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Cuban Militia Becoming Instrument of Police State

In an effort to strengthen its control, the Castro regime is giving intensive training throughout the island to a militia force of some 200,000 "volunteers." This force was formed late last year after long Communist urging, and there was a sudden intensification of organization and training with the officially inspired "war spirit" in late October and early November, when the alleged threat of an "imminent invasion" from the US was used to justify a nationwide mobilization.

The militia, which has a number of similarities to the Chinese Communist militia, is not only a force for police control but also a means of subjecting a relatively large number of Cubans to military discipline and political indoctrination. It also provides the regime with a cheap labor force, reducing the threat of political unrest stemming from the chronic unemployment problem. With extensive Communist penetration at all levels, the militia could also prove valuable against anti-Castro activity in the less politically reliable regular armed forces.

While the bulk of militiamen and women undergo regular part-time military training and indoctrination, a hard core of the militia is assigned full-time duties normally the responsibility of the regular armed forces. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] various militia units are being trained in the use of antiaircraft artillery, are preparing to manufacture antitank mines "and other similar objects," and are assuming responsibility for outlying stations of the internal communications network, among other duties. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]