was the same as a sword of Damocles hung over the happy co-existence" of Cubans and the rest of the Americas.

Next Batista discussed his administration's public works and other achievements, concluding that "of a country on the edge of chaos" he wishes "to make a stable Republic in which ... its sons can live secure and free". He enunciated the policy that there must be full guarantees for investors and at the same time a high standard of living for workers with decent and human working conditions.

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Censuring the revolutionary and other activities of his opponents, he said that "it is our duty to protect the peace of the country, prevent disorders and avoid anarchy" and that "we cannot permit the confusion existing among those irreconcilable groups to affect the nation".

The President blamed the opposition for obstructing the electoral process and promised that elections would be held as scheduled on November first "without further delays or wavering." He declared that "the abstention (from elections) of certain groups could be justified only by the lack of leaders with authority, the internal divisions (of the groups) or their connections with the Prío crowd". He considered the abstentionist attitude "harmful, ridiculous or negative, if not insurrectional or conspiratorial".

He closed his speech with an assurance of the vigilance of the armed forces throughout the Island on behalf of the people and with an invocation of José MARTÍ.

For the Ambassador:



Carlos C. Hall  
Counselor of Embassy

Enclosure

Press Clipping, El Mundo, 3/11/54

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