

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL

Authority: EO 13526

Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS

Date: DEC 28 2017

~~SECRET~~

#34

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~

Office of the Secretary of Defense

5 U.S.C. § 552

Chief, RDD, ESD, WHS

Date: 28 DEC 2017 Authority: EO 13526

Declassify: ☒ Deny in Full: ☐

Declassify in Part: ☐

Reason: ☐

MDR: 17 -M- 2054

Response to Congressional Queries on External Support of Subversion/  
Insurgency in Latin America (U)

House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Foreign Operations  
Hearing Transcript, December 2, 1975  
Page 35, following last line.

In response to the question of "Is there any one country in Latin America at this moment which is subject to an internal revolution supported by external forces," the answer is no. Argentina is the only country currently experiencing a continuing, violent insurgent situation, but it is not considered to be at the revolution stage at this time. External support to Argentina, and other insurgent/subversive groups, will be discussed in general below.

Regarding Che Guevara's activities in Bolivia, they took place in 1967 with Che being captured and killed on 9 October of that year. His guerrilla band included Bolivians, Argentines--Guevara himself was Argentine, not Cuban--, and Uruguayans as well as Cubans. The total number of Cubans involved in this adventure is believed to be about 12, although not all were there at the same time.

The last question as to whether there is external support of internal subversion in Latin America is not easily or simply answered. Support is a very broad term. If it is to take a narrow connotation such as sustaining subversive groups, implying full active support so as to strengthen by direct input of men and materiel such as the Soviet and Cuban action currently taking place in Angola, the answer would be not at this time, but with a very real potential. If support is to be taken to suggest favoring, approving, sanctioning or giving aid and comfort to such groups; advocating their actions and goals; or backing them with moral encouragement and at times financial aid; then the answer would have to be yes, there is such external support in some instances and a great potential for it in many more.

Looking at the more restrictive definition, Cuba was for many years guilty of such activity and did little to mask the fact. Castro rather indiscriminately provided direct aid to guerrilla groups in the form of advisors, weapons and equipment, training, funds, safe havens, and so on. There is little to indicate such direct support by the Soviets or Communist Chinese. However, after repeated failures for various reasons, Cuba began to modify its policy on export of revolution. Much of the change was due to pressures from the Soviet Union to halt random active support and to more closely adhere to the Soviet approach toward Latin America. In simplified terms, the Soviet attitude toward revolution in Latin America is that, while success of communism is inevitable, circumstances are not

~~SECRET~~

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~

~~Classified by GTR~~  
~~SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION~~  
~~SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652~~  
~~AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO~~  
~~YEAR INTERVALS~~  
~~DECLASSIFIED ON 01 DECEMBER 2005~~

DECLASSIFIED IN FULL

Authority: EO 13526

Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS

Date: DEC 28 2017

~~SECRET~~

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~

ripe as yet in that area of the world for militant revolutionary action, and other means must be used to gain footholds and influence through which advances can be made. Therefore, as Cuba increasingly embraced and parroted Soviet views and policies, it became much more selective and restrictive in its assistance to insurgent groups.

Cuba further modified its policy in this area [in June of this year. At a meeting of the Latin American communist parties hosted in Havana, Castro announced that henceforth Cuba would assist only those insurgent groups which were subordinate to the local pro-Soviet communist party and acting on the party's authority. He advocated unification and coordination of effort under the party in order that activities could be more easily controlled and manipulated by Moscow. Castro left the door ajar, however, by indicating Cuba would for tactical reasons aid other groups should the need arise.] In other words, Castro has at this point in time sworn off haphazard, indiscriminate assistance to insurgents. He has not, however, foresworn revolution or the need for it. [He has recognized, undoubtedly under Soviet tutelage and pressure, that the time is not ripe and conditions are not proper in Latin America for successful guerrilla wars; that more can be accomplished through diplomatic and economic maneuvers. Should the time arrive when the local party determines conditions permit or demand action, Castro's statement would suggest unconditional direct Cuban support would be forthcoming. The catchall statement also suggests that in some instances, especially when believed to be in Cuba's best interest, support would be given regardless of Soviet attitude.] Therefore, at this time, there are no indications that Cuba, the Soviet Union, or China are providing advisors, weapons, or large infusion of funds, but the offer is there and thus the potential.

Turning to the less material types of assistance such as moral and propaganda support; advocacy of Marxism; financial aid to local communist parties; training in military and political subjects; transportation and other logistical support for individuals; documents; etc; there is good evidence such is being given. It is sometimes direct and sometimes well covered. [For instance, the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR) in Chile is receiving monies from various sources including socialist groups in Italy and the communist party in Sweden. All is believed donated at the behest of the Soviets. Even though the Chilean coup was a great blow to Castro because of his close personal relationship with Allende, Cuba has refrained from sending men and material; not because of lack of desire to do so, but because of the communist party and the insurgent/subversive movements have been well contained by the government. Should the party and the militant groups find themselves in a position to challenge the military government, there is little doubt that large scale assistance would be forthcoming.]

~~SECRET~~

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~



DECLASSIFIED IN FULL

Authority: EO 13526

Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS

Date: DEC 28 2017

~~SECRET~~

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~

[Similar international communist connections can be seen in Argentina's ongoing insurgent problem. While the People's Revolutionary Army and the Montoneros profess to militant opposition to the domestic political and economic situation, their philosophy is pro-Soviet and pro-Cuban in orientation and a large number of the leadership has trained and been indoctrinated in Cuba and the Soviet Union. While there is no indication of direct Soviet and Cuban input in the present situation, the militants retain those characteristics and philosophies gained under foreign instruction and subscribe to that basic ideology. It is believed that Cuba and the Soviets maintain channels of communications and contact with these groups, which appear to be increasingly coordinating and providing mutual support. There is evidence that insurgents from at least Uruguay and Chile and possibly from some European countries are involved with the Argentine groups and that conglomerate organizations made up of European and exile Latin American insurgents based in Paris and other major European cities provide funds and propaganda support to the Argentine and other insurgents.]

[Several Central American communist parties and affiliates receive funds from the Soviets and Cubans through their embassies in Mexico City. These parties are small, outlawed, underground and generally under strong government pressure, and the funds are believed modest. Most do not currently advocate militant activities because of their weak positions, but attempt to subvert through infiltration into and control of peasant and student groups and through propaganda. In most instances, however, the leadership of these organizations have travelled to and received instruction from Cuba and the Soviet Union and closely adhere to Moscow's directions.]

One of the major reasons that direct and sizeable foreign assistance to Latin American insurgent groups has been significantly reduced and almost terminated (where less than a decade ago one could find a thriving insurgent group in practically every country in Latin America, there is really only one major effort underway today) is counterinsurgency action by local security forces. Achieving and maintaining the capability to effectively combat insurgency through proper training and acquisition of equipment is a major, and necessary step in preventing a takeover by insurgent elements. As stated above, foreign support of insurgency in Latin America is present in the form of sanctioning, approving and favoring such movement; advocacy; moral encouragement; and financial assistance. The promise of more substantial, material aid is also present and undoubtedly acts as encouragement and possibly a catalyst for insurgency.

Office of Origin: DIR-3B3  
Action Officer: Mr. McClellan  
Date Prepared: 12 December 1975  
Coordination: DIA  
Approvals:

~~SECRET~~

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS~~

*File*  
*Enrich*