

Box 7 - Folder 43

10: Guderlin
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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM
RELEASE AS SANITIZED
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24 March 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: NSC Meeting, 24 March 1960

1. The following briefings were prepared:

- a. [REDACTED]
- b. [REDACTED]
- c. [REDACTED]
- d. Cuba (Extracts from SNIE)
- e. Cuba (Current developments)
- f. [REDACTED]
- g. [REDACTED]
- h. [REDACTED]
- i. [REDACTED]

DELETED TEXT
NOT RELEVANT
TO BAY OF PIGS

2. The DCI briefed on items a through e above.

[REDACTED]
On Cuba, he read the last paragraph of the SNIE, did not use our item e above, but did discuss an FBI report.

THOMAS C. LAWLER

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NSC BRIEFING

APRIL 1960

23 March 1960

CUBA

- I. *FEW HOURS BEFORE AMB. BONAL'S*
~~Ambassador Bonal gets no official welcome on~~ return 20 March,
 - A. ~~Few hours before his arrival,~~ "Che" Guevara publicly warned that Cuba faces "economic war" with US.
 - B. Later on same day President Dorticos made his strongest attack to date on US and ~~accused~~ accused the US of being responsible for the La Coubre explosion.
 - C. Forcing down of small plane from Florida on 21 March provided additional theme for symphony of abuse: within hours, government radios were shouting "another aggression."
- II. Though Castro still strongly in control, opposition becoming more outspoken, particularly on Communist issue.
 - A. Autentico organization of ex-President Prio issued strong attack on Communism 14 March.
 - 1. Called Cuban Communists as grave a threat to the revolution as the counterrevolutionaries.
 - 2. But at same time reiterated support for the revolution which it saw threatened by "imperialism."
 - B. At least one student group is reported planning anti-Communist demonstration later this week to test limits to which government will go in suppressing anti-Communist activity.
- III. Meanwhile, Castro continues on same radical course.
 - A. In addition to 1,300 "people's stores" said to have been formed by INRA in rural areas *(SINCE OCTOBER,)* five such government-operated markets are said to be operating now in Havana.

1. Spread of "people's stores" to cities is in line with Castro's reported statements last autumn: "First we take the countryside; then we get control of the cities."
 - B. Over 80 radio and TV stations are being formed into government-controlled chain, Independent Front of Free Transmitters.
 1. Many of announcers are Communist-tinged, and output favors Communist line.
 2. Network may expand to Mexico, Venezuela, possibly Panama.
 - C. According to usually reliable CIA source, Cuba has offered asylum to former Guatemalan Communist boss during Arbenz regime, Jose Manuel Fortuny (who is now in Brazil).
- IV. This week is "Week of Solidarity with the Struggles of the Latin American People," declared by Communist-infiltrated Cuban labor confederation and warmly endorsed by Communist party.
- A. Chinese Communists giving strong support; Peiping radio reports mass rally of 10,000 in Peiping on 19 March in support of "the Latin American people's national and democratic movement and the Cuban people's struggle against US imperialist aggression."
 1. Rally, addressed by Chou En-lai and other leading Chinese figures, was first manifestation of the "China-Latin America Friendship Association" formed in Peiping on 16 March
 - B. Special meetings in Cuba have attacked Dominican, Nicaraguan, and Paraguayan regimes and emphasized the "struggles of the people of Puerto Rico."
 - C. Cuban labor confederation is preparing to send delegates to May Day celebrations in Moscow, Peiping, and Prague.

NSC BRIEFING

23 March 1960

SNIE 85-60: COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN CUBA
(EXTRACTS)

The first part of this special estimate reviews the trend of events in Cuba, the acceptance of local Communists "as participants in the process of remaking Cuba," and the development of "significant contacts with the Bloc." It states, "Prolongation of the present situation will result in even greater Communist influence in Cuba and will further encourage Communists and other anti-US elements throughout Latin America," and continues:

"6. However, Fidel Castro remains the dominant element in the regime and we believe that he is not disposed to accept actual direction from any foreign source.... We consider it extremely unlikely that the PSP ^{As per Paris} Communist Party...could soon develop sufficient strength to make openly an effective bid for power on its own....

"7. We believe that for some time ^{Cuban} Communist leaders will continue to concentrate on influencing the formulation and implementation of policy and on covert infiltration of the government--and that they will avoid any challenge to Fidel Castro's authority or any claim to formal PSP participation in the government.... The Soviet leaders probably believe that the present state of affairs is weakening the US position and advancing their interests, not only in Cuba, but throughout Latin America. The Communists probably also believe that the US will lose in influence and prestige so long as Castro's successful defiance of the US (including his acceptance of Bloc assistance) continues and that the US is faced with the dilemma of tolerating an increasingly Communist-oriented Cuba or of arousing widespread Latin American opposition by intervening. Above all, the Soviets probably wish to avoid a situation in which the US could secure broad Latin American support for action to curb Castro. While Castro's regime has lost

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prestige in Latin America, ... few popular leaders in the area are prepared to dismiss Castro as merely a pro-Communist demagogue....

"8. We believe that Fidel Castro and his government are not now ~~AND WILL NOT SOON BE~~ demonstrably under the domination or control of the international Communist movement.... Yet, we believe that the Cuban regime is in practice following the line set for Latin American Communist parties at the time of the 21st Party Congress in Moscow in February 1959 and that it will continue to pursue policies advantageous to the Communists and to accept Communist assistance and advice in carrying them out.... [Castro] appears intent on pressing ahead with his anti-US campaign, which might come to involve attempted expulsion of the US from its Guantanamo Base, abandonment of Cuba's privileged position in the US sugar market, a complete diplomatic rupture, and danger to the lives of American citizens. The more he becomes embroiled with the US, the more he will look to the Bloc for support, including provision of military equipment, although both the Bloc and the Cubans would probably seek to avoid any accusation that Cuba was being made into a Soviet base. Should the Castro regime be threatened, the USSR would probably do what it could to support the regime. However, the USSR would not hesitate to write off the Castro regime before involving itself in a direct military confrontation with the US over Cuba, or, at least during the present state of Soviet policy, in a major diplomatic crisis with the US."