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TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.
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232

DESP. NO.

October 17, 1956
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SUBJECT: Joint Weeka No. 42 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments from SANA.

(CONFIDENTIAL) REVOLUTIONARY PLOTTING. The air is becoming thick with rumors and reports of impending revolutionary attempts. The government and the local press talk as though it is taken for granted that insurrectionary groups will attempt some sort of uprising in the near future. It seems generally agreed that any such attempt will be easily disposed of. Insurrectionary groups are apparently now turning to the idea of calling a general strike. Reports have been received indicating that the Communist party (PSP) plans to take advantage of the strike call and attendant disorders, provided success appears assured. Eusebio MUJAL, Secretary General of the Cuban Confederation of Workers (CTC) categorically informed officers of the Embassy in private that the CTC is non-political and will not participate in any such general strike. He adds that without the sponsorship of his organization such a strike would have no chance of success.

The government maintains publicly that all elements of the opposition are engaged in revolutionary plotting, including particularly the followers of ex-President Carlos PRIO, the "26 of July" Movement of Fidel CASTRO Ruz, and the "revolutionary directorate" of the Federation of University Students (FEU), led by José Antonio ECHEVARRIA. The government also maintains that the Dominican Republic is a party to these schemes. Opposition political leaders, while acknowledging that insurrectionary groups may have plans for attempted uprisings, state to Embassy officials that they themselves are not participating in these plans, which they feel have slight chance for success. There is a great deal of noise and smoke, but no fire has appeared as yet.

(UNCLASSIFIED) TRIAL OF ALLEGED INSURRECTIONIST GROUP. The trial of the group of alleged insurrectionists led by Carlos Alfredo DEL AMO DIAZ, whose arrest together with certain arms and ammunition was announced by the National Police on October 5 (see Weeka No. 41), began on October 15. The defendants all denied complicity, and no government witnesses appeared. The court released three of the seven defendants, and bound over the remainder for hearings on October 31.

JLTopping:mbw

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(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. The government alleges that Del Amo was in contact with Carlos Prío, who had given him \$6,000 for rent of the locations to store the arms, and promised him a further \$50,000 after carrying out various acts of terrorism. Del Amo denies this, saying that he had visited Miami recently in search of employment and said that he had not seen Prío. The government has produced no evidence to date to substantiate its charges.

(UNCLASSIFIED) GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES ARREST OF SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS. The National Police announced that on October 12 they raided a meeting of Communists and members of the "26 of July" Movement of Fidel Castro in Habana, arresting 13 young men and seizing a quantity of subversive literature and a few pistols.

(CONFIDENTIAL) Comment. The Embassy has been informed by Cuban intelligence services that this was a staged performance; that there was no meeting, but that the National Police picked up several non-Communists and Castro followers at various locations. Neither the Embassy nor the Cuban Military Intelligence Service (SIM) had any prior information to indicate that any of these arrested was Communist. The affair appears to be part of a government campaign to "prove" that the "26 of July" Movement is making common cause with the Communists.

(UNCLASSIFIED) AUTENTICO PARTY DENIED PERMISSION TO HOLD MEETINGS. Minister of the Interior Santiago REY formally rejected an application from Manuel A. "Tony" VARONA, as Secretary General of the Partido Revolucionario Cubano (Auténtico) Party for his group to hold meetings in Santiago and Camaguey the 13th and 14th of October. Varona immediately issued a statement to the press condemning the action as one more example of the government's repressive tactics, and of the lack of freedom of political action existing in Cuba. Replying, Minister Rey pointed out that Varona and his followers have stated that they will not register as a political party to participate in the projected elections in 1957, that they have not disavowed insurrection and revolutions as means of attaining power, and that Guillermo ALONSO Pujol, vice-president under Carlos Prío, had recently felt it necessary to resign from the Auténtico Party in order to completely disassociate himself from revolutionary activities. Minister Rey added that since the Varona group was following the directives of Carlos Prío, its motives were naturally suspect.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) Comment. Varona now leads one section of the Auténtico Party, which was registered by former president GRAU San Martín and participated in the 1954 elections. The Varona wing is generally now identified as the "abstentionist" Auténtico Party. At present there appears to be little possibility of a reconciliation between the two factions. The statements made by Minister Rey seem reasonably accurate, and would justify the government in feeling some concern over the activities of the "Abstentionists". However, the action of the Minister in denying permission for the meetings appears

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arbitrary, and will probably serve to strengthen the feeling of many members of the opposition that the government will continue to place restraints on the political activities of opposition groups.

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) PRESIDENT APPROVES ICA PROGRAM. On October 15, 1956, John W. Johnston, Jr., Director, United States Operations Mission to Cuba, met with President BATISTA. The President expressed his complete satisfaction with the Technical Assistance Program now under way in Cuba and was in accord with the plans for the 1958 Program of Technical Assistance in Cuba. A short briefing paper was left with President Batista concerning the activities to date, and another paper which contained the proposed 1958 program that has now been requested by the various ministries in his cabinet. The President indicated that if he had any additions or criticisms, he would advise the Director before October 19, when USOM/Cuba's presentation will be sent to Washington.

Psychological.

(UNCLASSIFIED) The Suez situation and the rise of Titeism shared the editorial spotlight in Habana dailies during the week.

SUEZ. Excelsior observed that although it appears that the current Suez proposals should satisfy all parties, including Egypt, final agreement still hangs in the balance. In spite of the Soviet Union's imperialistic aims, Excelsior pointed out, SHEPILOV is acting the role of the defender of a small nation's rights before the United Nations. This role, the newspaper felt, is comical in view of the overall Soviet aims of dominating smaller countries. The USSR has ambitions in the Near East and Africa, the newspaper warned, and all of the present day difficulties in these regions have been provoked by Soviet intrigue. It is obvious, Excelsior stated, that the Soviets are capitalizing on the deep rooted hatreds of the Arabs and Moslems for Europeans. Excelsior expressed the hope that NASSER will be wary of this Soviet support and not let Egypt fall under the complete domination of Moscow. Avance pointed an accusing finger at the Soviet veto in the United Nations as a stumbling block in the way of agreement on the Suez issue. "How can Shepilov talk seriously of the authority of the UN", Avance queried, "when the Soviet Union has flaunted this authority and blocked progress?" The newspaper concluded that the United Nations is on trial at the present time, and if it cannot decide the Suez question, many will question its authority.

TITOISM. Pueblo drew a comparison by stating that TITO is to Europe, what NEHRU is to Asia. This newspaper felt that Tite is attempting to become a bridge between the East and the West - a bridge that leans toward Communism. Because of his traditional political beliefs, Pueblo continued, Tite is more dangerous because he is closer allied to Moscow than Nehru - therefore Tite's desire to

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act as the great arbitrator should be viewed with suspicion. In a later editorial, Pueblo observed that there are indications from the Soviet Union that KHRUSHCHEV's days are numbered. The newspaper felt that Khrushchev is in trouble and gave this as the reason why the Soviet leader was leaning on Tite. The time is now ripe, Pueblo predicted, for the emergence of a new strong man, because Khrushchev is slipping, just as MALENKOV slipped. In conclusion the newspaper observed that the satellite nations look with hope to the lessening of Soviet control and pressure because these nations are seeking more liberty. This, according to Pueblo puts the USSR in the midst of a serious dilemma because if the Soviets return to the old Stalinist policy, violent reaction will result. El Mundo posed a question: "What is going on in the Communist world?" Because of censorship, El Mundo stated, the picture is not clear, but one thing is obvious - Tite is giving the Kremlin hierarchy many headaches. Titeism is becoming more popular every day the newspaper observed, concluding that it appears that the Soviet Union is giving cautious endorsement to the Tite-type government for its satellites.

Army, Navy, Air.

Negative.


Arthur Gardner

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

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NA(5)
AA(2)

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