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FROM : AMEMBASSY, HABANA  
TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

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24	ACTION	DEPT.	RM/R	ARA-4	ICA-10	NEA-4	95-2
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SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 39 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA. CIA-16

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) PLANS FOR INSURRECTION. An increasing number of reports, rumors, and press articles are appearing, claiming that insurrectionary attempts are planned for the near future. On September 25, in Tempo en Cuba, Rolando MASFERRER charged that a coordinated series of disturbances, culminating in landings and uprisings, was planned to take place between October 10 and 26. As usual with him, the account was vague and probably exaggerated. Nevertheless, it was typical of the increasing preoccupation with insurrectionary activities apparent in many circles.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. The population as a whole is comparatively prosperous and generally apathetic concerning the political situation. There are no signs of widespread civilian discontent or unrest. A movement relying exclusively or principally upon civilian support would therefore appear to have slight chances of success. However, it appears that the bulk of the armed forces is also somewhat apathetic, and that devotion to BATISTA and his government is found only in a small group of officers closely associated with him. A movement led by determined military personnel, relying on the elements of surprise and apathy, might therefore very possibly be successful, along the lines of Batista's coup of March 10, 1952. The Embassy's Military Attaché has received information from a potential participant to the effect that such a basically military uprising is indeed planned, to occur in October. Other reports have been received indicating the existence of a well advanced civilian conspiracy, operating with a considerable degree of confidence. It now appears that disturbances are likely to occur in the near future, possibly during October. The army is the determining factor. An uprising which takes over or neutralizes it stands a good chance of success. Thus far, the administration is displaying little concern, and there are no signs that it is taking any unusual precautions. In view of the open predictions of impending trouble, it appears that the administration is convinced that the armed forces will remain loyal, and that it can handle any attempted uprising.

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(UNCLASSIFIED) CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES APPROVES ELECTION PLANS.

The Chamber of Deputies approved in principle the government's proposal to hold partial elections in November, 1957. These elections would include some seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Whether the terms of some incumbents would be shortened, or whether total membership in the Chamber would be increased, is not certain, since a detailed plan is lacking. The Chamber is expected to take up this week the question of the necessity and form of a constitutional amendment.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. There is an unrealistic quality to the proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies. The government's proposal has never been clearly spelled out, and the Chamber is in no hurry to elucidate.

(UNCLASSIFIED) FLURRY IN CUBAN OIL STOCKS SUBSIDES. On July 2, 1956 an oil well known as "Catalina No. 1" was brought in at over 7,100 feet just south of Jatibonico in Camaguey Province. The well was a combined enterprise of the Cuban-American Drilling and Exploration Company, Trans-Cuba Oil Company, and Cuban-Venezuelan Oil Voting Trust. The well showed an initial flow rate of thirty barrels per hour on a quarter inch choke. This, and other encouraging developments, led to sharp increase in prices and in the volume of trading in shares of the five Cuban oil companies now listed on the New York exchange. Since then, production from the well has leveled off to approximately thirty barrels per day, and the oil stocks are undergoing an appreciable decline.

Labor.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) LABOR OFFICERS CONFERENCE. The Conference of Labor Officers from our Embassies in Latin America, participated in by interested officials from the Department, the Department of Labor, ICA and USIA, reported in the last Weeks, completed its agenda and adjourned on Friday, September 21. All participants have now returned to their posts. The Conference was briefly addressed on September 20 by Eusebio MUJAL, Secretary General of the Cuban Confederation of Workers (CTC), and by Ignacio GONZALEZ TELLECHEA, Cuban president of the Inter-American Regional Labor Organization (ORIT). Mujal called for increased awareness of the danger to the democratic labor movement in Latin America posed by Communism, and increased activity in combatting it.

Psychological.

(UNCLASSIFIED) SUEZ. The Suez Canal situation continued to dominate the Cuban press this week with commentaries devoted particularly to the Second London Conference, the Users'

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Association Plan, and the "Suez Sea Lift" plan attributed to Secretary DULLES. The press in general seemed considerably relieved that the threat of military action against Egypt was being replaced by economic pressure, although there was some doubt as to whether this would be really effective. Granted that the Sea Lift around the Cape of Good Hope would be expensive, said Prensa Libre, how much does a war cost? This paper gave the United States much credit for its persistent efforts for a peaceful solution, but largely attributed this to the United States desire to keep Russia out of the Near East, and to maintain friendship with the Arabs because of our oil interests. Avance seemed quite concerned over NASSER hiring Soviet and other Communist Canal pilots, believing that the Western powers would not allow their ships to be piloted by Communists because of the possibilities of espionage. The paper said this would, in effect, be interference with the free navigation of the Canal. Información attacked the Sea Lift plan as economically unfeasible. It is very doubtful that the smaller European countries, would be willing to make such a heroic sacrifice solely for the benefit of England, this paper said, and as for the United States financing this deficit, what will the American citizen think in a year of elections? Alerta called the proposal to send a test convey through the Canal a positive and practical step, but expressed the fear that Nasser, like Hitler in 1936, would not be able to make concessions for fear of losing leadership in the Arab world. El Mundo compared the Nasser seizure to that of MOSSADEGH in Iran, whose take-over of the British oil wells did not bring the expected pot of gold. The real powder-keg in the Near East, felt this paper, was not Suez, but the long smoldering Arab-Israel conflict.

Army.

(UNCLASSIFIED) CHANGE IN ASSIGNMENTS OF KEY ARMY OFFICERS.  
In Presidential Decrees of September 17, 1956 the following changes in assignment of key Army officers were ordered:

Colonel Aquilino GUERRA y González will replace Lt. Col. Victor M. DUEÑAS y Robert as Supervisor of the Havana Prison, who has been promoted to Colonel in the Emergency Military Service and now designated as CO of Rural Guard Regiment No. 2 in Camaguey. Colonel Leopoldo PEREZ y Coujil is relieved of position as CO of Rural Guard Regiment No. 2 and replaces Colonel Guerra who was Vice-President Director of BRAC (Buro para la Represión de las Actividades Comunistas). Lt. Col. ESTEVEZ y Maymir serving as Cuban Military Attaché to Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama will be accredited only to Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. Colonel Manuel F. de los A. LARRUBIA y Paneque is designated as Cuban Military Attaché to the Republics of Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama with official

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residence in Costa Rica.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. It has been reported to ARMA that Guerra is a very ambitious man who became dissatisfied with the lack of progress in getting BRAC set up and desired a change (B-3). Perez y Coujil has been shifted several times in the past two years reportedly because of his wife's political activities. She is the Mayor of Matanzas. He is a relatively insignificant officer despite his rank. Larrubia is being sent to Costa Rica for two reasons. First, the present Army Attaché to Mexico, Lt. Col. Juan A. Estévez y Maymir, had all of Central America and could not properly cover the territory. Larrubia now takes three countries from Estévez. Second, it has been reported (B-3) several times that FIGUERES, PRIO and Fidel CASTRO are working closely together against Batista. The location of a loyal Colonel in Costa Rica will provide more first-hand information of anti-Batista activities.

Navy.

(UNCLASSIFIED) VISIT OF RADM. ATKESON. RAdm. C. L. C. ATKESON, Jr., USN, Commander Panama Sector, Caribbean Sea Frontier and Commandment of the Fifteenth Naval District, visited Habana from September 20 to September 22, on an informal trip in connection with MAP matters. RAdm. Atkeson travelled by Naval aircraft and was accompanied by a staff of three officers. While here, he called on the Minister of National Defense and the Chief of Staff of the Cuban Navy. He visited the Cuban Naval Arsenal at Casablanca, the frigate Antonio Maceo, the Cuban Naval Academy, and the Cuban Naval Air Station at Mariel.

Air.

Negative.

*Vinton Chapin*  
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