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File

THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

NFAC-3795-80/1
23 May 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: See Distribution

FROM : National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT : Monthly Warning Assessment: Latin America


1. Attached is a copy of the Latin America Warning Assessment based upon our discussion of 20 May 1980.

2. The next warning meeting will be held on 17 June 1980 at 1100 hours in room 5G00 CIA headquarters. Tentative agenda for the meeting is as follows:

- Cuba
- Jamaica
- El Salvador
- Nicaragua
- Bolivia
- Brazil

Please call [redacted] by noon on 16 June to give her the name of the individual participating from your office.

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Jack Davis

Att: (1)

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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

National Intelligence Officers

NFAC-3795-80
23 May 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

FROM : National Intelligence Officer for Latin America

SUBJECT : Monthly Warning Assessment: Latin America

1. Action Requested: None; for your information only.
2. Cuba

The Castro government has turned off the political tumult it previously had provoked to counter the embarrassment of the refugee situation and to divert attention from underlying political and economic problems. But these problems still seem more serious than any Castro has faced for at least a decade. The ever-growing numbers of Cubans who strongly desire to leave the island and the intense resentment of them by regime stalwarts could spark a renewal of street violence at a time inconvenient to Castro.

Recent signals of a willingness to discuss bilateral problems-- without the usual precondition of dropping the US embargo--probably indicate an unusual degree of concern about US intentions and Cuba's prospects on the part of Castro and some of his advisors. Hard line advisors, in contrast, might see a return to anti-US tirades as essential for maintaining revolutionary fervor at home and may work on Castro toward this end if the US response can be depicted as unsatisfactory from Cuba's point of view.

a tenacious myth

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BY SIGNER

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The actions of Cuban aircraft first against a Bahamian Coast Guard vessel and then against a US Coast Guard helicopter appear to have been blunders by local commanders or individual pilots. Inadequate command controls of Cuban aircraft from Havana might again lead to nasty incidents during a period of heightened domestic or international tensions.

3. Jamaica

The escalating political violence and worsening economic conditions in Jamaica remain matters for concern. A high level of partisan violence is a characteristic of Jamaican elections--both to intimidate the other party and stimulate the spirits of supporters. Either Manley or his radical supporters may see violence as a means of avoiding the elections altogether, to avoid near certain defeat. Seaga and his Jamaica Labor Party may be hard pressed to avoid escalation in the face of PNP provokations. The best bet is that mass disturbances will be avoided and that elections will take place, but it is not a sure bet.

4. El Salvador

After one says "where there is life there's hope", there is little room for optimism for US objectives in El Salvador. The escalation of rural violence, the dangerous economic situation, and the increased influence of military hard liners make it increasingly difficult for the Christian Democrats to stay in the government and extremely unlikely that other centrist civilians will lend support. While the extreme leftist can probably be held at bay for some time, the government may become even more characterized as a repressive one, and less defensible as a reformist one over the next month or so.

5. Nicaragua

The Sandinistas are still maintaining a facade of pluralism, but they probably have undercut the will and the ability of the private sector and moderate political forces to resist further movement toward one-party Marxist rule. The reports of anti-Sandinista armed resistance within Nicaragua (including the participation of the exiled former supporters of Somoza) add to the complexity of the situation. The resistance probably is not strong enough to do real damage, and its activities may give the Sandinistas added motivation to crack down on the non-violent opposition.

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5. Suriname

The influence of leftists on the government continues to increase, and the effectiveness of moderates in maintaining constitutional forms and conservative policies is eroding.



Jack Davis



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