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737.00(W)/4-1955

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

1017

DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

APR 19, 1955

REF : - -

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	061-10 4/20	RM/R-2 ARA-2 ARMY-35		SA-17 MC-1 OSD-2

SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 16 for State, Army, Navy, and Air Departments from SANA. OCB-1
RU-15A-B CIA-16(UNCLASSIFIED) BATISTA GIVES GREEN LIGHT FOR AMNESTY LAW.

Pessimism over the early passage of a sweeping amnesty law turned to high optimism with the issuance by President Batista on April 12 of a statement in which he declared himself in favor of a "broad and generous" amnesty, without any mention of the strings previously attached (see Weeka No. 13). The joint congressional committee already appointed to consider the matter immediately swung into high gear to report out an amnesty bill which was passed by the House of Representatives last night and is expected to be approved by the Senate today. It must be passed immediately since the current session of Congress ends tomorrow.

Statements by government leaders and spokesmen and the bill as passed by the House indicate that the law will grant amnesty to all persons classifiable as political offenders, including the attackers of the Moncada barracks in Santiago de Cuba in July 1953.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. In giving the green light to a broad amnesty law, Batista acceded to increasingly strong public opinion in favor of such a measure. At the same time, although opposition forces are claiming as much credit as they can for "compelling" him to take the step, Batista by this means strengthens his position against charges of ruthless dictatorship, deprives his opponents of political ammunition, almost assures severe public condemnation of any future outbreak of terroristic or revolutionary activity once past violence is forgiven, and makes possible a long step toward political peace and harmony. (See despatch No. 1008, April 14, 1955).

(UNCLASSIFIED) ANOTHER ARMS CACHE SEIZED. The National Police and the Military Intelligence Service (SIM) announced that on April 14th they had located and seized another arms cache, this time in the Santos Suárez section of Havana. There were 25 M-1 carbines, two Garand rifles, four 45-caliber pistols, 1000 odd fragmentation type, light-weight hand grenades (charged but without detonators), and some 5,000 rounds of ammunition of various calibers. An odd feature of the carbines was that six of them bore the s

FCFornes, Jr.:mbw
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serial number, possibly because they had been assembled from surplus parts in some small gunshop and stamped with the same die. Four persons have been detained in connection with the arms and the person accused of being principally responsible for the cache is being sought.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. It is unlikely that this reported arms discovery will affect the passage or the scope of the amnesty law now being considered by the Congress.

(LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) INDICATION OF CONFUSION IN UNDERGROUND OPPOSITION. José DUARTE, of Mamaroneck fame, recently contacted the office of the Embassy's Legal Attaché by telephone. He reported that he was still at liberty and alive. He said that the situation in the underground opposition is not good and that a decision must be reached shortly as to what must be done (possibly referring to the effect of a broad political amnesty on conspiratorial activities). Duarte indicated that the underground opposition is not ready for armed action, that there is considerable dissension in its ranks, and that those in Cuba are at odds with others opposing Batista from the safety of Miami and Mexico City.

(LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) Comment. Duarte is known to be active in the revolutionary opposition and what he says and intimates may possibly be true. It is quite likely that at this time there is confusion and uncertainty in the ranks of the revolutionaries as a result of the probability of a far-reaching amnesty law, the talk of exiles returning to Cuba following amnesty, and the tendency to regard Batista as now solidly entrenched under constitutional forms and to be combatted with a view to eventual overthrow by civic rather than revolutionary means.

(LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) SIM REPORTS CHANGE OF EMPHASIS IN LOCAL COMMUNIST AGITATION. On April 8, 1955, the local press carried a report from Mexico City to the effect that Vicente LOMBARDO Toledano had formulated a four-point program calling for the struggle of all the people of Latin America "against the common danger - the United States".

Apropos of this report, the "Anti-democratic Activities Section" of the Military Intelligence Service (SIM) pointed out that in mid-March it had received information regarding a change of emphasis in local Communist agitation. The ADA Section stated that it was informed that anti-government agitation would be relegated to the secondary plane and that first emphasis would be placed on "anti-United States agitation and the attack on the national economy". The anti-American attack was supposed to have been launched from Cuba but, the ADA Section plumed itself, "the repressive anti-Communist climate" here caused Mexico to be used instead. The ADA Section also said that the Cuban Communist,

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Lazaro PEÑA, was second in command to Lombardo Toledano and acted as liaison in the "Cuba-Mexico-Chile-Russia international Communist apparatus".

A copy of the ADA Section report containing the above information was supplied confidentially to the Embassy by the Chief of Staff of the Cuban Army. Nothing is known regarding the reliability of the ADA Section's source.

(UNCLASSIFIED) INTERVENTION OF UNION UNDER ANTI-COMMUNIST LAW-DECREE. Law-decree No. 1975 of January 27, 1955 was invoked to intervene the Union of Jewelers and Silversmiths of Habana because of Communist membership among its officers.

(UNCLASSIFIED) Comment. This is the third time in a month that this Law-decree has been used against Communists in the unions (see Weeka No. 12). It is probable that as on the two earlier occasions action was taken at the initiative of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC).

(UNCLASSIFIED) CTC SENDING DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES ON SUGAR ISSUE. The papers have carried the news that the CTC intends during the present week to send a delegation to the United States to discuss with labor leaders, government officials, and members of Congress Cuba's participation in the United States sugar market.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. Eusebio MUJAL, CTC Secretary-General, has informed the Embassy that the delegation will also call on "the 38,000 firms in the United States that sell more than \$100 a year of exports to Cuba". He intends to make Rafael OTERO a member of the delegation in view of Otero's fine job in Guatemala following the overthrow of the Arbenz government and the ability Otero demonstrated there to get along with Americans. Completion of these plans is awaiting the return of the Cuban delegation to the ORIT Congress at San José and its personal report of the reaction there to Cuba's point of view on the sugar question. While it is hardly likely the CTC delegation can see 38,000 United States firms, Mujal's remark is of interest as probably revealing one of the approaches the Cuban government plans to make on the sugar issue.

(UNCLASSIFIED) AFRO-ASIAN CONFERENCE. Cuban newspapers viewed the forthcoming Afro-Asian Conference with interest, particularly with regard to the respective influence exerted by CHOU En-lai and NEHRU. Diario Nacional commented that Chou and Nehru will play leading roles, and Bandung will reveal whether their relationship is cordial or stiff. Prensa Libre expressed surprise that no representatives of the white race will be in attendance although Australia and New Zealand are within the Afro-Asian orbit, and predicted that the conference will be charged with racial and

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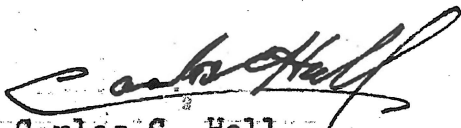
religious prejudices. The paper, while deploring western colonialism in Asia, feared an Asian or African imperialism even more. Alerta said that with five-eighths of the world represented a resurgence of Asiaticism will be a sure result, and that India will emerge more closely allied to Red China in the political sphere under the old banner of "Asia for the Asiatics." El Mundo said that Soviet Russia will gain by the Bandung conference because anti-Western pronouncements are bound to result and will be given wide play throughout Asia by the Communists.

(UNCLASSIFIED) SALK VACCINE. Confirmation of the effectiveness of the Salk vaccine and America's willingness to share its benefits with the whole world drew warm editorial reaction. El Mundo in praising the United States for its generosity said it should serve as an example to the Russians to contribute to the solution of the problem of the total elimination of atomic weapons. Diario de la Marina asked what would be sufficient to thank Dr. Salk for his research, and placed his name along with those of Pasteur, Finlay, and Fleming as benefactors of humanity. Excelsior said that the world owes a tremendous debt to Dr. Salk and noted with feeling that he used his own three sons for the experiment. El Pais predicted that the discovery would spur research into other medical fields, and expressed the hope that a vaccine "against war" might be found. Tiempo said that only a true democracy like the United States is able to develop such a vaccine through stimulated private research and distribute it to the entire world for the benefit of all regardless of class. Información said a temple of recognition and devotion should be erected to Dr. Salk.

Army, Navy, Air

Negative.

For the Ambassador:


Carlos C. Hall
Counselor of Embassy

Participants: CCHall, JPHoover, CSPick, FCFornes, DSGreen, JdeZengotita, RGCushing, CDAnderson, WBCaldwell, Park (AA).

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