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90th Congress
2d Session } COMMITTEE PRINT

# THE NEW STRATEGY OF COMMUNISM IN THE CARIBBEAN

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## REPORT

OF A

## SPECIAL STUDY MISSION

BY

THE HONORABLE ARMISTEAD I. SELDEN, Jr., *Chairman*

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

OF THE

## COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF

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90TH CONGRESS

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO CONDUCT THOROUGH STUDIES AND INVESTIGATIONS OF ALL MATTERS COMING WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF SUCH COMMITTEE

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# LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

WASHINGTON, D.C., *November 2, 1968.*

Hon. THOMAS E. MORGAN,
*Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs,*
*U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am herewith transmitting the report of my study mission to nine countries of the Caribbean region—from Mexico through Central America, to Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. The report deals primarily with the rising threat of Communist insurgency and subversion in the Caribbean basin—an area easily accessible from Castro's base of Communist operations.

I hope that the information contained in this report will prove of help to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and to the Congress.

Sincerely yours,

ARMISTEAD I. SELDEN, JR.,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs.*

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# INTRODUCTION

For the past 10 years, it has been my privilege to serve as chairman of the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs. These have been extremely eventful years for this hemisphere—years which have included efforts to cope with a Communist government in Cuba, the tragic Bay of Pigs episode, the creation of the Alliance for Progress, the confrontation with the Soviet Union after its introduction of nuclear missiles in Cuba, the initiation of Communist guerrilla activities in various Latin American countries, the intervention of the United States and the inter-American peace force in the Dominican Republic, and the establishment of new inter-American institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank and the Inter-American Committee on the Alliance for Progress (CIAP) to strengthen inter-American cooperation.

The report of this, my last study mission undertaken on behalf of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, deals with only one aspect of the current situation in the Caribbean region: the Communist threat to peaceful development and internal security of the countries of that area. Because any reference to this particular subject is apt to evoke strong reactions, both pro and con, I have tried to deal with it dispassionately, simply reporting the facts as I found them.

At the same time, I felt that it would be misleading not to include at least a few impressions of the attitudes of the many persons I met in all of the countries visited during the past 3 weeks—Chiefs of State, Foreign Ministers, political leaders of different persuasions, local and American businessmen, as well as U.S. diplomatic representatives and other informed persons. I have endeavored, however, to keep those references to a minimum, confining them primarily to the introductory part of the report.

While the framework of the report itself is relatively narrow, I would like to take the opportunity afforded by this "Introduction" to sketch my observations about the general conditions in Latin America and our country's relations with that area. In penning these thoughts, I have drawn upon the findings of this last study mission as well as upon my entire experience in the Latin American field.

I find conditions in Latin America improving, but, unfortunately at a rate which is not fully responsive either to the aspirations of the Latin American people, or to the magnitude of Communist machinations. The efforts of the Latin American governments, aided by U.S. support, have produced many changes during the past 10 years. Wherever one goes, there are new factories, new schools and roads, new social services, initial land reforms, and other encouraging developments. By and large, the Latin American governments, which invest nearly $9 in development for every $1 contributed by the United States and other foreign sources, have done a commendable job.

Yet progress has been slow. Rapid increases in population, ranging from 3 to 4 percent per year, have offset a large part of the new material progress. Even with gross national product (GNP) growth rates of 7 and 8 percent per year, the net improvement in the condition of

the masses of the people is slight. Their rising expectations, stimulated by better communications and exploited by radical agitation, pose a growing challenge to the stability of Latin American political institutions and to continued economic growth.

The problems confronting the governments of our sister Republics are thus twofold: First, they have to move forward on many fronts to promote economic development, more equitable distribution of income, and more and better services to the people. At the same time, in order to cultivate an atmosphere conducive to economic and social progress, they have to maintain an adequate measure of internal security and stability.

Both tasks entail sizable expenditures. And the more that has to be devoted to the maintenance of internal security, the less—in terms of resources, manpower, time, and energy—remains available for economic development.

As the first decade of the Alliance for Progress nears an end, I believe that the time has come for a thorough review of its accomplishments and of the applicability of our present policies to the tasks which still lie ahead.

In any such review, three issues appear to warrant particular attention:

*First*, it seems to me, we must acknowledge anew the fact that for the foreseeable future, the destiny of all the nations of our hemisphere will remain inexorably intertwined. We need the friendship and cooperation, the markets and the resources of Latin America for our own security and for the continued advancement of our standard of living. Conversely, Latin America needs us—our capital and technical assistance, our markets, and our military strength—in order to develop its own potential and to achieve the levels of human dignity and progress to which it aspires. This interdependence is substantial and when properly taken into account in our respective policies, can prove mutually beneficial.

I firmly believe that the United States must not allow our partnership with Latin America to be jeopardized by indifference or by our preoccupation with problems in other areas of the world. Instead, we must work to strengthen and improve the economic, social, and other ties which bind us together.

*Second*, I feel that for some years to come, the maintenance of internal security in Latin America will be very difficult without continued U.S. cooperation and support. In many instances, such support can take the form of training and the provision of limited equipment for counterinsurgency and civic action programs. It has not in the past, and it need not in the future, entail any large-scale outlays on our part. But it ought to continue.

The proposed cutoff in U.S. grant military assistance to Latin America, scheduled for 1970, appears exceedingly unwise. Under present circumstances, the countries of that area devote approximately 2 percent of their gross national products to their defense budgets. Without U.S. aid, that percentage will have to be increased, claiming resources that are being used for development. This would not be desirable. With the large stocks of excess equipment which the United States keeps on hand (which stocks will inevitably rise when the Vietnam conflict is terminated), the continuation of our modest military assistance programs in Latin America would impose few demands on this country but could prove critical in terms of Latin American security.

*Third*, U.S. support for the Alliance for Progress development undertakings should also continue, although perhaps in a somewhat different form. The deep cuts in fiscal year 1969 loan funds for the Alliance for Progress, necessitated by the demands of the Vietnam war and domestic U.S. programs, aroused considerable dismay in Latin America. To some, it appeared that the United States was turning its back on its nearest and oldest friends. Yet others, while shocked by this sharp curtailment of direct U.S. assistance, saw opportunity for a more effective United States-Latin American partnership at less cost.

Such a partnership would require a thorough rethinking of the present structure of U.S. trade relations with Latin America with a view to finding ways of enabling the latter countries to make up for the loss of direct aid through increased trade earnings. In this regard, the possibility of extending temporary preferences to certain Latin American exports was mentioned in several quarters—preferences patterned on those which many of the European countries extend to their "associated" states.

In addition, it was urged that the United States carefully reconsider the policy which, for balance-of-payments reasons, severely inhibits American private investments and reinvestments in Latin America. In this field, Latin America is treated less generously than, for example, Canada. At the same time, due to a set of special conditions, the existing "base" which governs U.S. private investments and reinvestments in that area is unrealistic, being based on investment activities during a period when American firms, responding to the pleas of the U.S. Government, voluntarily restrained their investment programs.

I personally believe that these suggestions merit close attention of the Congress and the next administration. I hope that they will receive it.

* * *

In concluding this introduction, I would like to express my profound appreciation to Chairman Thomas E. Morgan and my colleagues on the Committee on Foreign Affairs for their understanding and assistance in the tasks assigned to me. In particular, I want to thank the members of the Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs whose interest, encouragement, hard work, and cooperation were largely responsible for our legislative achievements and made my job as chairman rewarding, indeed.

To my friends and our diplomatic representatives in Latin America goes my gratitude for the many courtesies and help which they extended to me during the years of my tenure as chairman of this subcommittee. I have the highest regard for the caliber of work which they are doing and for their devotion to duty.

A special vote of thanks goes to the subcommittee staff: Mr. Robert F. Brandt and Miss Helen Hashagen, and to Mrs. Rosita Rieck Hannifin of the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress, who during the past 10 years rendered valuable assistance to the subcommittee.

Finally, I want to thank Mr. Marian A. Czarnecki, staff consultant to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, who accompanied me on this final study mission and rendered competent assistance in the preparation of this report.

ARMISTEAD I. SELDEN, Jr.,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Inter-American Affairs.*

21-083—68——2

# THE NEW STRATEGY OF COMMUNISM IN THE CARIBBEAN

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Communist subversive and terrorist activities are again on the rise in the Caribbean basin. The Communist movement in that area has weathered a series of temporary setbacks and today presents a growing challenge to the security and peaceful development of the Western Hemisphere.

This conclusion emerges from an on-the-spot review of conditions in nine countries of the Caribbean area—from Mexico through Central America to Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic.

A year ago, two widely separated developments dealt a body blow to Castro's ambition to spread his brand of violent revolution throughout Latin America.

In Nicaragua, an engagement between a contingent of the National Guard and the guerrilla elements of the local Communist movement inflicted serious losses upon the extremist Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional.

And in Bolivia, the death of Che Guevara at the hands of Bolivian troops brought to an end his terrorist campaign in the heart of the South American continent.

The aftermath of these events had serious consequences for the cohesion of the Latin American Communist movement and for its strategy of revolution.

The division between the pro-Moscow and the pro-Havana factions became more pronounced. The Moscow-oriented and largely Moscow-supported factions have continued to adhere to the strategy of a gradual, nonviolent buildup of Communist strength aimed at the seizure of power in the more distant future. These "orthodox" Marxist elements, already resentful of Castro's attempts to meddle in the internal affairs of their countries and skeptical of the utility of his theory of immediate, violent revolution, drew further apart from the Castro-oriented groups.

In the meantime, the radical, pro-Castro groups began to form new alliances with the younger extremist elements and with professional bandits, trying to implement Castro's theory of using small guerrilla bands to spread terror, stimulate national uprisings, and pave the way for early Communist takeovers.

Drawing their recruits from the ranks of secondary school and university students, the very poor and the lawless elements of their societies, these guerrilla movements present the immediate threat to the security of the countries of the Caribbean basin.

This threat is compounded by the recent switch in Castro's strategy.

The disastrous experience of Che Guevara's mission in Bolivia demonstrated the difficulty of organizing and sustaining a terrorist revolutionary movement in a foreign environment far removed from the source of external support.

This lesson appears to have convinced Castro that the road to a successful Communist revolution in Latin America leads through the countries of the Caribbean region which are more easily accessible from Cuba.

From all indications, these countries have become the prime target of Castro-exported revolution. And the radical, terrorist groups are the spearhead of the "new order" which communism is trying to impose on the people of Latin America.

Since January, three representatives of the U.S. Government have perished at the hands of terrorists in Guatemala. While their deaths may be explained in terms of the Communist guerrillas' reactions to specific, unique incidents, this repeated resort to extreme violence as well as other, less-publicized events of recent months suggest that reckless terrorism is becoming the dominant theme of Castro-inspired subversion in the Caribbean region.

Beset by other domestic problems, limited in their capacity to act by scarce resources, and constrained in their purpose by traditional and ideological differences among their supporters, most of the governments of this area have been unable to mount effective programs to cope with the increasing Communist pressures.

The continuation of this state of affairs could have serious consequences. It could interrupt meaningful communication between the Governments of our hemisphere, arrest current tendencies toward cooperative action, and make peaceful progress extremely difficult.

This would be tragic indeed: for the only effective, long-term antidote to Communist subversion of this hemisphere lies in the spirit and improving performance of a close partnership aimed at the development of the resources of the American continents and at bringing the promise of a better life to the masses of the Latin American people.

This is perhaps the biggest danger of the wave of Communist terrorism which seems to be gathering strength in the Caribbean area—and which is being assiduously cultivated, encouraged, and supported by Havana, and, in a more indirect fashion, by Moscow.

A more-detailed review of the chief characteristics and the extent of the Communist subversive movement in the Caribbean basin follows.

## I. Mexico

Mexico City continues to be a vital transfer point for Communist penetration of both Central and North America.

The geographically central location of Mexico, its transportation facilities, and its diplomatic relations with Moscow and Havana, offer ample opportunities for the advancement of the Communist goal of world revolution.

Seventy international flights land daily in Mexico City. Some of them originate in Moscow, Havana, and other cities accessible to Communist agents.

In addition, there are 19 other airports in Mexico which afford opportunities for similar types of traffic.

Oceangoing ships of Soviet, Polish, Cuban and other Communist registries call at Mexican ports.

The volume of human traffic moving through these channels is considerable. Keeping close watch on it would entail a tremendous

effort. Moreover, Mexico's long and vulnerable coastlines extend an open invitation to surreptitious landing forays from Cuba and from Communist-flag vessels moving through the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico.

Reportedly, there are only some 25 patrol craft available to keep tabs on any unwelcome intrusions upon Mexico's coast.

Evidence of the arrival of personnel, weapons, money, publications, and other implements of Communist subversion is attracting increasing attention from the Mexican authorities as well as from officials of nearby countries.

The Mexican Government, while continuing to adhere to its policy of detachment from the ebb and flow of the East-West struggle, appears to be getting increasingly sensitive to the abuse of hospitality which it extends to the diplomatic representatives of some of the Communist countries.

The brazen attempts by the proponents of disorder and terrorism to exploit student dissatisfaction in Mexico City for the purpose of embarrassing the Government of President Diaz Ordaz and forcing the cancellation of the 1968 Olympics, may have become the touchstone of a thoughtful reappraisal of the policy of tolerance applied to all factions of Mexico's political spectrum, including the Communists.

Such a reappraisal—should one be undertaken—cannot ignore some of the key aspects of foreign Communist intervention in the domestic affairs of Mexico.

### A. SOVIET AND CUBAN "DIPLOMATIC" MISSIONS

The most obvious reality which warrants attention centers on the activities of the Soviet "diplomatic" entourage in Mexico City.

The Soviet Embassy in that city is one of the largest diplomatic missions there—and probably one of the key Soviet espionage and political agitation facilities in the entire free world.

There are some 100 Soviet personnel employed in that Embassy: more than 50 officers and a comparable number of wives. The latter, however, must be considered an integral part of the Soviet operation in Mexico: with the exception of the Ambassador's wife, each of them appears to have regular assigned duties within the Embassy complex. They serve as secretaries, bookkeepers, telex operators, kitchen help, char force, and perform other work.

There are no foreign nationals employed at the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City.

In contrast, more than one-half of the staff of the U.S. Embassy in that city is composed of Mexican nationals.

Intelligence and other covert operations can provide the only explanation for the size of the Soviet "diplomatic" complement in Mexico. The normal, legitimate functions of that Embassy are estimated to require a staff of about one-tenth the size of the present one.

While the bulk of the Soviet "diplomats" in Mexico are assigned to consular, political, commercial, and other sections of the Embassy, their responsibilities clearly involve other duties. Most of the Embassy's sections dealing with the public remain open only a few hours each week. The officers assigned to them, therefore, either do an awful lot of resting—or engage in mischief.

There are, for example, 27 Soviet officers on the official diplomatic list (the French have only 17, the British 14). Yet during the entire year 1967, only a few formal diplomatic discussions were held between these Soviet "diplomats" and the officials of the Mexican Foreign Office.

The consular section of the Soviet Embassy provides a convenient cover for several Soviet officers. That section is open only 4 hours each week. Its legitimate workload can probably be handled by a single person. This conclusion appears warranted because the processing of visa applications—the normal function of a consular section—is performed by five local travel agencies representing Inturist.

The cultural section is also open only 4 hours a week. The four officers connected with that section are reported to be intelligence officers.

The commercial section has a staff of eight, even though trade between Mexico and the Soviet Union is negligible. It normally accounts for only a small fraction of 1 percent of Mexico's external trade. In 1967, for example, Soviet exports to Mexico amounted to $78,000; Soviet imports, $528,000.

In comparison, during calendar year 1966, approximately 64 percent of Mexico's imports of $1.6 billion came from the United States. In the same year, 63 percent of Mexico's total exports of $1.2 billion went to the United States.

It is also significant that the total staff of the Mexican Embassy in Moscow is less than half a dozen. According to public records, Mexico does not even have a commercial officer at that post.

Even a cursory examination of the quantitative structure of Soviet-Mexican relations—commercial, cultural, and others—would suggest that official work connected with them could be handled, on the Soviet side, by a fraction of the staff assigned to the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City.

The conclusion appears inescapable, therefore, that the sizable Soviet apparatus in that country is carrying out other missions—missions related to the publicly proclaimed Soviet sponsorship of, and support for, the cause of world Communist revolution.

Comments of informed observers throughout Central America and the Caribbean area lend substance to this supposition.

The same observers suggest that the primary mission of the Cuban "diplomatic" establishment in Mexico City serves a like purpose.

### B. STUDENT DISORDERS

In recent months, the world's attention has been drawn to two significant developments affecting Mexico City: the 1968 Olympic games which took place between October 12 and 27 and the protracted student demonstrations which culminated, in early October, in some violent clashes between the demonstrators, the police, and the Mexican military.

An undetermined number of participants were killed and wounded in those clashes.

There is little doubt that the students, on the one hand, manifested some of the worldwide youth's disaffection with "the establishment," and, on the other hand, had some legitimate gripes against the authorities.

What is worthy of note, however, is the established fact that shortly after the initial student demonstrations in July, known extremist elements, Communist propaganda materials, and fairly sophisticated, expensive equipment became a part of those demonstrations.

Communist posters printed in East Germany, similar to the ones used during this past summer's student demonstrations in Paris, appeared in large numbers in Mexico City.

Banners and leaflets proclaiming the cause of Communist revolution began to flourish.

Brandnew battery-powered electronic loudspeakers, in quantities estimated to have cost thousands of dollars, were suddenly found in the demonstrators' hands.

Automatic rifles were turned by snipers against the police and the military.

The proximate source of these implements of public disorder and terrorism has not been publicly announced. It may never be.

The active involvement of Communist elements in the later stages of the student demonstrations in Mexico City is accepted as a fact by responsible, informed persons in that country. It does not augur well for the prospects of a peaceful resolution of the students' legitimate complaints within the constitutional framework of Mexico.

Yet this sad and disturbing situation must be viewed in the proper perspective:

Nearly 10 million people live in Mexico City and its environs.

Approximately 190,000 college and university students are associated with institutions of higher education in that city.

The number of students who—with the connivance, support, or direct participation of adult extremist elements—appear determined to adopt violence as the tool for fashioning the future, represents a very small fraction of either of those larger wholes.

Many observers expressed their firm conviction that the vast majority of Mexican students will pursue their objective of reform within the constitutional framework of their country. At the same time, the dissident elements which are responding to Communist agitation should not be underestimated.

### C. LOOKING TO THE NORTH

The long arm of Communist subversion reaches also to the North: to the Northern States of Mexico and to the United States. The latter ought to give us some food for thought. For the Soviet and the Cuban Embassies in Mexico City may have largely replaced the center of the Soviet espionage apparatus that was once located in Canada.

There are occasional indications that these two Embassies, or at least their auxiliary facilities, may be used as staging areas for the transfer of Communist subversion to the United States—and for the handling of those disaffected elements in the United States which may wish to communicate with, or travel to, either Moscow or Havana.

For example, a tape recording containing messages of solidarity from members of the Black Panthers for Castro's regime in Cuba, intercepted outside the United States, appears to have been routed in that manner.

### D. THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE

The Government of Mexico is not insensitive to the threat of Communist subversion—at home or abroad. Traditionally tolerant of the more extreme dissent from the left of the political spectrum, it has exhibited patience—but also capacity for firm action. The tasks before it are not easy. The delicate balance between freedom and tolerance on the one hand, and civil disorder and chaos on the other hand, is difficult to maintain.

It may become even more so as the years go by. For it is apparent in Mexico as it is in other countries of the Caribbean region that youth remains the prime target of Communist ideological agitation. And the increasingly pervasive role which Communist and related extremist ideology appears to play in many of the educational institutions of that region may in time bring a bitter harvest.

The one impression which stands out from an admittedly brief review of conditions in Mexico and eight other countries of the Caribbean region is that new approaches and much greater effort will have to be exerted to harness the energies and talents of the disaffected youth to the tasks of constructive nation-building.

Unless these young people are afforded the opportunity to participate meaningfully in a peaceful and democratic reconstruction of their societies, the enticements of a violent revolution may become too hard to resist—and too costly to bear by their countries.

## II. Central America

The five countries of Central America—Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica—present attractive targets for Communist subversion. They are small, in varying degrees relatively underdeveloped, and most are easily accessible by boat from Cuba, as well as by air from Mexico City. Each of them has experienced internal Communist agitation and varying degrees of Communist terrorism. And because of their generally limited internal security arrangements and other complicating local factors, most of them could prove fairly vulnerable to any organized, sizable Communist guerrilla campaign.

Communist parties are outlawed in all of the Central American countries but continue to carry on their activities both covertly and through a variety of front organizations. Dissident pro-Castro groups comprised of radical elements, rural guerrilla bands, and urban terrorist units are reported to be operating throughout this entire area. Their sporadic acts of terrorism, and occasional clashes with government security forces, seem to attract only modest amounts of public attention.

In each of the five countries, the forces of revolution draw some limited strength from among the intellectuals, students, and the depressed rural population—primarily from among low-paid banana and coffee plantation workers. Labor unions, although frequently weak and at times still in the formative stage, apparently provide few recruits for extremist groups.

Fragmentation and deepening ideological splits seem to be endemic to the Communist movement in Central America. In most instances, the "orthodox," Moscow-oriented elements dominate the traditional

leftist organizations while the pro-Castro revolutionaries identify themselves with the more numerous but smaller bands of extremists.

Communist propaganda comprised of books, newspapers, newsletters, leaflets, and posters, some of Cuban and some of local origin, is normally distributed through clandestine channels. In at least one instance, however, it was sold openly in a bookstore under the cover of religious writings. Samples of Communist publications are not difficult to obtain.

Contacts between local Communist and terrorist elements on the one hand, and their ideological soulmates and supporters in Moscow and Havana on the other hand, appear to be frequent and continuing. Although the Caribbean coastline is poorly patroled and the mountainous terrain provides good cover and a fair amount of protection to foreign intruders, there are only occasional reports of direct travel between the countries of this region and Cuba. In the largest number of cases, Mexico City is cited as the transfer point between Central America and points east. A significant part of the financial support for the local Communist movements also appears to be channeled through the Soviet and Cuban missions in that city.

Training of guerrillas is accomplished primarily in Cuba. Although devious routes and removable travel documentation make it difficult to identify persons traveling to Havana, most observers agree that the bulk of the first- and second-rank leaders of the Central American guerrilla organizations learned their revolutionary skills under Castro's tutelage. This does not, of course, apply to the leadership of the more traditional, Moscow-oriented elements.

In all of the countries visited, the authorities appeared to be aware of the existing situation and sensitive to the potential danger of Communist guerrilla and terrorist groups. At the same time, some of them tended to display a degree of patience and tolerance which may underestimate both the real strength and the capacity for mischief on the part of the local subversive elements. In Guatemala and Nicaragua, however, there is evidence of firm, determined measures to cope with the problems of Communist insurgency and terrorism.

## A. RECENT COMMUNIST/INSURGENT ACTIVITIES

### *1. Guatemala*

In February 1968, a new split occurred in the ranks of the pro-Moscow Partido Guatemalteco de Trabajo (PGT), the traditional "home" of Guatemala's Communists. The guerrilla Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (FAR), led by Cesar Montes, broke away from the PGT on the grounds that the parent organization was giving halfhearted support to the armed struggle. Joining forces with Yon Sosa's Movimiento Revolucionario 13 de Noviembre (MR 13), Montes became the second in command of the expanded FAR, while helping to consolidate the extreme left wing of Guatemala's revolutionary movement.

Four months later, in the June issue of Verdad, its official organ, PGT made known its reaction to that development: it announced the formation of a new guerrilla arm, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionaries, also known as FAR. The setting up of this new group may indicate that not all of the "leftist adventurers" in the party had abandoned it and that the PGT leadership is doing its best to keep their allegiance.

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During the first 10 months of the year, sporadic terrorist incidents have continued to give evidence of the insurgents' capability to carry out hit-and-run attacks in both urban and rural areas. The most spectacular of these were the assassination of U.S. military and naval advisers on January 16, and of Ambassador John Gordon Mein on August 28.

Nevertheless, during the period from May to early September, the Government of Guatemala was able to inflict heavy losses on the guerrilla movement. On June 28 an indoctrination center was discovered near Amatitlan and two terrorists were captured. In Guatemala City another FAR center was found containing instructions, medicine, and olive green uniforms. The guerrillas' greatest loss came on May 11 when Nery de Leon Licardie, alias Nestor Valle, was killed in a clash in which six insurgents died. Valle was reported to be Montes' second in command before the merger and an important link with Cuba. He represented FAR at the Latin American Solidarity Organization (LASO) conference in Havana in August 1967.

While these reverses and the results of the August 12 elections in which the ruling Partido Revolucionario won 171 municipalities to 40 for the two right wing parties, represented a definite setback to Communist hopes of overthrowing the Government, the conflict has not abated and the situation remains fraught with danger.

*2. El Salvador*

The Communist Party of El Salvador, PCES, is a pro-Moscow party which adheres to the line that conditions do not now exist for violent revolution. This has led the PCES to work through mass organizations such as labor unions, teachers' and students' associations. During the months after the inauguration of President Fidel Sanchez Hernandez (on July 1, 1967), the PCES helped to exacerbate several strike situations, notably of the bakers and the teachers. These strikes rocked the new administration but were terminated without provoking a government crisis. The party is reported to have approximately 200 members and several thousand sympathizers. Like its counterparts in other Central American countries, the party is outlawed.

The PCES appears to draw its main strength from the University of El Salvador where it has members on the executive committee of the General Association of Salvadoran University Students, as well as in various radical student groups, the faculty, and the administration. Dr. Fabio Castillo, former rector of the university, once entered into an agreement with the Soviet Union to employ Russian professors. He was subsequently criticized for being reluctant to cooperate with other Central American universities in joint projects involving U.S. assistance.

The university, "off limits" to Government authorities like its sister institutions in other Latin American countries, provides occasional refuge to Communist leaders and agitators. At present, a known Guatemalan Communist, having been smuggled into El Salvador by his colleagues, is staying at the university, conducting classes.

The chief Communist front organization is the Unitary Salvadoran Labor Federation (FUSS) which has tried unsuccessfully to bring independent unions under its influence.

Although no local guerrilla groups are reported to be active in El Salvador, the formation of a Castro-oriented action group appears to be underway. El Salvador's border with Guatemala also offers potential for future insurgency situations.

*3. Honduras*

The Communist Party of Honduras (PCH), an illegal organization, is split into the Erazo and Ramos factions which are led, respectively, by Tomas Erazo Pena and Dionisio Ramos Bejarano. Of the total membership of approximately 500, the majority is reported to belong to the Erazo group. While both factions are basically pro-Moscow, the Erazo contingent is said to be flirting with the Chinese Communists and enjoys better rapport with Cuba than does the Ramos group. Efforts of the Soviets to unify the PCH have failed—probably because Erazo sees little to be gained from the rapprochement.

The Communist Youth of Honduras (JCH), the party's youth subsidiary, has several hundred members and is an important part of the Communist movement in the country.

Allied to the Communist groups, which also include the Honduran Revolutionary Party (PRH) with an estimated 150 members, is a small pro-Castro terrorist organization: the Francisco Morazan Movement (MFM). The MFM is reported to be influenced by, and some of its members belong to, the JCH. There are no indications, however, that the MFM has been particularly active in recent times.

As in the other Central American countries, a substantial number of Honduran Communists have been trained in Cuba. In addition, a number of them received some education in the Soviet Union which continues to provide scholarships at the Patrice Lumumba University for Honduran students.

There were no incidents of armed insurgency in Honduras during the past 12 months. However, the presence of Cuban "fishing" boats off the coast of Honduras, and of Guatemalan terrorists in the eastern territory, has been reported recently. In addition to a coastline easily accessible from Cuba, Honduras has a common border with Guatemala to the north and Nicaragua to the south. Organized insurgency in either or both of those countries could spill over into Honduras and catch fire.

This possibility is underscored by the fact that while a large part of the Honduran population has remained passive to Castro's repeated summons to armed revolution, conditions favorable to insurgency avail in the many economic, social, and other problems which exist in that country.

*4. Nicaragua*

Communist subversion thus far has not posed a serious threat to the stability of Nicaragua. There have been, however, persistent subversive incidents over the last 15 months involving Communist guerrillas in the countryside and terrorists in the cities. But to date, the government of President Anastasio Somoza Debayle has shown determination and ability to cope with both.

Nicaragua's organized Communist elements fall into three factions. The small, illegal Partido Socialista Nicaraguense (PSN) is deeply divided between rival "old guard" and "hard-line" splinter groups. Both factions have shied away from armed revolutionary action although some of the "hard liners" are reported to be trying to develop

a working arrangement with a third organization which views immediate violence as a means to power.

The organization which is currently attempting to destroy the present fabric of society and the Government of Nicaragua by violent means is the Castroite terrorist Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN). Starting in 1963 under the leadership of Cuban- and Moscow-trained Carlos Fonseca Amador, this organization embarked on a series of bank and commercial robberies designed to collect funds to finance their cause. It is useful to note at this point that the FSLN appears to encounter less difficulties in recruitment than do the traditional Communist organizations. The terrorists seem to encounter a positive response among secondary school and university students who espouse adventure and violent action.

In mid-1967, a band of young men, most of them members of FSLN, went to the mountains of north-central Nicaragua and began to train, gather ammunition, and cache food. A small contingent of well-trained Nicaraguan National Guard troops with prior experience in the Dominican Republic caught up with the guerrillas and killed 15. Of the dead, 10 were identified as active members of the FSLN. Some of them had been trained in Cuba, others in Eastern Europe.

Subsequently, there was an outbreak of Communist terrorism in Nicaragua's cities. In Leon the homes of Liberal (Government) Party politicians were bombed and in Managua a sergeant in the Office of National Security was gunned down in the street. A massive manhunt culminated in the discovery of an FSLN hideaway and the death of four terrorists led by Casimiro Sotelo, the chairman of the Nicaraguan delegation to the 1967 LASO conference in Havana.

Since those incidents, the country remained relatively quiet until September 18, 1968, when a group of five men, presumed to be FSLN terrorists, robbed a branch bank in Managua and killed a guard. A nationwide search has thus far failed to develop any information about the whereabouts of the assailants.

In view of these incidents, it would appear that the FSLN can still carry out at least isolated terrorist incidents—whether or not it is presently capable of fielding a guerrilla force as it did in 1967.

*5. Costa Rica*

The Communist Party of Costa Rica, the Partido Vanguardia Popular (PVP), has been outlawed since 1948. Its leaders, particularly Manuel Mora Valverde, PVP secretary-general, and Arnoldo Ferreto Segura, organization secretary, hold that Costa Rica is one of the countries in Latin America where the conditions for the success of Castro's policy of violent revolution are almost totally lacking. Therefore, the party has continued its youth, student, women, and labor activities and propaganda campaigns. It has also tried to participate in the electoral process through front parties but received only a handful of votes. In the 1966 elections, the PVP's front party was ruled ineligible to participate by the Costa Rican Electoral Tribunal on the basis of a 1949 constitutional provision which excludes parties with international ties from running candidates.

In addition, the Communists have incited landless peasants to invade and set up dwellings on private or Government-owned properties and tried to capitalize on labor-management disputes. There have been several incidents of this sort during the past 12 to 18 months, including one in Limon in October 1968.

Some members of the PVP, which has an estimated membership of about 500 and a following of several thousand, are reported to have received guerrilla training in Cuba or the Soviet Union. These elements were said to have been trying to interest members of the Communist youth organization (JSC) and the Partido Revolucionario Autentico (PRA), an extreme leftist, pro-Cuban organization, in establishing a guerrilla training camp in the mountainous area of the country. There is no indication, however, that their efforts to date have been successful.

While the outlook for the immediate future appears good, several forces are at work in Costa Rica which could afford the Communists an opportunity for more energetic revolutionary action. The fact that Costa Rica has no organized military forces as such could serve as an incentive for more violent Communist activity in that country. Furthermore, continuing deficits in national and international accounts, skyrocketing debt service payments, rising education and welfare expenditures, and avoidance of taxpayments, may force the adoption of policies which could meet with considerable opposition, particularly among the lower income groups.

The government of President Trejos appears to be sensitive to these problems. However, the fact that the President's party is in the minority in the Congress and the 1970 election campaign is already underway raises some question about the prospects of early remedial action.

### B. TRAVEL TO AND FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES

All of the countries of Central America proscribe travel to Cuba, the Soviet Union, and other Communist countries. In Costa Rica and El Salvador, for example, local passports bear the legend that they are not valid for travel to Communist-controlled destinations. But these legal restrictions vary from country to country, are fairly easy to circumvent, and are not uniformly enforced.

Hondurans, to mention one instance, may cross the border legally to El Salvador by merely showing their identity cards. Passports bearing Communist visas or stamps need not be displayed to border authorities. Communist elements and sympathizers are also known to travel under assumed names with the collusion and assistance of their sponsors.

Travel through Mexico City is widely reported to provide interested Central Americans with the best opportunity to reach the Soviet bloc or Cuba with a minimum chance of exposure or detection. Travelers to those destinations are provided with looseleaf visas by the Soviet and Cuban Embassies in Mexico. In that manner their stay in Communist countries cannot be proven.

Even when there is clear evidence of travel to a Communist destination, punitive action may not be taken. Only in Nicaragua are the offenders turned over to the courts which may sentence the returning student or agitator to 6 months of prison or less.

Clandestine border crossings appear to entail very little chance of detection. The mountainous terrain of most of the border zones of this region and the lightly patrolled coastlines aid and invite "unofficial" entrants.

Border controls observed during travel between the Central American countries appear fairly relaxed and, in some cases, seem to be neither methodical nor stringent.

At present, it was estimated by one observer that several hundred persons from this area travel annually to Cuba or the Soviet bloc using normal, public means of transportation.

### C. CONTROL OF MOVEMENT OF COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA

The entry and internal dissemination of Communist propaganda is generally prohibited in Central America. But here again, the various laws, regulations, and their application vary. In some instances, Communist materials are seized and confiscated when they come to the notice of the proper authorities; in others, their destination may simply be noted. In Costa Rica, confiscated Communist propaganda entering the country with a returning traveler is usually returned to the owner on demand.

In two of the five countries—Guatemala and Nicaragua—checks on the movement of Communist printed matter and funds from abroad are reported to be more stringent and effective than in the other three.

### D. COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY

The Central American Defense Council (CONDECA) was established in June of 1964. Its primary objective is to provide for the common defense of its member countries by enhancing regional capabilities to cope with acts of subversion, insurgency, armed aggression, and any other threat to the maintenance of peace and security in the Central American region. The Council's headquarters are operated by a Permanent Commission (COPECONDECA) in Guatemala City.

CONDECA has planned and executed several combined training exercises using military forces from member countries. Although additional exercises are planned for the future, some of the members' positions toward the Council are rather ambivalent. Honduras has not participated in the last exercise and Costa Rica has already announced its withdrawal from the organization. In contrast, President Somoza is reported to have worked hard to make the Council more viable and effective.

The Central American countries and Panama have held periodic meetings of their military, security, and related officials for liaison and operational purposes. The meetings are said to have been useful in providing a means for personal contacts between officials involved with the tasks of maintaining security.

Within the context of the Organization of American States (OAS), most of the Central American countries participate in the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) and the Defense Advisory Committee (DAC). However, most of those who participate seem to regard these regional military groups as rather ineffective.

## III. Panama

We arrived in Panama during the crisis caused by a government changeover in that country. President Arnulfo Arias, who assumed office on October 1, had been overthrown by a military junta on October 11 and had taken refuge in the Canal Zone. He was staying there together with a number of his Cabinet ministers and other supporters.

In the meantime, the military leadership of Panama had formed a new government. Since President Arias was no longer in office and the new government had not been recognized by the United States, we did not talk with the representatives of either group.

It is noteworthy that while we were in Panama, provisional President José M. Pinilla, who was selected by a group of young National Guard officers to lead the new government, pledged that free elections would be held within a year and that the Panamanian military would not run for any public office.

In the course of our visit, we had ample opportunity to discuss developments in Panama and various related issues with Ambassador Charles Adair, Gov. W. P. Leber, Gen. R. W. Porter, Jr., Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command, and others. Their grasp of the situation and their devotion to duty were impressive.

* * *

The Communist Party of Panama, which calls itself the Partido del Pueblo (PDP), has a total membership of perhaps 500. The PDP closely follows the Moscow line and the recent Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia barely rippled its surface. One reason for this may be its reported dependence on the Soviet Union for funds to pay the local functionaries.

Organizationally, the PDP is concentrated in Panama City with small outlying units in Colón, Veraguas, and the banana areas of Chiriqui. Just last month, the PDP managed to hold a national congress—the first in 17 years—and elect a central committee. The Congress was clandestine and the police were unable to prevent it. However, when on the last day the PDP attempted to hold a public session, the police announced that if it did so it would be raided. The PDP has been illegal since 1951 and its plans to hold a public session probably were designed to achieve some semblance of semilegality.

The PDP has a number of front groups but most of them, such as its labor organization, appear to be rather ineffectual. The one area where the PDP has been able to exert influence entirely disproportionate to its size and power has been among the secondary school and university students. The Communist-dominated Federation of Panamanian Students (FEP), and the University Student Union (UEU), play an important part in secondary school and university affairs. Through these channels, the PDP has dominated the National University and has made itself felt on national issues.

Although the PDP has not advocated an immediate armed revolution in Panama, it can, and does, take advantage of popular issues to embarrass the Government and to create difficulties for the United States—for example, over the canal treaty issue. The Communist-led students, in particular, are often the sparkplug for street demonstrations and violence.

In addition to the PDP, there are a number of small, pro-Castro groups in Panama including the Revolutionary Unity Movement (MUR), which attract the more extremist elements. A number of Panamanian Communists and radicals are reported to be training in Cuba.

Both the PDP and the MUR sent delegates to the LASO conference in Havana, with a MUR leader serving as president of the Panamanian delegation.

## IV. Colombia

The changed character of the Communist threat in Colombia constitutes a significant development in the Caribbean region. Virtually overnight, the Communist subversive efforts in that country acquired a new dimension. Under the surface of political stability, impressive economic progress, and the outstanding administration of President Carlos Lleras Restrepo, new and disturbing forces have begun their work.

The long and bloody history of Communist armed insurrection in Colombia is already in the domain of public knowledge. That struggle continues. The Government forces are pursuing the guerrillas and endeavoring to cope with urban terrorism. Thanks to the energetic, purposeful action on the part of President Lleras and the Colombian military establishment, the threat from that direction has temporarily abated. The armed insurgents have been contained but not eradicated. The progress and prospects of that battle will be described below.

First, however, our attention must turn to the new element which was recently introduced to the Colombian scene and which is bringing with it a more subtle but equally dangerous form of Communist aggression.

### A. THE NEW THREAT

The reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Colombia and the Soviet Union, consummated in January 1968, marked the opening of a new phase in the Soviet campaign to extend Communist influence and power in the Western Hemisphere.

In one bold stroke, the Soviet Union acquired a new, strategically located operational base in the Caribbean region and an opportunity to advance locally its long-term strategy of Communist world revolution.

Judging from the rapid buildup and the professional qualifications of its staff, the Soviet Embassy in Bogotá could soon become a counterpart of the Soviet "diplomatic" establishment in Mexico City; namely, the focal point for the coordination, support, and implementation of Soviet designs for Panama and the north coast of South America.

The initial consequences of this development are already discernible on the Colombian scene:

Among the Moscow-oriented Communist elements in Colombia, the shortrun, hit-and-miss, guerrilla and terrorist tactics are seemingly taking a back seat to a long-term strategy of consolidating and building up the local Communist strength for more effective use at some appropriate time in the future.

The guerrillas are doing less shooting and more political work among the campesinos.

Communist penetration of student and labor organizations, and of other groups, is being stepped up.

And a campaign has already started to discredit the military who have a long tradition of not interfering in the political processes of their nation, but who have proved very effective in coping with Communist insurgency.

This is the classical pattern of Moscow-oriented Communist subversion and infiltration. It aims at the penetration of all the vital sectors of a nation's society, economy, and body politic. It is patient, sophisticated, but in the long run perhaps equally as dangerous as the more violent Castro-advocated forms of Communist insurgency.

### B. OTHER COMMUNIST INSURGENT ACTIVITIES

In addition to this new development, Communist-inspired guerrilla warfare and sporadic terrorist activities continue in Colombia, although presently at a slightly diminished pace.

Three guerrilla groups account for the bulk of the activity in this field:

(1) The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), numbering about 400 activists, is the guerrilla arm of the Moscow-line Communist Party of Colombia (PCC). Led by Tiro Fijo (Sure Shot), a product of the old *violencia*, the band operates in the Tolima-Huila region in the south where much of the rural banditry of the 1950's was centered. After the Soviet Union opened diplomatic relations with Colombia, FARC's reported sponsor—the Colombian Communist Party (PCC)—found itself in a dilemma which it has tried to solve by talking out of both sides of its mouth. While claiming to follow the path of nonviolent subversion promoted by Moscow, it also expressed support for peasant "self-defense" efforts. Nevertheless, it appears that at least for the time being the PCC may have influenced FARC to scale down its rate of violence. High casualty rates during the past year and the steady pressure exerted on the guerrillas by the Colombian military may have also contributed to the slightly lower number of armed engagements in the south of Colombia during the last few months.

(2) The National Liberation Army (ELN), formed in late 1964, is a Castroite guerrilla group with sharp differences with the traditional Communist Party of Colombia. It operates in the mountainous area of Santander, north of Bogotá. Colombian in leadership and membership, it enjoys a measure of Cuban financial support and some of its members are reported to have been trained in Cuba.

For a time, the ELN attracted major attention in Colombia. Among its adherents was a young Roman Catholic priest, Camilo Torres Restrepo, a former chaplain of the National University and member of a prominent Colombian family. Father Torres argued that only through violent means could the social and economic problems of Colombia be solved. And he said that he took the step of alining himself with the Communists because, in his view, they provided the best course of action in the struggle. Shortly after joining the ELN, he was killed in a gun battle in February 1966.

At one point, the ELN's membership was estimated at about 200 but grave internal disputes in the last year over leadership and ideology, problems of support, lack of peasant support and military attrition have cut into that number. The ELN's urban units were destroyed last year after the leftist Mexican *Sucesos* did a series of articles about their operation, thereby facilitating identification.

(3) The Popular Liberation Army (ELP), a new group operating in the Alto Sinú/Alto San Jorge area of Córdoba Department since 1967, is reported to be supported by the Communist Party of Colombia/Marxist-Leninist (PCC/ML), a Chinese-line party. Although

little is known about this group, its membership is reported to be fairly small.

The insurgents in Colombia carry out sporadic attacks, particularly where the security forces are not present in great strength. They also have the capability to mount urban terrorist operations but except for isolated incidents, they have not chosen to do so in recent months. Nevertheless, in the areas where they operate, they continue to hamper the efforts of the Colombian Government to provide political stability, individual security to the small farmers, public order, and socio-economic development.

In addition to the above-described guerrilla groups, a number of Communist and Communist front organizations operate in Colombia.

Chief among them is the Colombian Communist Party (PCC) which regained legal status in 1958 and has an estimated membership of 9,000. While the PCC has failed to attract significant voter support, many of its members are reported to have infiltrated the Liberal Revolutionary Movement (MRL) and to have run under its label. The latter is a leftist offshoot of the Official Liberals, Colombia's largest political party.

The PCC has encountered competition for the loyalties of its members. On its left, the PCC/Marxist-Leninist (PCC/ML) and the Castroite Army of National Liberation (ELN) have tried to attract party members who favor more violent policies than the PCC has been willing to adopt.

The LASO conference in Havana in August of last year apparently increased the PCC's internal dissensions. The intense dispute between the pro-Moscow PCC and the Castroites heightened when the PCC Central Committee under Diego Montana Cuellar returned from the conference and called upon the party to abandon its "peaceful line" and adopt armed struggle as the official policy. Instead, the party eased him out of his functions and announced that it would continue its broad-based political activities. Cuellar now is attempting to organize an urban terrorist group under the name of Fuente Unido (United Front).

The PCC has tried to avoid defining its relationship to the guerrilla movements, particularly the FARC. It is widely reported, however, that the PCC does indeed help to finance those extremist operations.

Communists, Castroites, and other radical elements have long dominated the National Federation of University Students (FUN). However, President Lleras clipped their wings by issuing two decrees which eliminated student representation on university policymaking committees and prescribed stiff penalties for anti-Government violence usually engaged in by students. Since that time, the students at the National University in Bogotá, which has been the focus of radical student activity, have not been engaged in any major disorders.

The Communist-dominated Trade Union Confederation of Colombian Workers (CSTC) claims to represent approximately one-tenth of organized labor in the country, including the petroleum workers' union. Communist labor elements are reported to be sympathetic toward the guerrillas but the unions as such have demonstrated more concern for bread-and-butter issues than for political agitation and armed insurgency. At some point in the future, however, they may become a key factor in any general Communist attempt to disrupt the country's economy and seize power. Like student groups and

other infiltrated organizations, they certainly constitute an important element of long-range Soviet strategy.

On April 20, 1968, the Colombian security service arrested Feliciano Pachón Choconta, the Communist leader of the Tierradentro region of Tolima Department, and Librado Moreno Leal, the widow of a former FARC guerrilla leader, as they disembarked from different planes which brought them from Mexico. Pachón and Moreno were carrying $30,000 and $70,000 in U.S. currency concealed on their persons and among their effects. These funds reportedly were given to them by representatives of the Soviet Embassy in Mexico and were intended for the FARC. Colombian investigations subsequent to the arrest of Pachón and Moreno uncovered a clandestine propaganda and false document net serving the Communist Party.

## V. Venezuela

During our visit, Venezuela was in the throes of a national election campaign. Political campaign activity and speculation as to who would succeed the government of President Raúl Leoni were everywhere in evidence. During the preceding four and a half years, under the firm leadership of the present government, Venezuela has enjoyed political stability and impressive economic growth. Social progress has been an integral part of national development. Concern was voiced, however, whether this broad-based advancement could be sustained after a new administration takes office. Fragmentation of political parties, the possibility that the winning presidential candidate may attain office with a minority of the popular vote (which would be sufficient to elect him since the Venezuelan elections are decided by a plurality of the votes cast), and evidence of continuing Communist activity cause some concern about the future. The latter factor, in particular, appears to warrant attention: for although Venezuela is blessed with rich resources, a relatively high level of industrialization, and a fairly wide sharing in the economic development of the nation, the Communist-led violence of the early 1960's cannot be forgotten. Any significant reversal of social and economic progress could again provide the opportunity for an open Communist bid to seize power through political subversion, disruption of the national economic life, and resort to sheer terrorism.

A closer look at the state and extent of Communist subversion in Venezuela follows:

### A. Major Communist/Insurgent Elements

The Communist Party of Venezuela (PCV) is numerically weak, with an estimated dues-paying membership of 5,000. Nevertheless, since the 1950's, the party has maintained a measure of influence in the communications media, labor, and scientific organizations, the teaching profession, and particularly among the students.

Failure to garner support from the populace, coupled with effective police and military action in combating the guerrillas, in recent years convinced the majority of the PCV leaders that the policy of armed revolt was a failure. Consequently, at the eighth party plenum in 1966 the decision was taken to temporarily abandon violence as a means to power. This decision was reconfirmed at the ninth plenum

in late 1967. This year, the PCV is ostensibly pursuing the strategy of a gradual, nonviolent buildup of Communist strength in Venezuela.

In spite of its public disavowal of the "armed struggle," the PCV maintains guerrillas in the interior of the country. The "Simón Bolívar front" in western Venezuela has traditionally been the main PCV guerrilla stronghold. Although those guerrillas have not engaged in active combat in 1968, they have maintained their physical presence in the field and continue training and organizational work among the campesinos. Active participants in the "Simón Bolívar front" have been estimated at 50, but recent Government actions may have reduced that number.

The other PCV guerrilla force is known as the "Manuel Ponte Rodríguez front." Operating in eastern Venezuela, this group at present is also concentrating on training and recruitment. The "Manuel Ponte Rodríguez front" is reported to consist of approximately 70 men and has a reputation for doing excellent organizational and indoctrination work. Approximately one-third of its members received guerrilla training in Communist China and they serve as cadre for training PCV insurgents.

The Leftist Revolutionary Movement (MIR) is a radical, Castroite party which was formed from the ousted extreme leftwing segment of the ruling Acción Democrática Party. This group has consistently taken the hardest line among the Venezuelan extremist parties and argues that any abandonment of the armed struggle is little short of treason. The MIR has always been in favor with Castro and is now the main beneficiary of his aid. They received a shipment of arms and funds in June 1967 when an invasion force, complete with Cuban guerrillas, landed near the El Bachiller area.

Even the MIR, however, is at present reported to be responding to PCV pressure to refrain temporarily from violence. This group's leadership is also locked in a struggle between those favoring armed action and those favoring the advancement of Communist revolutionary objectives through participation, directly as well as through fronts, in this year's elections. Consequently, while the MIR guerrillas in the interior are reported to be ready and capable of initiating armed action, they are not doing so at present. The MIR guerrillas comprise two main units—the "Ezequiel Zamora front" and the "Antonio José de Sucre front," both operating in eastern Venezuela. The combined strength of these two elements is estimated at approximately 120 men—a force fully capable of engaging in extensive guerrilla operations when they decide to go into action.

The MIR is said to have only a limited capability for urban violence. However, the party has an active support group at the Central University of Venezuela in Caracas, which militant group is reported able to engage in sporadic violence.

The Armed Front of National Liberation (FALN) once served as the chief military arm of a loose alliance between the PCV and the MIR. Led by Douglas Bravo, formerly a member of the Central Committee of the PCV, the FALN went on its own when the PCV began to play down the armed struggle. The FALN then became the main guerrilla threat and has continued so during the past couple of years. Bravo has had the support of Cuba and, aside from arms and money, received the physical assistance of Cuban guerrillas who made

a clandestine landing in Venezuela in July 1966 and possibly another earlier this year.

The number of Cuban guerrillas serving with Bravo was at one time estimated as high as 40. In recent months, the FALN was dealt several heavy blows by the Venezuelan Army, began to suffer from internal dissension, and finally appears to have lost Cuban support. Bravo's second in command, Luben Petkoff, is said to have left the group to join forces with the MIR.

Bravo also had a rather formidable urban terrorist capability in Caracas, but this was smashed by the police late in 1967. A clandestine FALN radio station was captured at that time, and dozens of terrorists were arrested. Since that time, urban terrorism in Caracas has been on the wane.

Although Bravo himself is reported to have fallen upon lean days, the remaining FALN forces continue to maintain a guerrilla and urban terrorist capability. A few isolated recent actions have been attributed to them.

### B. OTHER SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

For the present, the primary threat to Venezuela's democratic institutions appears to stem not so much from guerrilla activities as from the more sophisticated, long-range undertakings of the local Communist elements.

Although they are presently staying under cover, the Venezuelan Communists are reported to be actively engaged in trying to subvert the key sectors of the Venezuelan society—its political institutions, labor and scientific groups, teacher and student organizations, and the media.

The latter development deserves particular mention: for in Venezuela, and in some of the other countries of Latin America, the communications media appear to offer an inviting field for subtle but effective Communist subversion. The capability to slant news reports to spread rumors, and cause dissension, to undermine public confidence in the legitimate authorities and their programs, and, ultimately, to foster confusion and chaos, can give the Communists important leverage for the advancement of their cause. From all indications, they are fully aware of this and are actively attempting to penetrate the media as well as the important economic, political, and social groupings in the country.

The situation relating to students also needs to be underlined. Although the government of President Leoni has not shirked taking actions against the extremist elements, in and out of institutions of higher learning, the Central University of Venezuela apparently continues to provide recruits for radical groups. Many of the captured and killed guerrillas and terrorists are reported to have come from university environments. Similar situations obtain in a number of other Latin American countries.

If something unfortunate should happen to halt the process of economic and social development in Venezuela, and to disrupt orderly political processes in that country, the subversive elements, together with guerrilla and urban terrorist components, may again find their opportunity to resort to mass violence and to try to take power in the guise of providing a solution for the problems of the decreasing but still large portion of the population which is underprivileged.

## VI. Dominican Republic

Three and a half years after the crisis of 1965, the Dominican Republic gives evidence of remarkable political and economic progress. The memory of the tragic events preceding the election of President Joaquin Balaguer is still strong and the conflicts which rended the Dominican society during that period have not completely abated. In the light of that background, however, the degree of political stability achieved to date by the government of President Balaguer is impressive. So are some of the initial reforms and changes in civic and military administrations and in the economic life of the country.

Perhaps the most promising sign of the increasing viability of the democratic political institutions of the Dominican Republic comes in the form of an active discussion of the 1970 elections. The jockeying for position among the different political factions and the widespread speculation about possible candidates suggest that, for the first time in many years, a freely elected government may serve out its term. This would augur well for the future of this island republic.

Nevertheless, problems confronting the Balaguer administration remain awesome. Until further diversification is achieved, the economy will remain extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in weather and world market conditions. Unemployment is high, productivity fairly low, and foreign earnings lag behind import demand. The prolonged drought of the 1967–68 season retarded urgently needed progress in the agricultural sector and scarcity of resources has delayed the implementation of educational reforms without which the country will be unable to achieve a satisfactory level of social and economic progress.

On the political scene the situation is mixed. The government of President Balaguer has achieved some semblance of cohesion at the center of the national political spectrum. But the buffeting from the left and right continues. In a country in which political fragmentation is a fact of life, in which alliances are made and unmade rather frequently, and in which political intrigue appears endemic, stability may still be a distant goal.

In the meantime, Communist activity and factional agitation are evident.

### A. Communist/Insurgent Activities

Since the revolution of April 1965, the Dominican Communist movement has been characterized by increasing dissension. This has resulted in a proliferation of Communist factions which generally draw from among the same body of people for leadership and activities. In addition, most of the individual Communist parties, new and old, have experienced factional problems which have pitted their members against each other. The extreme left has neither advocated nor achieved a common front since the 1965 revolution. Yet such a development is not by any means impossible, given the proper stimulus or issue.

Among the most active Communist-oriented groups is the 14th of June Revolutionary Movement (MR–1J4) which came into existence as a nationalistic, anti-Trujillo clandestine movement in the late fifties but evolved into a self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist party in 1966. At

the present time, it is generally classified as a pro-Castro party with increasingly pro-Chinese tendencies. In 1967, the MR–1J4 supported the Cuban emphasis on guerrilla warfare and, in its early preinsurgency activities in the interior of the country, lost a number of its members. After that experience, the party became virtually inactive in guerrilla warfare preparatory undertakings. During that low-ebb period, however, the MR–1J4 had a number of its personnel training in Cuba. A few of them have returned in recent months.

The party is divided into at least three mainstreams, each advocating a different approach, but all agreeing that they should again become active in the interior. The so-called Red Line Faction is headed by Fidelio Despradel Roque, who has been the titular head of the MR–1J4 (Secretary-General) for the past several years. A recent Cuba returnee, Héctor Homero Hernández Vargas, leads the "Revolutionary Faction" which leans toward Mao-Tse Tung's philosophy. Amaury German, another recent traveler from Cuba, is reported to be forming a third group which is said to advocate immediate action in the interior. None of the three factions enjoys clear ascendancy within the party although the Amaury German group is reported to be the largest.

The Popular Dominican Movement (MPD) was founded in the midfifties by Máximo López Molina who broke with it in 1966 and founded the Orthodox Communist Party (PCO). The MPD has had a checkered background in terms of its membership and activities. In 1966, a group of younger and better educated members of the MPD walked out and formed a new party entitled the "Communist Party of the Dominican Republic" (PCRD).

Since the 1965 revolution, the MPD has been the party most given to isolated acts of urban terrorism, while at the same time devoting a great deal of attention to the theme of "lo mejor al campo" (the best to the countryside). MPD activities have ranged from assassination to bank robberies and counterfeiting. Despite repeated attempts, however, the MPD has not been able to obtain the support of its middle and lower echelons for a movement to the interior to generate the basis for a guerrilla warfare program.

At the present time, the MPD is split into two major and harshly contending factions: the Central Committee group led by Marino Nazario, its secretary general, and the dissident faction headed by Cayetano Rodriguez and Caonabo Jorge. These two factions are engaged in a bitter struggle which involves public polemics as well as occasional hijacking of each other's equipment. Both factions, and thus the MPD in general, claim to be pro-Chinese, although there are some members trained in Cuba who follow the Debray philosophy of revolution.

The Dominican Communist Party (PCD), organized in the midforties by Spanish exiles, was until quite recently the advocate of nonviolent political subversion. Traditionally, its main strength has come from urban professionals and intellectuals, many with upper class backgrounds, and from university students. The PCD has been, and remains, the best disciplined, organized, and trained of the three principal parties.

In late 1964, a group of young Turks wrested the leadership of the party from an entrenched group of older leaders. Since then, the PCD

has been wavering between its basic pro-Moscow orientation and Havana's revolutionary doctrine. This process was accelerated when the PCD leadership denounced the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovakian issue shook the monolithic facade that the present PCD leadership had managed to sustain for almost 3 years. Justo del Orbe, one of its central committee members, resigned publicly in a move unprecedented in recent times. In lower party ranks, also, dissension over this issue became visible.

In keeping with its increasing pro-Cuban orientation, the PCD over the past year has been moving away from its political action posture to a more activist revolutionary doctrine. This has been evident in its public propaganda, its efforts to obtain guerrilla warfare training for some of its lower level followers, and its increased willingness to undertake harassing actions in urban centers through the placement of small time bombs, use of Molotov cocktails, and similar activities. It has, however, made no significant effort in the insurgency field as yet. Its present leadership in the central committee consists of the Isa Conde brothers, Narciso and Antonio, Luis Rafael Gómez Pérez, and others.

The so-called "splinter" Communist parties which have formed since the 1965 Revolution are the Orthodox Communist Party (PCO), the Communist Party of the Dominican Republic (PCRD), and the Popular Socialist Party (PSP). The first two are Chinese oriented and centered around leadership which left the MPD. Since all of these groups are small, they rely on vociferous propaganda to compensate for their lack of strength.

The PSP consists of the old leadership ousted from the PCD in 1965; mainly the Ducoudray brothers, Felix and Servio, and a few close adherents. It remains stanchly pro-Moscow and, during the recent Czechoslovakian-Soviet confrontation, strongly supported the Soviet invasion.

The most important and by far the largest of the three small parties is the PCRD which has some influence among the students at the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo through its youth arm, the Communist Youth (JC). Also, some dissident elements of both the MR–1J4 and the MPD reportedly are considering breaking away from their parent parties and joining the PCRD.

Estimating membership in these individual parties is very difficult since shifting allegiances and realinements, even on an individual basis, are frequent. It is estimated, however, that the Communist movement in toto, including all categories of activists, may not exceed 1,000 persons.

### B. ANOTHER POTENTIAL THREAT

Another potential threat to the stability and orderly political processes in the Dominican Republic is reported to come from still a different quarter—that of Francisco Caamaño, one of the former leaders of the rebel "Constitutionalist" movement which opposed Government troops in the civil war following the April 1965 coup against the government of Donald Reid Cabral. The civil war was terminated in the fall of 1965 when the provisional government of Hector Garcia Godoy was installed under an agreement signed by both of the contending forces.

The son of one of Trujillo's close collaborators, General Fausto Caamaño, Francisco has had a checkered career, notable primarily for his defiance of authority and active opposition to "the establishment."

Sent out of the country in early 1966 prior to the election of President Balaguer, Francisco Caamaño vanished from sight on October 25, 1967. At the time he was serving as military attaché at the Dominican Embassy in London.

Numerous rumors about Caamaño's presence in different Latin American countries, as well as behind the Iron Curtain, have circulated during the past 12 months. Many of them center on one location: Cuba. There appears to be a strong possibility that Caamaño, who was never previously regarded as an ideological exponent of communism, is being tutored in the revolutionary doctrine by Castro.

If Caamaño is indeed in Cuba, and if he should choose to press his opposition to the existing order in the Dominican Republic, his return to that country, perhaps in the guise of an insurgent leader, could serve as a rallying point for those dissident elements in the old "Constitutionalist" movement which are unhappy with the Balaguer administration.

In the rather tenously balanced political environment of the Dominican Republic, such a development could have seriously disturbing consequences.

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