

JUN 7 - 1955

AIR POUCH
PRIORITY

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

SECRET

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FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA

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TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

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SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 23 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA.

(UNCLASSIFIED) BATISTA INDICATES DETERMINATION TO SERVE OUT FULL FOUR-YEAR TERM. In a speech delivered upon inaugurating a new boulevard on June 4th, President BATISTA spoke of "turning over power in 1959" to an elected successor.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. This statement is interesting from two points of view. In the first place it constitutes a public declaration that Batista presently intends to observe the constitutional prohibition against a president succeeding himself. Secondly, it indicates a determination to serve out the full four-year term for which he was elected on November 1, 1954, and hence offers no encouragement to current agitation for general elections for all offices including the presidency before 1958 (see below).

(UNCLASSIFIED) CALL TO GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION FOR UNDERSTANDING. The "Friends of the Republic", a group which declares itself non-political and is headed by and reflects the thinking of elder statesmen Cosme DE LA TORRIENTE, has just issued a call to both government and opposition forces to "agree to establish the bases indispensable to achieving the democratic reordering of the institutions of the Republic as soon as possible". Such agreement would require that the Constitution be "fully and effectively" in force and to such end the association "formally demanded", apart from the correction of measures that "may restrict or adulterate individual rights", the repeal of certain 1953 law-decrees that gave special status to the armed forces and "violate ... the principle of equality before the law". The opposition was called upon to agree on "measures that must be adopted duly to guarantee general elections as soon as possible to fill all offices of the State".

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. There is a chance that a substantial portion of the opposition may get together, not in a "united front", but to exchange views and possibly to reach agreement or "coincidence" (as it has been called) on demands to be presented to Batista. However, should those demands include general elections before 1958, they will collide head on with the President's determination (see above) to serve out the full four-year term.

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he was elected in November 1954.

(UNCLASSIFIED) MORE BOMB EXPLOSIONS. In the early morning of June 2nd an apparently powerful bomb exploded in the entrance to a store in the Luyanó section of Havana. Considerable damage was done but no one was hurt.

About 8:00 p.m. on June 4th another powerful bomb reportedly exploded at the entrance to the street cleaning department of the Ministry of Health. The heavy door was blown in, drums of disinfectant stored inside exploded, and damage estimated at \$5,000 was done to the building and furnishings. Three persons - two women and a youth - were hurt, one of the women being said to have imbedded in her flesh more than twenty pieces of glass and fine wire, the latter possibly having been used to wrap the container of the explosive. It is said that a person implicated in the alleged bombing may also have been hurt. The authorities have detained many persons for questioning, including some of those recently released from prison under the political amnesty and others accused of past terroristic activity.

(UNCLASSIFIED) BRAC OFFICES FILLED. By a decree appearing in the Official Gazette of June 4, 1955, Brigadier General Martín DIAZ Tamayo, Inspector General of the Army, was named Vice President-Director of the Bureau for the Repression of Communistic Activities (BRAC) and Lt. Col. José J. FIGAROLA Infante, legal adviser to the Military Intelligence Service (SIM), was designated BRAC's Administrative Secretary. There still remain to be appointed a Ministry of State delegate and a lawyer in charge of legal matters, two of the positions established by Decree No. 1307 of May 4, 1955, which promulgated BRAC regulations (see despatch No. 1144, May 18, 1955).

As provided for by Decree No. 1307, the officers in charge of the BRAC are the Minister of the Interior, the Vice President-Director, the Administrative Secretary, the Chief of the National Secret Police (in charge of the Technical Section of Investigations), a Ministry of State delegate, and a lawyer in charge of legal matters. An advisory Technical Commission will be composed of the Vice President-Director, the Administrative Secretary, the lawyer in charge of legal matters, and the Chiefs of the National Secret Police, of the Bureau of Investigations of the National Police, and of the SIM.

(UNCLASSIFIED) ORTODOXO NEWSPAPER HAS ISSUE SEIZED. La Calle, which emerged in early April as a strongly anti-Batista newspaper, ran into its first brush with the government authorities when the police seized all the copies they could find of its June 3 issue. That edition carried a spectacular front-page article by Waldo PEREZ Almaguer, former governor of Oriente Province, severely

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attacking Col. Alberto DEL RIO Chaviano, military commander in Santiago de Cuba, as a cold-blooded murderer, thus backing up Fidel CASTRO's charges in connection with the uprising in Santiago in July 1953 (see Weeka No. 22). Undaunted, La Calle came out the next day with the front page of the suppressed edition cleverly inserted as an inside page. The director of La Calle said that, while the seizure of the issue was a blow to freedom of the press, it was encouraging that Batista had not ordered the destruction of the paper's plant. The Pérez article was the talk of Oriente. On June 4 the pro-administration newspaper, Tiempo, charged in streamer headlines that La Calle was supported by the Communist Party.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. While the Communists might regard La Calle as a potential vehicle for their propaganda, it is possible that the Tiempo charge is a first move in a government campaign to put La Calle out of business. While La Calle has carried occasional Communist-line articles, including an anti-United States series on Guatemala which has run ever since the paper first came out, it frequently has attacked the Reds and uses a great number of anti-Communist USIS stories. The paper, unlike the rest of the Habana press, receives no government subsidy and has few advertisements. Wealthy Ortodoxos are its main supporters and it has appealed to Ortodoxo party members for greater subscription support.

(UNCLASSIFIED) CTC TO SEND NEW MISSION TO WASHINGTON ON SUGAR. Within the next week the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) will send a third delegation to Washington to protect Cuba's participation in the United States sugar market against possible injurious legislation.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. The Embassy is informed that the CTC is sending this delegation on the advice of Mr. Mason, CIO congressional liaison officer, who believes that the delegation should make the Cuban point of view known in Washington while hearings on pending legislation are held by congressional committees. CTC Secretary-General Mujal, who because of ill health has not resumed that position since his last return from Washington, will head the new delegation.

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(UNCLASSIFIED) RETURN OF EXILED LABOR LEADERS CRITICIZED BY CTC. The return from exile in the United States the past weekend of Pascasio LINERAS, textile workers leader, provoked a statement from the CTC Bureau of Direction which revealed that the CTC had sent a mission to Lineras and to Marco HIRIGOYEN, exiled bus workers' leader, recommending that they not return to Cuba for some months. The statement said that the return of the two men would not benefit the workers they represent and that the two were at present more involved in politics than in trade union matters. The CTC could not offer guarantees to politicians.

Hirigoyen, who is still in the United States and receives \$400 a month from the CTC, has replied with a statement affirming that the CTC has many politicians in its leadership, that he has always been apolitical, and that he wished to return to Cuba to fight for labor's rights and conquests.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. The Embassy is informed that the leadership of the CTC is mainly concerned that Lineras and Hirigoyen might come back and stir up trouble in their industries at a time when that could only be harmful. It feels particularly concerned about Hirigoyen, who has his base in the employees of the bankrupt Autobuses Modernos. Hirigoyen would probably try to ~~interfere with~~ interfere with putting this company back on its feet, demagogically agitating the interests of Modernos' workers.

(LIMITED OFFICIAL USE) DOMINICAN EXILES REACH CUBA.

On May 21, 1955, five Dominican exiles landed from Haiti on the south shore of Cuba, well to the east of the United States Naval Base at Guantánamo. They were Manuel Leovigildo PINA, Jr., Andrés Marcelino RAMOS Peguero, Francisco Eleuterio RAMOS Peguero, Alfonso ESPINAL, and Victor ORZATELLIS Matos. They made their way to Guantánamo City whence they were sent by the local authorities to Havana. Here they requested asylum as political refugees in danger of their lives if returned either to the Dominican Republic or to Haiti. The five were set at liberty on May 29th but their status as political refugees has not yet been determined by the Cuban Government.

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(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) UNITED STATES CITIZEN HELD IN CONNECTION WITH ARMS RUNNING. A presumed United States citizen calling himself Michael P. MORENO is being held by the Cuban police after confessing to having flown arms to Camaguey province in 1953, to Varadero on another occasion, and to attending in May of this year a meeting of Prío revolutionaries in Miami. At this meeting plans were allegedly laid for the bombing by three B-24 planes and one B-25 of the Cuban capitol, Cabañas fortress, Campo Columbia, and Morro Castle. Moreno has kept changing his story constantly and making additions to or denials of parts of it. He was unable from the air to locate the farm in Camaguey he said he had flown to, and no arms were found by the authorities at the farm of the person named by Moreno as the owner.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. Moreno and a companion calling himself Charles HOBBS had come to the Embassy's attention earlier as potential protection cases and probable impersonators of USAF officers. Hobbs told the Embassy's Treasury Representative that he was implicated in plans to fly marijuana from Mexico to the United States and arms from Florida to Cuba. Hobbs, of whose leaving Cuba there is no record, is now at large but is being sought by the police. Moreno seems a pathological liar with an obsession for being taken for a pilot. The U. S. Treasury Representative is convinced he cannot fly at all. However, all his lies weave around the arms theme and he seems to know enough about persons who might be conspirators against the government, about Miami addresses, and about the possibilities of landing on Camaguey farms to suggest that there probably is something in his stories. The Embassy consular section and the U. S. Treasury Representative are following the case closely. The Cuban authorities intend shortly to return Moreno to the United States.

(UNCLASSIFIED) CONTRACT WITH FRENCH COMPANY FOR HARBOR TUNNEL APPROVED. The decision of the Habana Tunnel Development Company, a private entity, to award the construction contract for the projected vehicular tunnel under the Habana harbor entrance to Société des Grands Travaux de Marseille was approved by the official National Development Commission on June 1. The formal contract for the construction work was signed on June 6. Financing contracts will be concluded at a later date.

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(UNCLASSIFIED) YUGOSLAVIA. Cuban newspapers without exception considered the top-level Soviet mission to Yugoslavia a ludicrous performance which failed to win Tito back into the fold, but there was an undertone of concern that while Tito did not swallow the hook, he did grant the Russians important concessions. All major newspapers expressed amusement at what they called the absurd and juvenile statement by Krushchev that the dead Beria was to blame for Russia's mistreatment of Tito, and many thought the Soviets had lost prestige by sending its leaders on such a fruitless mission. However, there were cautions that perhaps the Soviets got pretty much what they wanted in Belgrade, such as Tito's support of the Chinese Communist claim to Formosa and the admission of the Chinese Reds into the United Nations, both major points in Soviet policy. Diario de la Marina saw the trip to Belgrade as part of the new Moscow line of sweetness, coming on the heels of the liberation of Austria. The paper said Russia did not try to win Tito back, but sought only to win Yugoslavia away from the West, and in this partly succeeded by obtaining certain concessions involving Red China. Diario Nacional observed that the pressure on Tito was terrific since the Bulganin-Krushchev mission was a supreme effort to reconquer Yugoslavia, the only country which has been able to escape Soviet imperialism. Alerta and Información went so far as to wonder whether Krushchev himself may come a cropper over his failure to convince Tito that Beria was to blame for the USSR-Yugoslavia rift. Alerta thought Tito had appeased the Soviets not only on the Red China issues but also in regard to Germany, since his interpretation of a "democratic" settlement, which he agreed to, would seem to mean a Communist settlement since Tito is undeniably a Red. Tiempo attributed the Soviet olive branch to her need to make political gains in order to divert public attention from drastic failures at home in collective agriculture and industrial production.

(UNCLASSIFIED) RELEASED U.S. FLIERS. Red China's motives in deporting the four American fliers were viewed here with suspicion. Many newspapers thought the Chinese Communists were bartering the fliers for concessions of one kind or another. Información said the Red China action was too patly tied in with CHOU En-lai's efforts to enter into direct talks with the United States on the Formosa issue and with the forthcoming tenth anniversary meeting of the United Nations, in which Red China would like to participate. Diario Nacional said the move obviously was made as the result of Krishna MENON's visit to Peiping, and that the motive is to create good feeling in an effort to drive a wedge between the United States and Nationalist China. The other Americans held by the Reds will be held as hostages in case United States-Communist China talks on Asian problems fail, the paper predicted. Alerta wondered whether the Red China gesture might reflect the apparent softening attitude in Moscow

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towards the West and, conceding that the move generated optimism, warned that the free world is prone to thank the Communists for things they should have done long before.

Armed Forces

(SECRET) AMENDMENT TO US-CUBAN COMMON DEFENSE PLAN. On June 4, 1955, an amendment to Annex A of the "Plan of the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America for Their Common Defense" was signed by Major General Robert W. DOUGLASS, Jr., USAF, Chairman of the Inter-American Defense Board, acting as special United States representative, and Major General Francisco TABERNILLA y Dolz, Chief of Staff of the Cuban Army acting as special representative of the Cuban Government.

The amendment, which became effective immediately, increased the Cuban Western Hemisphere Task Units by one Infantry Battalion, one Reconnaissance Squadron (Navy) and one Fighter Bomber Squadron (Air Force).

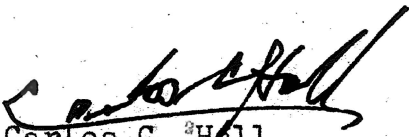
Army

(UNCLASSIFIED) INSPECTOR GENERAL OF CUBAN ARMY RETURNS FROM U.S. On June 4, 1955, Brigadier General Martín DIAZ y Tamayo, Inspector General of the Cuban Army, returned to Havana from a three-week tour of military installations in the United States sponsored by the U.S. Army. Accompanying General Díaz on his trip were Lt. Col. Felipe CATASUS y Pazos, Operations Officer of the Cuban Army Air Force, and Lt. Col. Manuel VERELA y Castro, commanding officer of the Tank Battalion of the Mixed Tank Regiment.

Navy, Air

Negative.

For the Ambassador:


Carlos C. Hall
Counselor of Embassy

Participants; CCHall, HMRandall, CFPick, Jr., FCFornes, Jr., JdeZengotita, ACertosimo, REWhedbee, RGCushing, CDAnderson, Elmore (MA), Slaton (AA).

Copies to: AmEmbassies, Ciudad Trujillo and Port-au-Prince.

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