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FROM: Habana (Via Pouch)

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 577, May 29

Control: 19248
Rec'd: May 31, 1957
9:17 a.m.THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE RETURNED
TO THE RM/R CENTRAL FILESSENT DEPARTMENT 577; REPEATED INFORMATION MEXICO CITY 87,
GENEVA 5.1. COFINO deposed leader of intervened Federation, called
off strike electric workers as of May 27, and ordered all
workers who had not already done so to return jobs.

2. In statement cancelling strike COFINO said among other
things: (1) confusion produced at time (May 21) of appoint-
ment military supervisor prompted many workers who out of
touch with leaders return work; (2) Federation proud of be-
haviour of members in first stage of struggle; (3) opponents
who expected find only docile submission without any resis-
tance surprised and they could do nothing more than appeal
to drastic measures of military intervention; (4) Cuban
people will interpret struggle of Federation as beginning
of trade union rebellion against impositions of CTC and
Government and inquisitorial regime established by MUJAL;
(5) fellow workers who now in prison still retain their unalter-
able faith in destinies of Federation and feel their sacri-
fices not useless; (6) rank and file who misled by their
traitorous leaders in provinces of Las Villas, Matanzas, and
Camaguey will in future answer call of dignity as did workers
in Oriente, Habana, Pinar del Rio.

3. Provincial Federation leaders in Las Villas, Matanzas and
Camaguey had instructed their followers return work early in
strike and thus have been branded as traitors by COFINO.

4. COFINO's statement, in fact, came after strike virtually
over. On May 23 and 24 it clear that majority workers back
on job. Some estimates considered reliable indicated over
90% had returned afternoon 25th.

5. Significantly, however, soldiers continued to stay at
producing plants and double shifts were maintained at company
expense in anticipation further trouble.

6. This came at 2:05 a.m. morning May 28 when consolidated
cables

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HBS

-2- 577, May 29 from Habana (via pouch).

cables were dynamited at the electric plant at Suarez Street, near Habana. As a result of this explosion nearby houses were damaged; a gas line broken; and electric service to old Habana and some parts of Vedado was shut off. Repair may take at least 48 hours. Shops, banks, business houses and newspapers were most affected. Telephone service was also reduced. As yet blame for the explosion has not been placed; but, because of the labor tension at the Electric Company, Cofino's name has been bandied around. This, of course, an unwarranted assumption until all evidence is in.

7. Afternoon press May 27 denied Cofino planning go U.S. as rumored; but asserted he leaving for Geneva ILO Conference. Embassy as yet unable confirm this. Cofino still in hiding.

GARDNER

AH

JUN 10 1961

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