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1 May 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Communist Involvement in Recent Strikes in Latin America

1. This memorandum is for your information.
2. At the USIB meeting of 14 April, General Breitweiser invited the Board's attention to the emerging pattern of communist activity in various Latin American countries, particularly through labor movements. The members agreed that this situation should be watched closely.
3. We have reviewed the information available on incidents of labor unrest which have taken place in various Latin American countries during the past few months and have discussed this situation with appropriate officers in DDP and OCI. It is our view that recent strikes were primarily caused by the reaction of national labor groups to local situations. Although communists were involved in most instances, their actions appear to be in the nature of exploiting the opportunities presented by the unrest rather than of implementing a specific Moscow directive or policy calling for simultaneous strike action throughout Latin America.
4. It should be noted, however, that the communists have demonstrated increased interest in Latin America. For example, in his opening speech to the Twenty-First Party Congress, Khrushchev noted a new stage in the "national liberation movement," and referred to the assertedly intensified struggle in Latin America against American imperialism. Following the Congress, Latin American delegates reportedly received instructions in Moscow and in Peking on tactics for intensifying the "struggle" in their own countries.
5. We are sending a copy of this memorandum to General Breitweiser.

SHERMAN KENT
Assistant Director
National Estimates