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Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: May 19, 1954

Mr. Mat
Mr. Burrows
DC/R

SUBJECT: Proposed Newspaper Story on Batista and Communism

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Rosson, Washington Star
Mr. Arzac, MID

COPIES TO: ARA/P; ND; Embassy Habana

Mr. Rosson came in to discuss a story on Batista and Communism, by Ronald May, which Mr. Earl Voss of the Star asked me to look at May 17. The newspaper was considering it for publication next Sunday, May 23.

I told Mr. Rosson that we had checked for accuracy the names and titles of prominent persons mentioned, as well as certain facts, but that no extensive research was possible. I said that this check should not be construed as approval of the story, its approach, or its accuracy. I pointed out that the story was heavily slanted to give the distorted impression that Batista is aiding Communism and Communists. I read aloud portions of the story and commented to demonstrate this slant. I said that the story did contain some facts which are undeniable, but that Mr. May had ignored important pertinent facts given to him by me in a background discussion May 6. I said that, of course, Mr. May is free to draw any conclusions he wishes, and that the Star is free to print what it likes, but this story does not represent an accurate picture of President Batista's policy of suppressing Communism and crippling the activities of Communists.

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