



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AIR MAIL

No. 1752

Habana, June 14, 1946

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Extradition proceedings instituted
against former President Batista

The Honorable

The Secretary of State, c/o. H. L. de P. m. es
Washington

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Embassy's despatch No. 30 of July 28, 1945, entitled "Batista's Plans", as well as to other reports on the activities and circumstances of the erstwhile President of Cuba, and to state that the Grau Administration continues to do everything within its power to discourage his return, its most recent effort being the institution of extradition proceedings against him by the Administration appointed Supreme Court Prosecutor Rafael TREJO, to answer charges of malversation and falsification. These proceedings were instituted just prior to the June 1 elections and were doubtless conceived principally for internal political consumption, in view of the small likelihood of successful accomplishment. It is not anticipated that this effort will be seriously pressed, although it may be re-exerted from time to time if the need, as the Auténticos see it, should arise.

There can be little doubt that this maneuver, however, was effective in high-lighting the contrast to which the present Administration has continually pointed between the open and unashamed pillage of the former regime and the relative high degree of honesty of the present. That it had a telling effect on Batista is evident from the response it brought from him, his acrimonious and rather wild counter-charges clearly showing that he was wounded to the quick. His statement, made in West Palm Beach, that the institution of such proceedings was "ridiculous and stupid" and that "the recent elections were the result of a psychological climate created by terror and money" was in marked contrast to his previous restrained and dignified replies to his Auténtico de-

tractors

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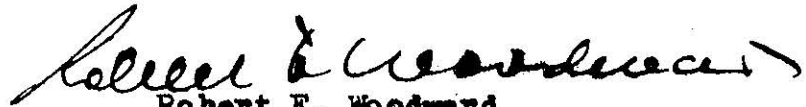
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tractors. A translation of this statement as reported by the Associated Press and carried in the June 7 issue of El Mundo is enclosed for the record.

Batista's statement in Miami a few days later, based on reports concerning President Grau's supposed desire to seek re-election in 1948, also seems to reveal that the former master is losing his touch and what remains of his confidence. Thus, for instance, his declaration that if Grau tries to get re-elected "he will march against him in a revolution together with the people" is not in the best style of his former lofty and somewhat smugly confident more-sinned-against-than-sinners pronouncements. His reported fear that "Grau's conscience must be very troubled" certainly reflects very little of what he must know to be the true state of the President's mind now that he has just been so unmistakably endorsed by the Cuban electorate at large.

When Batista turned over the reins of government to Grau in October 1944, he probably felt, as many did, that the "apostle of Cubanidad" would soon make such a mess of things that the tried and proven leader of the Cuban people would be called back to rescue the country and restore order. With the constantly growing indications that Cuba can do very well without him, Batista must indeed finally realize that except for some unforeseen development, his star will continue to decline as long as Cuba maintains anything approximating its present level of economic prosperity and political consolidation.

Respectfully yours,



Robert F. Woodward
Chargé d'Affaires ad interim

Enclosure: *WPRO*

Translation of reported statement by Batista
appearing in El Mundo, June 7, 1946.

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Original and hectograph to Department

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Enclosure to despatch No. 1752
dated June 14, 1946, from the
Embassy at Habana, Cuba

TRANSLATION

Reported Statement by Batista appearing in El Mundo, June 7

Dr. Grau's threats, which undoubtedly are of a political nature, increased during the electoral campaign in order to favor his supporters. The recent elections were the result of a psychological climate created by terror and money. In less than one year numerous murders have been committed without the criminals having been apprehended and without their being repudiated by the President of the Republic. The national capitol has been stoned by gangs that the chief executive received in the Palace to encourage. During the days immediately before and after the elections the President publicly declared to his supporters that he did not acknowledge the Congress' authority, and warned that the candidates of former regimes should retire if they wished to protect their interests and their lives. With his compliance, candidates of the opposition and members of their families were annoyed in the streets. Aspirants to elective offices were accused as conspirators, and others were stoned or threatened with death. At the height of the political campaign an armed revolt was invented, cannons and machine guns were fired in the military fields and non-existent enemies and landings were alleged.

Grau, the very protector of criminal gangs, threatens a reorganization of the judiciary to annoy and dominate the judges, and declared at the same time that if I returned to Cuba he would send me to jail, at the same time stating that there are liberties and guarantees in the country.

In this evil atmosphere darkened by blood and irresponsibility many made a deal with the oppressor on the spot. The Government won as was expected. The losers hastened to recognize their defeat but those in power have continued their insults. They have not yet wished to recognize my brother's victory which they could not deny the people, and the streets have continued to be stained with blood which the Palace itself spatters.

In the meanwhile the guilty silence and the morbid smile of the chief instigator is the only law in effect.

Now this ridiculous and stupid foolishness of the proceedings appears. It is perfectly apparent what it is all about.