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CUBA

THE EXCHANGE OF INTELLIGENCE  
CONCERNING COMMUNIST SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

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CUBA

THE EXCHANGE OF INTELLIGENCE  
CONCERNING COMMUNIST SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES

I. Introduction

In combatting Castro-Communist subversion throughout Latin America, there is a fundamental requirement for intelligence -- a requirement which involves the timely acquisition and processing of information as well as its rapid dissemination, on a selective basis, to countries concerned. While efforts are now being made by CIA, AID, and the US Military Services to improve Latin American intelligence systems, success thus far has been limited, and much remains to be done. It is not with this broad problem, however, that this paper is primarily concerned, but rather with the narrower matter of the need for a stronger program of exchanging essential information regarding Communist subversion in Latin America among those who need to know it.

II. The Nature and Scope of the Problem

1. Limiting Factors

a. There are many inhibitions which tend to discourage the exchange of intelligence on an international basis, even among allies. National privacy with regard to the inner workings of an intelligence system must be preserved. Compounding the problem further, where Latin America is concerned, is the divisive influence of the long history of rivalries, wars, jealousies and disputes which have characterized relations among the nations concerned. The wounds of past conflicts among pairs and groupings of nations are not completely healed. There is lingering hostility between Peru and Ecuador deriving from their boundary war. Chile and Bolivia continue at odds over the Rio Lauca and the question of Bolivian access to the sea, and, even now, Nicaraguan insurgents are harbored within the borders of both Costa Rica and Honduras. It could hardly be expected that these countries would be eager to exchange intelligence on a full and frank basis.

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b. Beyond this, Latin America is not a homogeneous entity in social, political, or economic terms, and attitudes toward the Castro-Communist subversive menace vary widely. A completely unified approach toward exchange of intelligence concerning this menace, therefore, cannot be regarded as attainable.

c. Additional impediments to intelligence exchange are the generally low level of competence of most Latin American intelligence services, their lack of rapid, secure means of communication, the absence of adequate security systems, and the lack of security consciousness. Deficiencies in security safeguards must necessarily limit the exchange of intelligence obtained covertly by any of the nations involved, and particularly the United States, which has the most sophisticated system and hence the greatest need for protection.

d. These defects promise to persist, since the governments of some countries have little desire to develop a competent career security service. There is a fear that the existence of an efficient service would constitute a threat to further activities of members of the existing governments at such time as they might find themselves out of power. Moreover, many Latin American intelligence services tend to label as "subversives" those of their own nationals resident in other countries who are opposed to the existing government.

e. These realities all underscore the fact that multilateral intelligence exchange must be approached on a most circumscribed basis. It should not be concluded, however that nothing of value can be accomplished multilaterally. With proper definition, limiting the problem of exchange to matters directly related to communist subversive activities, such as the movement to and from Cuba of subversives, the production and movement of propaganda materials which threaten internal stability, the movement of arms, and the movement of funds, it should be practicable to marshal a useful measure of cooperation. In pursuing this effort, it will be important to draw a sharp distinction between secret intelligence

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gained by covert means and information obtained openly. The former involves the requirement to protect national secrets both as to sources and acquisition methods employed. The latter, which can be of great value, can be exchanged without fear of compromise.

2. Categories of Exchangeable Intelligence

The following describe generally the categories of exchangeable matter, and exemplify the types of material under each:

a. Travel information - Unevaluated information devoted solely to rapid reporting of the movement of individuals between Latin America and Cuba or Soviet Bloc countries. Such reports can be reduced to a few elements such as identification of the individual, point of departure, date and time of departure or arrival, destination, and carrier. When presented in an abbreviated form such information offers minimum security problems with respect to exchange with one or more countries.

b. Intelligence information reports - Unevaluated information derived from clandestine collection operations or confidential sources reporting on plans and activities of Cuban or communist connected subversive individuals or groups; on movement of arms, propaganda and funds; on shipping and air movements and on results of surveillance efforts. Because continued receipt of such information by the United States is dependent on careful protection of sources and methods of collection, the exchange of this information with other countries must be carefully controlled by the collecting department.

c. Intelligence reports and studies - Evaluated intelligence in all of the above areas, prepared by an appropriate element of the US government in a form which is releaseable to other Latin American countries.

d. Selected overt materials - Articles or news stories drawn from press, periodical and other overt publishers. Selected for maximum impact on

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other countries particularly where such information is not freely available to security services, as in the case of foreign broadcast reports.

3. Current Exchange Arrangements

a. At present there is little organized exchange of intelligence among the Latin American nations. There is a limited amount of informal exchange, often on a basis of personal relationships between government officials having a community of interest with respect to a particular matter.

b. The Central Intelligence Agency has established working liaison arrangements in those Latin American countries where such relations have been considered to be in the best interest of the United States. Most of the intelligence concerning subversion in Latin America available to the CIA is derived from covert operations or through contacts with another intelligence or security service. This inhibits the passing of such information to agencies of a third country. There is, however, a substantial amount of intelligence available from overt or non-sensitive sources which can be provided to other countries. In 1962, CIA received information reports from [ ] services with which liaison is maintained in Latin America and released reports to [ ] recipients. Intelligence items exchanged included collated studies, weekly intelligence reviews, name traces and travel reports.

c. The U.S. Army, through its attaches, currently has an informal arrangement involving bilateral exchanges of intelligence with Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Uruguay, Peru, Paraguay and Venezuela. Information provided by the Army has been concerned with subversive personalities, communist infiltration, weapons movements and related matters. Reciprocal intelligence received has been of small value. The Army also provides selected information on subversive activities to Brazil, Chile, Guatemala and Mexico, without reciprocation. The Navy has established a Navy-to-Navy program for the exchange of intelligence among nine South American navies and the U.S. Navy. The U.S. Air Force, through its attache system in Latin America, likewise has an exchange program. This is accomplished on an informal basis and is bilateral in nature.

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d. Exchanges of information are also effected from time to time through channels of the Department of State,

e. As yet, however, the program for the provision by United States agencies of information on subversion to Latin American governments has not been developed to an adequate degree. Since the United States possesses the most extensive acquisition capabilities, as well as the only secure and reliable means of rapid communication throughout Latin America (currently in process of improvement), the development of an integrated United States system for bilateral exchange offers the greatest possibility of achieving the results desired.

f. United States experience in the matter of intelligence exchange in Latin America, and in other areas of the world, has led to the conclusion that bilateral arrangements are more fruitful than multilateral arrangements such as those established within the framework of NATO, CENTO and SEATO. Nevertheless, this experience has shown also that multilateral arrangements can be of some use, particularly in creating an awareness of the need for intelligence exchange.

g. The concept of an exchange of information among members of the OAS with regard to subversive activities has been put forward at numerous Inter-American meetings, but has not been implemented, largely for the reasons set forth in Section II. 1. Under the Punta del Este decisions, the OAS members were urged to cooperate in strengthening their capacity to counteract threats or acts of aggression, subversion or other dangers to peace and security. The Council of the OAS is charged with maintaining vigilance over Castro-Communist subversion, and a "Special Consultative Committee on Security (SCCS)" is established to give technical advice on request to governments and the Council on matters relating to subversion. All American governments have been asked to furnish information on Castro-Communist activities to serve as the basis for studies and recommendations by the Council of the OAS on how to

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counteract them. Since the Punta del Este meeting, the OAS has been making slow progress in the countersubversion field, but there has as yet been no significant exchange of intelligence through its machinery.

h. The Inter-American Defense Board (IADB) has also demonstrated an awareness of the need for exchanging intelligence regarding communist subversion. Annex 4 of the General Military Plan prepared by the IADB requests the American States to report information to the Board and to establish agreements among themselves for exchanging information of collective interest. The United States has approved the General Military Plan, but similar action has not been taken by all member countries.

1. This brief summary serves to illustrate that there is much room for expansion of bilateral intelligence exchange arrangements among the Latin American nations themselves, which is now minimal at best, as well as a need to create an expanded program for bilateral intelligence exchange between the United States and individual countries, and finally, a requirement to develop the possibilities of a multilateral approach within the recognized limitations involved.

III. Existing Programs

Enumerated below are the principal programs now in progress. They are subject to continuing improvement.

1. Bilateral exchange of intelligence is now being conducted by CIA, DOD, and other US agencies with their Latin American counterparts in instances where it has been found possible to establish appropriate arrangements for exchange of selected information consistent with security requirements.

2. A study is currently underway to evaluate the feasibility and desirability of establishing military intelligence centers of the Caribbean Command and the Caribbean Sea Frontier, Atlantic Command, for further dissemination of intelligence as appropriate in conjunction with our Military Alerting System, for rapid processing and dissemination when appropriate, of intelligence on subversive activities directly to the countries concerned through the US Ambassador.

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3. Intelligence is being provided to the Caribbean Command by CIA and other elements of the U. S. Embassies in Latin America as well as to CIA Headquarters for further dissemination as appropriate.

4. Various agencies of the U. S. Government are now disseminating to Latin American governments unclassified studies and reports and other non-sensitive information concerning Castro-Communist subversion.

5. U.S. Government communications systems throughout Latin America are being expanded and improved upon on a high priority basis.

6. Programs now exist under AID, CIA, and DOD for the training and equipping of Latin American internal security and intelligence services. Additional programs could be established in other countries where it is found to be in the best interests of the United States and acceptable to the country concerned.

7. All information received by CIA concerning travel to and from Cuba is put into a computer system capable of producing lists by name, by country, by point of travel, or sorted on various other bases.

IV. New Actions Recommended

1. Reinforce the present procedures for bilateral exchange of intelligence, as described in Section III. 1. by recommending an Embassy intelligence committee to coordinate procedures for ensuring timeliness, completeness and freedom from duplication or false confirmation in the bilateral exchange with the host governments.

2. Encourage Latin American countries to engage in bilateral exchange of intelligence on Castro-Communist subversive activities.

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3. Arrange for the electrical dissemination to appropriate Latin American governments of daily summaries of radio broadcast material as monitored by the FBID of CIA.

4. Make available to as many countries as security permits, sanitized results of the extensive travel coverage obtained by the Central Intelligence Agency, already processed by machine. (See paragraph III. 7.)

5. Discourage the employment of intelligence advisors from nations other than the United States except in instances where the United States can arrange to provide for the training and control of any third country intelligence advisor.

6. Arrange for the preparation of periodic studies of Castro-Communist subversion in Latin America which can be disseminated to selected Latin American governments.

7. Undertake action in the OAS to stimulate governments to keep the Council and the SCCS fully informed on a continuing basis of the nature and incidence of subversive activities in their respective countries.

8. Encourage Latin American countries to approve the General Military Plan of the Inter-American Defense Board (IADB), and, in accordance with Annex 4 thereof, furnish to the IADB intelligence information and estimates concerning Castro-Communist subversive activities.

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