

from his anti-communist work and that he had publicly opposed the Batista régime. Communist leaders in the armed forces and in the labour movement advanced to new positions of power and communist groups in several other Cuban organizations threatened the control of those bodies. The most important example of the latter situation occurred in late April when a small group of left-wing lawyers established a Revolutionary National Union of Lawyers as a challenge to the National College of Lawyers, which had expressed some opposition to Castro's intervention in the trial of the Cuban airmen (see our despatch D-128 of March 18).† The large number of government employees who were fired before the April 1 deadline for removing government personnel no doubt made way for leftist occupants in many of their positions. At least 3,300 government employees were fired on the last day of March alone and removals prior to that time probably tripled this figure.

7. Several of Castro's pronouncements during his North American tour undoubtedly caused some consternation among his wavering supporters. The most important of these announcements concerned the date for the promised national elections. After having extended the pre-election delay to two years (see despatch D-175 of April 15)†, Castro now admitted that the elections would probably not be held within a four year period. Ex-President Ramon Grau San Martin, who had the temerity to suggest that general elections should be called in the near future, found himself in new trouble. Following Grau San Martin's electoral defeat in 1948 charges had been laid against him for malfeasance of some \$174 million in public funds. The documents in support of this charge were mysteriously seized by armed bandits and the case was continuously postponed from 1948 until last fall when it was dropped, probably in payment for San Martin's candidacy in the rigged November elections. Immediately after his new call for elections it was announced that this case would be re-opened and that photostats of the lost documents were now available.

C. International

8. The outstanding development in the Cuban international scene during the month of April was the apparent success of Castro's journey to the United States and Montreal. The Cuban press carried detailed reports of the enthusiastic reception which apparently greeted Castro at each stop and even dubious Cubans were forced to admit that Castro was accomplishing what he set out to accomplish — the mending of relations with the United States.

AN UNPREDICTABLE, UNRELIABLE, WANDERING PLOTTER: FIDEL CASTRO

9. The Cuban press found nothing extraordinary in Castro's last minute decision to cut short his visit to Canada, although some Cuban citizens expressed the view that Castro's immaturity and lack of protocol had apparently slighted the Canadian government. The reason given for cutting short his Canadian visit was that he had to return home. He did not come to Cuba. Instead he spent 2 days in Houston, Texas, in conference with his brother, Raul. Rumours have it that Raul tried to convince Fidel to return home because communist members of his cabinet wanted an immediate explanation of Fidel's repudiation of communism while in the United States and in Montreal.⁵⁰⁹ The invasion of Panama by Cubans also needed explaining. Fidel spoke to the Cubans while his plane was flying over Havana on the afternoon of April 29, en route to Rio de Janeiro. Apparently he spent that night in Sao Paulo. Whether this is another publicity stunt or whether Fidel Castro was afraid to come back home to address his beloved "people" no one will ever know. It is now obvious that he will not be here for the May 1st parades. This was another reason he is reported to have given for cutting

⁵⁰⁹ Voir/See "Castro Rules Out Neutrality; Opposes the Reds," *New York Times*, April 20, 1959, p. 1; "Rousing Welcome Given Cuba's Premier," *Montreal Gazette*, April 27, 1959, p. 1; "Castro Scoffs at Idea Government Communist," *ibid.*, p. 3.