

AIR POUCH

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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM :

Ambassy, Habana

653

DESP. NO.

TO :

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

April 5, 1957

DATE

REF :

Voluntary Labor Report

24 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION ARR-4	DEPT. IN F O	RM/R-2 REP-2 OLI-8 P-1 LAB-5 CIA-12 USIA-10 OCB
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SUBJECT: FOUR BRIEF BUT SIGNIFICANT LABOR ITEMS

The purpose of this despatch is to present in succinct manner four items of significance in the labor field. The Department will shortly receive a despatch amplifying the first item.

1. CTC Leaders Visit President Batista. Over two hundred top officials of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), led by their secretary general Eusebio MUJAL Barniol, went to the Palace on March 29, to congratulate President Batista on his own and his family's escape from injury on March 13, when the Palace was attacked.

Following the CTC visit, there has been a continuous parade to the Palace of a large number of economic, financial, commercial, and professional organizations which have expressed thanks and happiness that no harm was done President Batista.

The CTC Executive Committee met on April 4, to make plans for participating in the huge rally which is now being organized to pay homage to President Batista on April 7, 1957.

2. Labor Leader Grantee Denies Making Disloyal Statement.

On April 4, several Cuban papers reproduced a telegram signed by Samuel Powell, a Cuban labor leader-grantee now in the U.S., denying categorically that he had made statements disloyal to the policy of the CTC. Powell was quoted by anti-government politicians in a local broadcast as having said that 90% of the Cuban workers were against the Government.

This, of course, clashes sharply with the implications of Item One above. As a consequence, Mual promptly got in touch by long distance telephone with Powell, who then sent a telegram which was published in the Cuban press. (One copy of this telegram as appearing in the press is attached).

LABOR:JF:prell:hs

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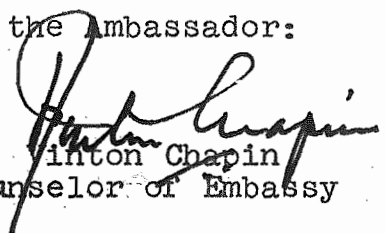
From Habana

3. Cofiño Goes to Court. Unofficial sources indicate that Angel Cofiño, secretary-general of the Labor Federation of Electric, Gas and Water Plants, in the name of that Federation has presented before the "Tribunal of Social and Constitutional Guarantees" a legal objection to Decree 538 and Resolution 51 which require screening of all new employees of public service companies for Communist sympathies. In his case Cofiño alleges that the new enactments violate Article 72 of the Cuban Constitution.

4. FNTA Secretary-General Thanks Batista for Restoring Wages of Sugar Workers. In giving public thanks to President Batista for signing a decree on March 28, 1957 which restores wage cuts made in the years 1953 and 1955, Prisciliano FALCON, Secretary-General of the National Federation of Sugar Workers, said "we cannot let this occasion go by without stating that the present leaders of the FNTA have fulfilled their duty. The 14% wage reduction of former years has been fully restored. In showing our joy we make a cordial call to all sugar workers to close ranks and strengthen the monolithic unity of the workers in our industry. We call on those who have opposed our discipline to admit their mistakes and acknowledge the positive things we are doing for our class."

The latter part of Falcon's remarks were directed toward Conrado Becquer, labor leader and congressman from Las Villas, who has been carrying on bitter fights with Falcon, charging that the FNTA leaders have done nothing for the rank and file sugar workers.

For the Ambassador:


Vinton Chapin
Counselor of Embassy

cc: Mr. Leonhardy - MID-ARA

Enclosure: Newspaper clipping (M)

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