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SUBJECT: Ministry of Information Abolished.

On May 12, 1954, the Cuban Ministry of Information ceased to exist, in accordance with the terms of Law-Decree No. 1386 of May 3, 1954, published in the Official Gazette of May 4, 1954. By the same Law-Decree the Publicity Office of the Presidential Palace was renamed the Publicity and Information Office. To it were transferred the budget, archives and equipment of the Ministry of Information and it was made responsible for the Ministry's unfinished business. A copy of Law-Decree No. 1386 is enclosed.

In a radio interview Ernesto DE LA FE, former Minister of Information, stated that the Government abolished the Ministry at his request "in order to facilitate still more the electoral process already under way in view of the fact that there have ceased to exist the difficult circumstances under which the Ministry of Information was necessary to quiet passions and help maintain in the Cuban family a climate of harmony".

The question of whether or not the Ministry of Information would be recreated was left by Law-Decree No. 1386 to the discretion of the Congress to be chosen in the elections scheduled for November 1, 1954.

Comment. The Embassy has been informed by an official of the Ministry of Information that the real reason for de la Fe's request for the abolition of his Ministry was chronic lack of operating funds which was so bad that essential equipment and materials were lacking. In addition the Ministry to a certain extent duplicated the work of the information sections maintained by other Ministries.

The Embassy was also informed that Ernesto de la Fe hopes to be made Minister of the Interior or Minister of Defense, the present incumbents of which contemplate leaving their posts to run for election as Senators. It has also been suggested that de la Fe will be made a Minister Without Portfolio.

For the Ambassador:

Carlos C. Hall
Counselor of Embassy

FCF rnes, Jr. / cv
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