

AIR POUCH

PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL

(Security Classification)

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

737.00(w)/8-1556

FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

103

DESP. NO.

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

August 15, 1956

DATE

REF : -

25 For Dept. Use Only.	ACTION	DEPT.
	REC'D	IN F O
	06-10	RM/R-2 S/S-2 aia-4 90-2 9CA-10
	8-16	USIA-10 Army-35 Navy-30 Air-24 Cia-16

SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 33 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA.

OCB-2 OSD-2

(UNCLASSIFIED) GOVERNMENT ALLEGES PACT BETWEEN TRUJILLO, PRIO, AND INSURRECTIONARY LEADERS. On August 11, 1956, Brig. Gen. Rafael SALAS Cañizares, Chief of the National Police, released the text of a report he submitted that day to the Urgency Court of Habana, "in amplification of previous reports", concerning conspiratorial and insurrectionary activities. The report states in part that "(1) There truly and effectively exists an agreement between the ex-Presidents Rafael Leónidas TRUJILLO, Dictator of the Dominican Republic and Carlos PRIO Socarrás, of the Republic of Cuba, and Fidel CASTRO Ruz, responsible for the events at Montcada (the assault on the army garrison at Santiago on July 26, 1953), to provoke an armed movement in Cuba, by means of which they hope to overthrow the present regime of Maj. Gen. Fulgencio BATISTA y Zaldívar; (2) That it is totally certain that Dr. Carlos PRIO Socarrás has met on three occasions with Dictator Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, two of them in the north of the United States and the third in the city of Miami, discussing at each of them the plans and preparations for the insurrectionary movement which they are preparing against Cuba; (3) The shift or change in tactics of Fidel Castro Ruz is a proof more than clear, that he is aligned parallel at the side of PRIO-Trujillo". The report is a series of allegations, offering nothing in the way of proof or substantiation. It maintains that PRIO, operating through his follower Eufemio FERNANDEZ Ortega, and with the assistance of Policarpo SOLER Cruz, established contact with Trujillo from which a working arrangement developed, and that Fidel Castro has now joined the group as a result of financial assistance from PRIO. The contributions of the participants are, alleged to be as follows: Trujillo, arms, money, men, utilizing the services of trained and experienced mercenaries whom he has used in other revolutionary activities, and "implements of war"; PRIO, money and men, mostly mercenaries, some from World War II and others from the Spanish Civil War; Fidel Castro and Eufemio Fernández, arms and men, from their secret organizations "26 of July", "Triple A", "Insurrectionary Orthodox Group", and others.

JL Topping:mbw
REPORTER

CONFIDENTIAL

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to RM/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

737.00(w)/8-1556

This Document Must Be Returned to
RM/R
Central
Files

CONFIDENTIAL
(Classification)

Page 2 of
Encl. No.
Desp. No. 103
From HABANA

(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. The report reads like a "Who's Who" of names mentioned in connection with insurrectionary activities. Everybody is dragged in, and assigned his place in the scheme. No proof is offered, and the general tone is that the statements are true because Salas says so. Some of the allegations appear highly improbable and others doubtful. The persons mentioned have engaged or been implicated in conspiratorial activities at one time or another since Batista seized power in 1952. However, the report implies the existence of an organization, force, and cohesion in these activities much greater than performance to date would indicate. If it were correct, the Batista regime would be facing an imminent struggle against powerful and unified insurrectionary forces. The Embassy has no confirmation from other sources, either within or outside Cuba, of such unity or power among the conspiratorial groups opposing Batista. Indeed, the general trend of the information available to the Embassy is against the thesis advanced by Salas. Trujillo maintains vehemently that he is not conspiring against Batista. The recent activities and movements of Prió, so far as known to the Embassy, indicate a relaxation and general lack of care inconsistent with the leader of insurrectionary movement approaching a critical state, though this could well be an attempt at deliberate disguise. Fidel Castro, though maintaining that 1956 is a year of decision, does not appear to have any significant number of followers outside of Cuba, but may be able to count on a sizeable number within the country. The report mentions Aureliano SANCHEZ Arango, and the "Triple A" insurrectionary group which he was said to be organizing. This is the first mention of them in some time. Reports concerning his movements were formerly extensive, but we have had no information concerning his whereabouts or activities for many months. Unconfirmed allegations have appeared in the past, particularly in the newspaper Tiempo en Cuba, owned and directed by Rolando MASFERRER, to the effect that Prió and Trujillo have conferred, generally on the high seas. American intelligence sources available to the Embassy state they have no information to substantiate the allegation that the two have met in the United States.

The Prime Minister, Dr. Jorge GARCIA Montes, told an officer of the Embassy that he felt the report submitted by Salas was in general accurate, implying that he had direct knowledge of some of the information on which it was based. However, there have been no indications of any increased concern or alertness on the part of the administration. Batista himself seems relaxed, and has been spending weekends vacationing at Varadero Beach.

(UNCLASSIFIED) ACTIVITIES OF CARLOS PRIO. The local press has reported with some surprise statements made by ex-President Carlos PRIO to a representative of the Cuban paper Avance when in New York to see Mrs. Prió and their daughters off for Europe.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(Classification)

Page 3 of
Encl. No.
Desp. No. 103
From HABANA

Prío was quoted as saying that he was leaving his followers in the Auténtico Party (Partido Revolucionario Cubano (A)) at complete freedom concerning participation in the partial elections scheduled for 1957. Prío added that the proposal left him somewhat perplexed and "disoriented". He is understood to be now back in Miami, conferring with Manuel A. "Tony" VARONA of the Auténtico Party directorate.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. The reported statements are unexpectedly mild for Prío. Further comments may well be forthcoming after he and Varona conclude their conference. It is rumored that one of the Prío daughters requires medical attention, and that the European trip is for that purpose. One local paper, apparently without foundation, has hinted that Prío himself will shortly go to Europe.

(UNCLASSIFIED) STUDENTS' UNION OBSERVES ANNIVERSARY OF MACHADO'S FALL. The Federation of University Students (FEU) celebrated August 12, the anniversary of the fall of the Machado regime in 1933, in Habana and Santiago, and possibly elsewhere. Police blocked off the University area in Habana, and the commemorative meeting held there passed without incident. However, in Santiago several participants were arrested, including Juan NUIRY, a member of the directorate of the FEU.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. The participants in the Habana celebration were orderly, and made no attempt to create an incident. In Santiago those running the celebration seem to have attempted to make it an anti-Government demonstration, and marched through the streets of the city. The police moved in apparently when the demonstration got involved with the funeral services for the former Governor of the province (see below). At both meetings handbills were distributed drawing forced parallels between the last days of the Machado regime and the present situation, and attacking United States and British "commercial imperialism" and Sumner WELLES.

(UNCLASSIFIED) POSSIBLE TROUBLE INVOLVING ORTODOXO PARTY. The Directorate of the Ortodoxo Party (Partido del Pueblo Cubano (O)), requested permission to hold a procession from Habana University to the grave of the party's first leader and idol, Dr. Eduardo CHIBAS, on August 16, the anniversary of his death. The request has been refused by Minister of the Interior Santiago REY, on the grounds that the Government has knowledge that subversive elements plan to infiltrate the procession and cause disturbances. He has, however, offered to permit the party members to meet around the grave in the cemetery. The Minister has maintained his position in spite of direct appeals from the Ortodoxo directorate, which has stated that his action is unconstitutional and contrary to the spirit of the Government's proposals for

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(Classification)

Page 4 of
Encl. No. _____
Desp. No. 103
From HABANA

registration of political parties and the holding of partial elections in 1957. The directorate has announced that the procession will be held with or without permission.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. Minister Rey has gotten the Government into a difficult position. His grounds for refusing permission for the procession appear flimsy, to say the least, and may well be unconstitutional. Whatever the Government does now, stands to lose. If it backs down, the Ortedoxes can claim a victory for political liberty. If the Government remains firm and attempts to break up any procession, the Ortedoxes will probably maintain that it is but one more proof of the oppressive character of the regime, and an indication that the proposed elections will be far from free. President Batista has, of course, been drawn into the controversy. He has stated that Rey acted correctly, and has talked in threatening terms. "If the Ortedoxes want to create disturbances, let them do so; that would be their responsibility. We know our obligations, and would comply with them", he said.

(UNCLASSIFIED) GOVERNOR OF ORIENTE DIES. The Governor of Oriente Province, Justo SALAS Arzuaga, died on August 11 after a heart attack suffered several days previously, and was buried with full honors the following day. The position has now been filled by Mariano REY Gonzalez, local head of the Radical Union Party (PUR) and mayor of Alto Songo.

(UNCLASSIFIED) PARDO LLADA VISITS BOLIVIA. José PARDO Llada, who recently changed his "Movement of the Nation" to the "Nationalist Revolutionary Party", returned August 13 from a visit to Bolivia, where he attended the inauguration of President Hernan SILES at the latter's invitation. Parde Llada has stated that the Nationalist Revolutionary Party now governing Bolivia is one of his models, along with similar movements in other countries and certain aspects of Peronism.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. The nationalist revolutionary doctrine is attractive to Parde, fitting closely the political philosophy he has developed. He expresses confidence that the movement will be equally attractive in Cuba. However, because of basic differences in the economies and the people, he will find it difficult to draw accurate parallels between Cuba and Bolivia.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) CUBAN INQUIRY RESPECTING RED CHINA TRADE. After stressing Cuba's desire to cooperate with the United States in anti-Communist trade controls, Minister of State GUELL last week inquired with respect to United States reaction if Cuba should sell sugar to European countries, which in turn would resell to Communist China, with payment made to Cuba in currencies and through banks not subject to United States Treasury licensing. He asked

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL
(Classification)

Page 5 of
Encl. No.
Desp. No. 103
From HABANA

furthermore, for assurances, in case Cuba is asked to pass up such market opportunities, that other countries linked in the anti-Communist fight similarly are not doing such business.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. Dr. Guell's request resulted from recent United States Treasury refusal to license certain dollar transactions on sugar sales to European buyers because of suspected Communist China involvement, and from overtures by French interests reportedly seeking sugar for resale to other countries including possibly Communist China. The Minister stressed his understanding of United States policy and Cuba's desire to cooperate, but pointed out his difficulty in justifying his position to Cuban sugar trade which alleges that European allies of United States are actively soliciting such trade.

(UNCLASSIFIED) CUBAN SENSIBILITY TOUCHED. Reverberations over the "\$64,000 Question" (see Weeka No. 32 of August 8, 1956) were still in the air when another attack on United States entertainment media came from the pen of Dr. Herminio PORTELL-VILA, writing in Bohemia. Portell-Vila, in an article titled "Hollywood Toys with Marti", sharply criticized Warner Brothers - probably with some degree of validity - for its "twisting of history" as reflected in the motion picture "Santiago", dealing with the Spanish-American War. Portell-Vila objected to numerous historical incidents as portrayed by Warner Brothers as doing scant honor to Cuba, and most of all the erroneous portrayal of José Martí as a near-ludicrous fat man. He also complained vigorously about similar treatment of Cuba and Martí in a Dell comic book based on the film.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. Apparently Portell-Vila has obtained support for his protest. There are indications that many Cuban intellectuals are disturbed over the picture because of Portell-Vila's article. This feeling could be sufficient to cause the film to be banned in Cuba.

(UNCLASSIFIED) HEMINGWAY HONORED. Ernest HEMINGWAY was honored as a warm friend of Cuba at a huge subscription luncheon given on August 13 by José M. BOSCH, Cuban rum and beer magnate, and attended by some 300 businessmen, intellectuals, newspapermen, and even the American novelist's fishermen friends from Cojimar. Hemingway drew prolonged applause when he announced he was donating the gold medal of his Nobel Prize to the church near Santiago containing the "Virgen del Cobre", patron saint of Cuba. Hemingway rarely makes public appearances of this type. Apparently tremendously pleased at the honor, he chatted amiably with scores of admirers.

Psychological.

(UNCLASSIFIED) SUEZ. Heavy stress continued to be placed in the Cuban press on the Suez Canal situation but comment on the

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL
(Classification)

Page 6 of
Encl. No. _____
Desp. No. 103
From HABANA

forthcoming London conference was generally side-stepped. Instead, editorials and commentaries probed deeper into the significance of the mounting tension in the Near East and came to some of the following conclusions: Prensa Libre stated that the United States is taking an independent attitude in the Suez controversy because Washington sees a bigger problem - the potential expansion of the Soviet sphere of influence in the Near East. The Egyptian problem, from the United States point of view, commented Prensa Libre, is with Soviet Russia and not with Nasser. Later in the week, the same newspaper struck the pessimistic note that Nasser appeared to be winning out and Britain and France losing. The newspaper took a dim view of the possibility that an act of violence could be cured by a conference. Further, Prensa Libre lashed out at Sir Anthony Eden stating that he was not the man to rise and meet the tense Suez situation.

Excelsior defended the critics of United States policy by stating that the United States was maintaining its prestige by encouraging the settlement of the situation by peaceful means. Excelsior further warned that Russia has everything to gain and nothing to lose at Suez, and the longer the controversy is prolonged, the better the chances the Soviets will have of penetrating this strategic region. There is a good possibility concluded Excelsior, that the internationalization of the Suez Canal may open discussion of the internationalization of the Panama Canal. The question of why Panama had not been invited to the Suez Conference was posed by Pueblo, who felt that the United States had used influence to make sure that Panama would not attend in order to avoid potential trouble in the isthmus.

Información anticipated a trip of Nasser to Moscow in his bid for Soviet support. This, the newspaper felt, would put Russia in a very shaky position to provoke the Western Nations. Russia may propose, concluded Información, a guarantee of freedom of navigation of the canal, but at the same time defend the Egyptian right to nationalize the canal.

Navy.

(UNCLASSIFIED) GRADUATION OF CUBAN NAVAL ACADEMY MIDSHIPMEN.
On August 10, 1956 twenty-one Midshipmen of the Cuban Naval Academy at Mariel were commissioned Ensigns of the General Line in the Cuban Navy. These Midshipmen entered the Academy in 1952 and have completed the four-year course. Graduation exercises took place in the morning and were followed by a large dinner dance for the Midshipmen and the twelve Military Academy Cadets who graduated the same day. It is understood that all of the twenty-one newly commissioned Ensigns will be assigned sea duty in surface units of the Cuban Navy.

Army, Air.

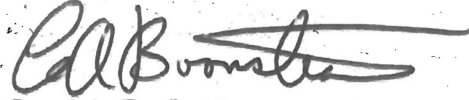
Negative.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL
(Classification)

Page 7 of
Encl. No.
Desp. No. 109
From HABANA

For the Chargé d'Affaires a.i.



C. A. Beenstra
Counselor of Embassy
for Economic Affairs

Contributors:

Political:	JLTopping
Red China:	CABeenstra
Hemingway:	RGCushing
Susceptibility:	RGCushing
Psychological:	RGCushing
	SPHelms
Navy:	CdrLKrisel

cc: AmEmbassies, Ciudad Trujillo and Port-au-Prince.

MA(7)
NA(5)
AA(2)

CONFIDENTIAL

