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RPT #5
80SITUATION INFORMATION REPORTTrends and Developments, WDC, Week ending: 31 May 1968POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

Reports continue to highlight the difficulties that SCLC Poor People's March leaders are having in controlling the dissension and internal strife which exists among the participants in the Campaign. Besides the foreseeable emotional stresses accompanying such a protest movement and the gathering of a heterogeneous mass in close proximity under adverse conditions of weather, housing, feeding, etc., the differences in goals, ethnic backgrounds and degrees of participation in both numbers and leadership of the various minority groups has shown marked increase of incidents and tension between Spanish Americans, Mexicans, Indians, whites and Negro groups. Maintenance of a workable degree of harmony will probably become increasingly difficult as time passes and the initial novelty of the Campaign erodes. The arrival of assorted student groups, which will include militants of all colors and persuasions, must increase the tensions.

1. An additional element which will add to the difficulties and the threat of both internal and external explosive situations is the projected increased participation by the Puerto Ricans. Reportedly some 50,000 Puerto Ricans are expected to travel to Washington, D. C. on 8 June, mostly from New York City and New England, to demonstrate in behalf of the poor. The one-day demonstration will be in sympathy with the Poor People's Campaign and 50 to 100 Puerto Rican families will move into Resurrection City.

SOURCE: FBI cable 20 May 1968

AUTHENTICATION: Overt sources probably reliable

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2. The Puerto Rican March in Washington is intended to dramatize the plight of more than 1,200,000 Puerto Ricans who live in the U. S., 800,000 of them in New York City, many in dire poverty or on the borderline.

The Puerto Ricans feel they have special problems somewhat different from the Negro and will maintain their identity while coordinating their efforts with the Poor People's Campaign. Their own march will begin 8 June. In Washington they plan to set up a shanty town adjunct to Resurrection City for some 50-100 Puerto Rican families now on relief.

SOURCE: The Worker, 28 May 1968

AUTHENTICATION: Probably accurate

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3. A number of instances of picketing have occurred recently by members of the Puerto Rica Independence Movement (MPIPR) which is described as a militant nationalist extremist group. Reportedly it is aligned with Castro's Cuba and maintains representation at the Havana Secretariat of the Tri-Continental Conference of African, Asian and Latin American people which sponsors and supports wars of liberation. The MPIPR has sponsored numerous demonstrations against U. S. policy in Viet Nam and compulsory military service for Puerto Ricans. One of its leaders reportedly has boasted that the MPIPR has a special underground task force which is ready to commit sabotage and violence. It is suspected that some MPIPR members have been to Cuba for sabotage and guerrilla training.

SOURCE: SCIB (OSI) 15 May 1968

AUTHENTICATION: Probably reliable

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