

CONFIDENTIAL

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

AIR TOUCH

PRIORITY

FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

American Embassy, Habana

592

737.00(w)/4-1757

FROM

DESP. NO.

April 17, 1957

TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

Action Assigned to

DATE

REF

95 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.	IN F OTHER
	REC'D		
4-18	4-18	Rep-2	
Joint Weeks No. 16 for State, Army, Navy and Air Departments			
from SANA			
Date of Action			
USIA-10 army-35 Navy-30			
Action Office Symbol			
B-270508-2			

SUBJECT:

(UNCLASSIFIED) CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES. The order suspending constitutional guarantees (suspended 10 of March 5, 1957) expired at 2400 hours on April 15, 1957. In announcing the end of the suspension period BATISTA ~~action to do the~~ suspension had not affected the rights of peaceful citizens and expressed the Government feeling that terroristic activities are under control.

(CONFIDENTIAL) COMMENT. The reestablishment of constitutional guarantees removes one of the opposition's main causes of complaint. The Embassy continues to hear rumors that some revolutionary groups have been waiting for the end of the suspension period to resume terroristic activities.

(UNCLASSIFIED) FIDEL CASTRO. A group of some 27 newspapermen visited the Sierra Maestra area at the invitation of the Cuban Government on April 11 and 12, 1957. They interviewed Colonel Pedro BARRERA, commander of the Cuban Army forces opposing CASTRO, and were taken on a tour of the area in Army jeeps; they spoke with about 100 local residents who had gathered in one spot along the way and found them to be in favor of the Government and against CASTRO. Colonel BARRERA told the newsmen that while he could not categorically deny CASTRO's presence in the Sierra Maestra's he could state that there had been no anti-Government armed activity in the area since he assumed command of the Army forces in early February. BARRERA revealed that he had 563 men under his command, that there were some 150 undercover agents operating in the field against CASTRO, and that Cuban Army maneuvers in the area had included aerial bombardment.

(CONFIDENTIAL) COMMENT. The newsmen were told they could go where they wanted and stay as long as they liked, but the trip was in the nature of a guided tour. The Embassy understands that most newsmen on the trip are of the opinion that CASTRO and his forces are still in the Sierra Maestra mountains, though not necessarily in the area the Cuban Army has attempted to seal off.

POL:HALagasse:hs

CONFIDENTIAL

REPORTER

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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

737.00 (W) / 4-1757

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

APR 29 1956

FILED

APR 17 1957

CONFIDENTIAL
(Classification)

Page 2 of
Encl. No. _____
Desp. No. 692
From Habana

(UNCLASSIFIED) **JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE.** The Joint Congressional Committee established to study peaceful solutions of Cuba's political problems (WEEK 15 of April 10, 1957) completed its hearings on April 16, 1957. Leaders of several Government and oppositionist political groups appeared in person before the Committee and others submitted prepared statements. The Committee is scheduled to meet in closed session beginning April 22, to study the opinions expressed and to initiate the legislative action necessary to implement the majority opinion.

(CONFIDENTIAL) **COMMENT.** The opinions submitted for the Committee's consideration showed that there has been no appreciable change in the positions of the Government and the opposition: the opposition's platforms include early elections and a political amnesty while the Government groups continue to support their program of elections on November 1, 1958 and no amnesty. The Embassy continues to feel that it is unlikely that a solution acceptable to all will result from the Committee's efforts.

(UNCLASSIFIED) **ATOMIC ENERGY EXHIBIT GIVEN TO CUBA.** A large USIS Exhibit on the peaceful applications of atomic energy was presented to the Cuban Government on April 10. The Ambassador made the presentation to the Cuban Nuclear Energy Commission, which intends to exhibit the 72-panel display in the interior and ultimately establish it as a permanent exhibition in Habana. The brief ceremony received extensive publicity.

(UNCLASSIFIED) **SUGAR.** On April 10, the Cuban Sugar Stabilization Institute made a direct sale to Russia, through the West Indies Trading Company (Golidetz of London) of 150,000 Spanish long tons of sugar at 6.12 cents per pound, f.o.b., Cuba, April-July delivery. Russia obtained a 24-hour option on an additional 50,000 tons of sugar at 6.25 cents per pound but did not exercise the option. World sugar futures advanced from 6.01 cents per pound on April 10 to 6.55 cents per pound on April 11, and to 6.82 cents per pound by April 15.

On April 12, Tate & Lyle, British refiners, and Mendoza and Company both requested 100,000 Spanish long tons of sugar from the Cuban Sugar Stabilization Institute. Mendoza and Company gave Japan as their tentative destination. The Institute vetoed both sales after an extremely vigorous protest on the part of Sales Committee members, Dr. Arturo MANAS and Jorge HERNANDEZ, who were of the opinion that such sales at this time might endanger Cuba's reserve supplies (less than 650,000 Spanish long tons) held for United States consumption, if and when needed, particularly if the current crop does not substantially exceed the official 5,150,000 Spanish-long-ton figures. Most sugar trade sources still estimate the current sugar crop at somewhere between a minimum of 5,100,000 and a maximum of 5,300,000 Spanish long tons.

(UNCLASSIFIED) **COMMENT.** The possibility of "endangered U.S. supplies" has been discussed informally by the Ambassador with the appropriate Cuban officials.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(Classification)

Page 3 of
Encl. No.
Desp. No. 692
From Habana

LABOR

(UNCLASSIFIED) **ELECTRICAL WORKERS' FEDERATION INTERVENED.** The powerful Federation of Electric, Gas and Water Plants and its Habana Provincial Syndicate were intervened on April 12, pursuant to a Ministry of Labor Resolution, calling for (1) the suspension from their offices for two years, of Angelo COFINO Garcia, Secretary General of the Federation, and 16 other top leaders of the Federation and the Habana Syndicate who support him; (2) the establishment of a provisional governing Board composed of (a) three Ministry of Labor officials, (b) three top leaders of the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC), and (c) several workers in the electric plants who are opposed to Cofifo; and (3) the holding of elections within the Federation and its affiliated provincial syndicates within 90 days.

The Ministerial Resolution was issued immediately after a meeting of the CTC's National Council whose some 250 delegates from throughout Cuba voted, with only one negative ballot, to withdraw for two years the "trade union rights" of Cofifo and certain of his supporters and to ask for an intervention of the Federation through the means of a provisional governing board. These sanctions were imposed upon Cofifo and his followers for alleged "indiscipline and infraction of CTC regulations."

(OFFICIAL USE ONLY) COMMENT. Intervention of the Electrical Workers Federation, which has been expected for some time, is another chapter in the struggle for power between Mujal and Cofifo. Through intervention Mujal has now apparently gained the ascendancy over his strongest rival. The National CTC Council took only "admonitory" action in regard to Vicente RUBIERA Feito, Secretary General of the Telephone Workers, another strong rival whom Mujal wants to replace.

Immediate reaction to intervention of the Electrical Workers occurred when rank-and-file Cofifoistas attempted to stage a sitdown on April 12. This was broken up when police arrested a considerable number (papers say over 300) of employees. In spite of warnings by the Minister of Labor that dismissal action would be taken against those engaged in slowdowns there did occur on April 15 and 16, slowdowns in Habana and Mariama offices and in certain provincial offices. The CTC Executive met later on April 16, and decided to extend intervention procedures to provincial centers. The Embassy was told that Amado MAESTRI and three other leaders were arrested and that an order had been issued for the arrest of Cofifo for inciting workers to strike. As of April 16, there has been no interference reported with basic electric, gas or water services.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

(UNCLASSIFIED) The political crisis in Jordan, and its significance to rest of the Near East problem, was the focus of attention in the Cuban press. While the Jordan crisis has now eased, these editorials were written when leftist Premier Nabulsi was defying King Hussein and the whole situation was confused. Almost all the papers

CONFIDENTIAL

APR 17 1957

CONFIDENTIAL

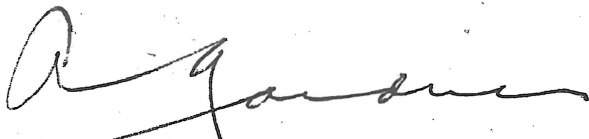
(Classification)

Page 4 of
Encl. No. _____
Desp. No. 692
From Habana

delved into the historical background of Jordan explaining how this little state was created by the British to justify the existence of the Arab Legion, an instrument to maintain political stability among the Arabic countries. Now that Britain has withdrawn from the Middle East, these same papers predicted that the tiny Kingdom of Jordan is seen destined to disappear from the map. Prensa Libre felt the situation to be very explosive because of the different ambitions and forces converging on this little country, and that much would depend on the attitude of the Arab Legion, undermined by Egyptian propaganda and money, and all complicated by the presence of Syrian troops in Jordan. Diario De La Marina called Premier Nabulsi a "Man of Moscow" who also represented a powerful national sentiment, and stated his resignation was a serious reverse for Egypt, and the situation was precarious. Jordan, said Informacion, is a political vacuum as a result of the ousting of Glubb, British head of the Arab Legion, with Jordan's neighbors, some backed by the USSR, now maneuvering to move in for the kill. This paper felt the Jordan crisis to be a real test for the Eisenhower Doctrine since it is really a result of Soviet penetration in the Near East, and the Soviets now seem to be in a hurry. One can now see, continued this paper, how very difficult it is to fill the vacuum left by England in the Near East; and that the U.S., in spite of the Eisenhower Doctrine, has not yet found the right policy to maintain stability.

ARMY, NAVY, AIR

Negative.


Arthur Gardner

Contributors:

Political: H.A. Lagasse
Atoms: R.G. Cushing
Sugar: C.E. Davis
Labor: J.F. Correll
Psychological: R.S. Bryan

CC: AmEmbassies, Ciudad Trujillo and Port-au-Prince; AmConsulate, Santiago de Cuba; MA(7); NA(5); AA(2).

CONFIDENTIAL

1452